



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Management of
Social Transformations
Programme

United Nations Department
of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Inclusive Social Development



COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York

The United Nations Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD), UNDESA,
the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,
cordially invites you to attend a high-level side-event:

“Social protection to reduce inequalities and enhance social inclusion in countries affected by conflict”

13 February 2019, from 1.15 to 2.30 p.m.

Conference Room 12, United Nations Headquarters

Moderator

Ms. Daniela Bas, Director, Division for Inclusive Social Development, UNDESA

Speakers

Mr. Paul Ladd, Director, UNRISD

Mr. Mohamed Gad, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations

Mr. Timo Voipio, Chief Expert on Social Protection at the Government of Finland's National Institute for Health and Welfare

Ms. Valentina Calderón-Mejía, First Economic Affairs Officer, Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division, ESCWA

Ms. Wendy MacClinchy, Senior Policy Advisor, UNHCR's office in New York

Ms. Cecilie Golden, Programme Specialist, UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme

Thematic focus

The presentations and discussions will focus on: 1) the critical role of social protection in reducing inequality and promoting social inclusion 2) additional challenges faced by in-conflict and conflict affected countries in the Arab region in delivering social protection, including the outcome of the MOST Forum of Ministers on “Multi-dimensional Social Protection Policies in Conflict and Conflict-Affected Arab States” co-organized by UNESCO and the League of Arab States in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt on 4 December 2018 and 3) the importance of knowledge-based policy-making.



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As emphasized in the Report of United Nations Secretary-General on the priority theme of the 57th session of the Commission for Social Development (E/CB.5/2019/3) “Income inequality is but one of several dimensions of inequality, including inequalities of access and opportunity in relation to education and health services, productive assets, financial services and political representation”. Social protection is a direct response to this, in conjuncture with other measures.

SDG 10 to reduce inequality within and among countries has a specific target 4 focusing on to “Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality”. Thus, when the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in 2015, Member States recognized that social protection is one of the key policy tools to reduce inequalities. Target 2 reads, “By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. As the overarching objective of Agenda 2030 is to leave no one behind, social protection policies need to cover all in need over the life-cycle, including those who are the most vulnerable, including refugees and internally displaced people.

The UN-DESA 2018 Report on the World Social Situation shows the potential of social protection systems “to prevent poverty, reduce inequality and promote social inclusion”, Furthermore, the WSSR 2016 on “Challenging Inequalities: Pathways to a Just World” co-published with UNESCO emphasizes “Social protection is a suite of policy instruments that explicitly aims to reduce poverty and vulnerability and has the potential to be redistributive.

Because of the importance of social protection as a contributor to human and social development, there are also several other Sustainable Development Goals having social protection-related targets, such as SDG 1 (poverty), SDG 3 (health), SDG 5 (women empowerment), SDG 8 (employment). Social Protection is also a core contributor to the achievement of many other SDGs, including SDG 4 (education) and SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies).

All these SDGs focusing directly or indirectly on social protection as a policy response were at the core of the discussions during the MOST Forum on “Multi-dimensional Social Protection Policies in Conflict and Conflict-Affected Arab States” co-organized by the League of Arab States and UNESCO in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt on 4 December 2018. Attention was drawn in particular to the risk of interruptions in social services delivery and financial means due to some countries being affected by conflicts and thus the increase in refugees or internally displaced people who also need social protection. At the Ministerial Forum, attended by both Ministers of Social Affairs and Ministers of Health, the UN system and researchers, a strong focus was given to the importance of policies supported by evidence.

Several of the recommendations in the Report of the Secretary-General for the Commission (Doc.E/CN.5/2019/3) are also in line with the discussions at the MOST Ministerial Forum co-



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organized by the League of Arab States which will be presented at this side-event as a contribution, alongside the other presentations in this event, to the 57th session of the CSocD.

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