Social protection floor: An ASIAN perspective

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Valérie Schmitt
Social security specialist, ILO
Decent Work Team, Bangkok
Asia's growth record in recent decades has been remarkable. The benefits of growth have not been equitably shared:

- Employment growth lower than GDP growth, high levels of poverty despite recent decline, high (and increasing) inequality

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<td>China</td>
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<td>Indonesia</td>
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<td>39.41 (2005)</td>
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<td>Vietnam</td>
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<td>Mongolia</td>
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<td>Sri Lanka</td>
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Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook Database, July 2009; ILO, LABORSTA; ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Sixth Edition; World Bank, World Development Indicators.
... to social protection for all & more balanced economy

- Recognition of the **role that social protection** can play in:
  - **Reducing the impact of the crisis** (short term) ... Most of the fiscal stimulus packages adopted by the governments included social protection components
  - Limiting in the long run the negative social & economic impacts of **any future crisis**
  - Promoting a **more balanced economy** with higher redistribution and the development of domestic consumption (lower savings rates and less reliance on exports)

- The **ASEAN community** recognizes the need for increased cooperation in the field of social protection:
  - **ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Plan of Action**, 2nd pillar: "Managing the social impact of economic integration by building (...) adequate systems of social protection”
  - **ASEAN Leaders’ Statement on Sustained Recovery and Development** (Ha Noi, 9 April 2010) “Strengthening the Network of Social Security Systems”
  - **ASEAN Labour ministers’ work program** 2010-2015 (adopted on 24 May 2010, Ha Noi) includes cooperation on social security and social protection: information sharing, capacity building, documentation of country profiles, social insurance for self-employed
Many countries in Asia are implementing the SPF

India: RSBY, NREGA

Cambodia: CARD’s SP strategy for the poor and the vulnerable with clear reference to the SPF … including HEFs, CBHIs, Food distribution, Cash transfers, PWPs…

China: minimum living standard guarantee program; new rural corporative medical care (NRCMC); health insurance for urban uninsured residents (HIUR); rural old-age pension

Lao: extension of SHP for all

Thailand: UC scheme, minimum pension scheme (500 THB)

Vietnam: 10 years Social protection strategy
Although there is a generic definition of the SPF ...

- The SPF = guarantee of access to essential services and social transfers for the poor and vulnerable. It focuses on 2 critical components:

Supply of **essential services** for all the population:
- housing,
- education,
- health care supply,
- water and sanitation,
- food, etc.

Financing **access to essential health care** (HEFs, CBHI, Subsidized health insurance …)

**Minimum income** support:
- to children (family/child benefits),
- the working poor (cash transfers and PWPs)
- and the elderly (minimum pensions)
… to ensure access to basic social services.
SOCIAL SECURITY ( NSSF and NSSF-C) for private sector employees and civil servants

... the SPF is adaptable to country contexts

- Horizontal/vertical extension in Cambodia

1. Horizontal coverage: providing a social protection floor for all

2. Vertical coverage:
  - providing higher levels of social security benefits through contributory schemes

Civil servants
Formal sector
Workers
Informal Economy
Near poor
Very poor

SOCIAL PROTECTION STRATEGY FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE

- Food security (school feeding programs, distribution of food)
- Child benefits, CCTs (to enhance school attendance and access to health care)
- Public works

- Community based schemes
- Health Equity Funds
Joint UN activities on the SPF in Asia:

Country level & regional level:

1. **Joint working groups and teams**
   - Cambodia: Working Group lead by World Food Programme
   - Thailand: Joint UN Team

2. **Documentation** of existing SPF “good practices”
   - UCS and 500 THB scheme in Thailand

3. **Support to the design** of national social protection strategies and schemes
   - NSPS in Cambodia, Vietnam

4. **Resource mobilization**
   - in Lao PDR, in Cambodia (ILO-EU funded project)

5. **Technical support to the implementation** of concrete SP schemes through specific projects
   - Cambodia: social budgeting exercise in order to cost the NSPS strategy and estimate the fiscal space
   - Lao PDR: design and implementation of social health protection for all in the rural areas (under development)
   - Several countries: rapid assessment of the SPF ..
Joint UN activities on the SPF in Asia:

Country level & regional level

6. Communication and awareness raising tools ..
   – A comics to be developed in Thailand and then replicated in other countries

7. Applied research on specific issues
   – Employment safety nets in ASEAN (ILO Japan)

8. Capacity building & Exchange of practices
   – Course on the SPF in Asia (with ITC ILO Turin)
   – GTZ conference in India (Nov 2010)
   – Training on social budgeting

9. Statistics & Monitoring
   – ILO-ADB: development of a statistical database and indicators to measure the progress of the SPF and extension of SP in the region
1. Advocacy & awareness raising

- Launch a public debate on the SPF (arguments on balanced and equitable growth, preparation for any future crisis, etc.)

- Employers associations should promote the SPF & SP as part of CSR vis-à-vis staff and subcontractors, differentiation & marketing strategy (fairness / equity / redistribution), strategy to increase productivity ...

- Consumers associations should stress the importance of SP (value chain)

- Members of grass roots organizations

- Examples: Find “ambassadors” among employers, document and disseminate good practices, produce brochures for specific target groups, media campaigns ...
2. Active participation in the design of SP strategies and SPF schemes

– NGOs, associations working with the poor and the vulnerable understand the specific needs of the SPF’s target groups
  • In Cambodia CARD (the coordinating institution of the National Social Protection Strategy for the poor and vulnerable) involved associations dealing with vulnerable groups
  • In the Indian rural employment guarantee scheme, NREGA, local communities are involved in the choice of public infrastructures to be built under the scheme (schools, roads, irrigation...)

– Piloting schemes and providing evidence for the design of national policies
  • International NGOs (Helpage ...)

Which role for Civil society?
Which role for Civil society?

3. Specific role in the implementation of SPF schemes

- Associations, NGOs, grass roots organizations are the missing link between central level and populations …
  - Targeting (ex: community targeting)
  - Counseling / orientation / follow up of recipient families
  - Channeling cash transfers (ex: local microfinance institutions)
  - Administration: registration, collection of fees/premiums, relationships with HC providers (ex: mutual health organizations, MFIs and cooperatives within nation-wide social health insurance schemes: Colombia, Burkina Faso, Philippines)

- Synergies and increased impact
  - RSBY in India provides inpatient insurance; micro-insurance schemes can focus on prevention, education and out-patient care
Thank you!