
REPORT

The 2018 Mauritius Social Protection Country Workshop was held from 17 to 18 October 2018 at the Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel, Caudan Port-Louis. This workshop was organised by Southern African Social Protection Experts Network (SASPEN) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Lusaka in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development and the University of Mauritius. The theme of this workshop was on "Social Protection in Mauritius: International Frameworks and National Policies". This is the first workshop organised by SASPEN in Mauritius.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to:

1. bring together the international and national dialogue and debate on social protection;
2. reflect on relevant social protection issues in Mauritius;
3. learn from the Mauritian Social Protection system through both domestic exchange and international contributions;
4. contribute to new linkages, improved networking, and dissemination of information/experience sharing; and
5. make the Mauritian Social Protection system better known to partners in other African countries.

Opening Session

The workshop was officially opened by the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development. The Vice Chancellor of the University of Mauritius along with the Vice Board Chairperson, Southern African Social Protection Experts Network (SASPEN), Zambia also intervened during the Opening Ceremony.

Highlights of Sessions

Day 1

- Continental perspectives—the AU instruments standards and development
- The ratification—AU instrument
- The African Charter—African charter on human and people’s rights.(Banjul Charter)
• The AU protocol of the African Charter on human and people’s right on old pension
• Continental perspectives—specialized framework for the workers’ rights
• Social Security in SADC
• A conclusion that the value rights have approach need to understand and include broader conception approaches connections.

Social protection in Mauritius
• A definition of social protection
• The social protection system for Mauritius is articulated around 6 pillars which include the non-contributory benefits and contributory benefits
• The National pension Act—Basic benefits cater from January 2018
• Social Insurance—contribution of National pension schemes
• National pension fund which is mandatory
• Contributory scheme—voluntary scheme
• Paid contribution pensions
• Industrial Injury benefits
• The National Saving fund
• Providing lump sum at retirement of death

• National Solidarity Fund—empowering the disable
• The Ageing population and its implications
• Subsidy put by the government on what he calls social protection

Social Aid in Mauritius
• Allowances obtain to benefit people example fishermen as well as pensions
• The number of beneficiaries of social aid tend to be explained by 2016 the National Pension legislation
• Provision of cash allowance by National Empowerment Foundation
• Introduction of minimum wage
• Evidence of other scheme
• Indoor relief which is expenses incurred for the maintenance of charitable institutions

The Disability, social protection policy and work: An in-depth analysis of Mauritius
• Disabilities are often marginalized and discriminated, no employment for these type of people
• Existing work—the number of laws in Mauritius to promote labour protection for them
• Highly vulnerable
• Mauritian Act –to create an inclusive society in the Equal Opportunity Act
• Disabilities under presented in labour and over presented among poor
• Implementation of policies on how to engage them in the labour market

NGOs as Social Enterprises
• The capacity of NGOs to become sustainable by creating social enterprises
• To survive and attract funders
• NGOs contribution
• Breaking cycle of poverty and ensuring a right future
• Support the poor

Social Protection in Southern Africa
• Social Compact and Social Justice Project – enhancing rights-based social protection systems.
• Gave an overview of the project aim, strategic objectives, indicators, tools and frameworks and activities.
• Towards comprehensive social protection systems: The case study of South Africa.
• An overview of the current social security systems in South Africa, the principles of social security, the new developments and the UN CESR recommendations (October 2018).

Day 2

The State of Social Assistance in Africa research and data project
• To produce a comprehensive compendium in social protection in South Africa
• How Africa define social protection- social insurance, labour market programs, social assistance
• Social assistance- Cash transfer, food transfer, public works, support by external donors
• Social assistance was food but now its cash transfers
• It started since a long time, in almost every region in South Africa there is social assistance, even in countries like Libya, Somalia social assistance has started
• About 25 countries have policy of strategy of social assistance
• The rate of social assistance is very high in Africa
• Conditional transfers versus unconditional transfers (much more popular)- A problem of supply of service in Africa as in some countries there are very little access to education and the quality is not very high
• Transfers are carried out by bank transfer, cash, mobile payments
• Africa use mix targeting approach
• In South Africa there is only 16 workers per 100,000 inhabitants- a large gap

The social Register of Mauritius (SRM) - the Marshall Plan against poverty

• Leaving no one behind- identify the determinants that cause people to be left behind- use these to identify who they are
• SRM is a tool to register, to identify the poor and socio economic profile- to inform policy makers so that they can make decisions
• SRM identify a list of beneficiaries by assessing eligibility- Means Tested: if the person is eligible or not
• Three types of household assessment- Verified Means Tested, Unverified Means Tested, Proxy Means Test
• SRM combines 100 approaches- self-selection (people come to register themselves), proxy means test (formulate derived economically from HBS data)
• MPSC- cash allowance eligibility is for education of children
• Not just giving money but to cover the level of poverty- give cash for basic needs- conditions to promote investments to reduce the level of future poverty- economic empowerment, family empowerment for abuse of adults
• Those who are eligible sign a social contract- they receive remedial steps- after some sometime the person have to re-register (recertify) so that she/he can continue to be on the system
• Monitoring Compliance- school attendance is being monitored
• Approaches to poverty- Monetary (subsistence allowance to meet immediate basic needs)
• Capability (through better education and training)
• Social exclusion
• Participatory (feedback from the poor to the decision makers)
• Some proposal- setup mobile technology to make access to programs
• A framework for SRM has been developed but need to be implemented
• Community working groups
• Enhance training and placement opportunities for the poor
• Introduce a school completion premium
• Introduce a Citizen Reporting Mechanism and data analysis to improve service delivery
• Design an official poverty line per adult equivalent in Mauritius
• Goal- end poverty in all its forms- ensure inclusive and quality education- gender empowerment- reduce inequality

Building Critical Thinking and Capacities of policy Makers and stakeholders: The Case of TRANSFORM

• Definition of Social Protection Floor
• Africa practitioners from different academic background have learned SP “on the job”
• No available in service learning in Africa SP curriculums; no reflection on specific Africa circumstances and rich experience
• Focus on SP systems and inter-relations of its elements and on people as agents of change, not only instruments and tools
• Focus on developing national curriculums through national institutions, and empowering African trainers to train
• The prime objective of the learning package is to build critical thinking and capacities of policy makers and practitioners at national and decentralized levels to improve the design, governance and administration of social protection systems.

• The learning package is based on a participatory approach and puts strong emphasis on leadership and transformation with a view of blending technical content that is relevant to the region with a participatory and interactive pedagogical approach.

Regional and International Experiences and Lessons – The Way Forward

• Empowering the families living in poverty, NGO “Lovebridge’ – fight against poverty.
• Interconnection between 6 fundamental pillars: motivation, attitude, skills and courage (MASCO) and poverty trap.
• Focus is on accompaniment of families living in poverty.
• Sources of Mauritian Law and Legislations on pension and social security law.
• Challenges: How to protect self-employed and vulnerable workers who fall outside the legislations.
• An analysis of the Singaporean Central Provident Fund and identifying the key elements of its
success story as a social protection instrument.

**Debriefing Session** – was held to thrash out all the key issues discussed during the two-day workshop.