



EU expertise on social protection,
labour and employment

Input for the proposal for a Global Fund for Social Protection

SOCIPEUX+ is implemented by

Partnership led by:

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Dear Professor De Schutter, Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights,

SOCIEUX+ warmly welcomes the idea of a Global Fund for Social Protection to ensure social protection for all. The need for technical knowledge, adequate funding and global coordination is huge, and we think that there is space for an extra entity that can speed up and energize the movement for social protection for all.

This fund could benefit from the current momentum for social protection expansion. During the last decade we have seen a rapid expansion of social protection schemes and cash transfers across the world (and SOCIEUX+ has contributed to that). The combination of interesting country examples with promotion by international organisations, such as ILO, World Bank and OECD has already drastically changed the landscape. Nevertheless, the coverage gaps are still huge and the most vulnerable people are often not yet protected. In addition, the global covid-19 pandemic has been a wake-up call. It clearly shows how social protection can be an adequate buffer against (unexpected) shocks and risks. Though, it has revealed also some new needs in the field of social protection. So, we think the time is right for action.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that a massive investment in social protection schemes can substantially contribute to reduce inequality, poverty and vulnerability, and foster social inclusion, resilience and social cohesion. It could also contribute to peace and stability. Hence, we think adequate people-centred social protection schemes are of pivotal importance and should be seen as an investment.

Before answering some of the questions (those on which we feel we are best placed to answer), we like to present SOCIEUX+. SOCIEUX+ is an EU-funded project that facilitates short-term peer-to-peer exchange (especially among people working in the public sector) in the field of social protection, labour and employment on demand of a partner country. Social partners and public entities can do a request to SOCIEUX+. Hence, ownership is an important objective of SOCIEUX+ actions.

SOCIEUX+ has been established in 2013 and is funded by the EU through a co-funding of France, Spain and Belgium, as well as resources managed by the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation of the European Commission (EuropeAid). This facility for technical cooperation is implemented by an association consisting of agencies for the development cooperation from the Member States: Expertise France (main partner of the association), the Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas (FIIAPP), the Belgian International Cooperation on Social Protection (BELINCOSOC) and the Agence Belge de Développement (Enabel, Belgian Development Agency).

The main goal of SOCIEUX+ consists in contributing to the extension and improvement of inclusive social protection systems and to access to better employment opportunities in the partner countries. Its specific goal is increasing the capacities of the partner countries aiming to improve the design, management and monitoring of sustainable and efficient strategies for social protection, as well as employment systems, thanks to the development of knowledge and to peer technical support in the short term. SOCIEUX+ acknowledges the impact of social

protection and employment on the reduction of poverty and vulnerability. It supports the efforts from the partner governments aiming to promote sustainable and inclusive systems for employment and social protection.

Answers to questions

Question 1: Added value of the Global Fund for Global Fund for Social Protection

Although it is a difficult exercise to prioritise the objectives, we find ourselves in the priority of the objectives as listed from (a) to (d). SOCIEUX+ is actively contributing to goal (b), namely Capacity-building and improving international cooperation in order to strengthen the ability for LICs to mobilize domestic resources.

Question 3.1: Strengthening international coordination – objective (b)

SOCIEUX+ considers domestic resources should not only be seen as funding, but also institutional and human resources should be considered. To foster these three types of resources with a long-term perspective, and taking into account the complexity of fast changing contexts, is key.

Therefore, short-term peer exchange can be fruitful, as SOCIEUX+ actions have proved. Nevertheless, it should also be complemented with long-term projects.

Besides of multilateral coordination and country level exchange, in our opinion regional dynamics for capacity building and domestic revenue mobilisation could also be developed. Events fostering learning among countries (e.g. with structured peer-reviews) can offer very good opportunities for learning. SOCIEUX+ experienced this with the organisation of regional learning events.

Special strategies should also be developed for countries with fragile states. Furthermore, creating synergies with the development of civil registration and identity management systems is also pivotal.

Question 6: The informal economy

The Global Fund for Social Protection should definitely play a role in encouraging the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy, in line with ILO Recommendation n° 204. Enhancing social protection for those in the formal sector is important, but it can mean widening the gap with others and protecting the ones who are better off. Hence, including people working in the informal economy is key.

SOCIEUX+ has been particularly active, at least during the last years, concerning the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy. A number of actions in the field of social protection and labour and employment have been addressing this crucial stake, from a variety of points of view. For example, in Peru we have been promoting public-private-unions technical dialogue on the possibility of introducing micro-insurance arrangements for granting some minimal coverage for old-age and accidents/sickness risks for informal workers (market dockers). In Colombia we have been helping the set-up of individual capacities and tools for addressing psycho-social vulnerabilities of informal street vendors. In several actions, we have been supporting an improvement of social assistance frameworks for filling the gap of contributory social coverage, such as in Palestine, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Panama and Jordan.