

CONCEPT NOTE

INNOVATIONS FOR INEQUALITY REDUCING SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICIES IN EUROPE AND AFRICA

SIDE EVENT AT THE 57TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION

Time: Thursday 14 February 2019, 13:15-14:30

Location: UNH, CR 12

Co-organized by: Government of Finland, UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Background:

Economic growth does not automatically lead to the well-being for all. Inequality leads to wasting human talent and creativity that could have contributed to the general good of everyone. Equality enhancing social protection and labour market policies promote social mobility and opportunities for all to improve their lives and to make their positive contribution to the society and national economy. Reduction of inequalities decreases social conflicts and creates positive trust in the government, making it easier for the governments to respond to changing ecological, economic and social situations.

Social protection programs should not be seen only as cash transfers, but as part of multi-pillar social protection systems with a lifecycle approach. These include contributory social protection such as pension schemes and employment benefits; social services including health, education, water and sanitation, child, old age and disability care; social assistance through conditional and non-conditional cash transfers, public works and social pension as well as productive inclusion through financial and saving groups, minimum wages and asset building and tailored career opportunities for people with partial work ability.

In all societies there are large numbers of people who work hard but their labour inputs are not recognized by economic statistics and public policy. Women's unpaid care work is the backbone of the real social protection systems in most countries. The Target 5.4. of the UN SDG framework requires societies to recognize women's unpaid work and to formalize it so that many women would get decent formal jobs in public care services - and many more women would be liberated from a good part of their daily care obligations at home, and be able to take a more active role in labour markets, entrepreneurship, politics and community life outside their homes.

Another important issue to bear in mind is that Domestic Capacity Development is a necessary condition for sustainability. International development partners typically spend large amounts on short courses for training partner country officers. Much less is being invested into the systematic development of social protection related professional capacities and identities.

Objective:

This Side Event will bring together experts from Africa, Europe and the UN to discuss recent innovations in equality enhancing social protection and employment policies. What lessons could be learned for capacity development and policy making at national continental and global levels?

The Side Event will also discuss how to progressively streamline fragmented social protection programmes into nationally appropriate social protection systems that cover all people throughout the life cycle.

Specific experiences will be shared from African countries' efforts in developing multi-disciplinary social protection curricula for pre- and in-service training. These kinds of capacity development efforts are key for the sustainability of social protection systems, and have been a key focus area of the EU Social Protection Systems Programme / Finland.

Programme**Introduction:**

Dr. **Timo Voipio**, Chief Expert, THL (Government of Finland's National Institute for Health and Welfare), EU Social Protection Systems Programme (EU-SPS)

Speakers:

Mr. **Stanfield Michelo**, Master Trainer, African Regional Social Protection Leadership Curriculum TRANSFORM, and former Director of Social Welfare, Government of Zambia

Dr. **Päivi Mattila-Wiro**, Head, Government Key Programme on Career opportunities for people with partial work ability

Adv. **Bience Gawanas**, UN Under Secretary General, UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

Conclusions:

Dr. **Daniela Bas**, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, UN DESA

*For further information: Ms. **Christina Kapanen**, Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN, christina.kapanen@formin.fi*