Social Protection and Informal Workers in Africa

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Outline

• The Africa Platform for Social Protection
• The challenges facing Africa
• The Informal workers
• Social Protection in various regions of Africa
• Social Protection and Informal Sector workers
• The way forward
The Africa Platform for Social Protection (APSP)

• A network of organizations operating at national and regional levels, with a commitment to promoting and strengthening the social contract between states and citizens
• It is made up coalitions of CSO’s working on Social Protection = Platforms
• It is divided into the 5 Regions of the AU :-
• It is registered in Kenya as an NGO
• It has a representative Board which is elected by the Platforms

Challenges in Africa

• A rich continent in many respects, but poor
• High levels of poverty which continues to rise
• HIV infections and AIDS deaths are the highest in the world
  ➢ A large number of orphans and vulnerable children
• A lot of fertile land, but a lot of food insecurity
• Too many conflicts and disasters – killing and displacing millions of people annually
Informal workers

- Bigger proportion of workers are in the informal sector and increasing
  - Not enough jobs have been/are being created
  - Too much rural/urban migration & rural areas remain unattractive
  - AIDS, among other factors, creates orphans, a lot of whom must work and the destination is the informal sector
  - With no food, people must work to eat and survive
  - Internal, external conflicts & natural disasters disrupt the way of life and create informal workers

Social Protection in Africa (main features)

- **Southern Africa**
  - Social transfers such as OP pensions, disability grants, etc
  - Contributory schemes
  - Many pilots since 2004
  - Zambia is scaling up the pilots
- **East Africa**
  - Policies/frameworks/constitution (Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda)
  - Contributory schemes
  - Pilots (Eth, Ug, Kenya), but being rolled out (Kenya)
  - Coordination – all SP under one agency (Kenya)
SP in Africa........

- Central Africa
  - Contributory schemes
  - Conflict has disrupted services (CAR, Chad, DRC)
- West Africa Francophone
  - Contributory schemes
  - Community health programmes
- West Africa Anglophone
  - Contributory schemes
  - Big pilots - Ghana, Sierra Leone
- North Africa
  - Well developed contributory schemes but being disrupted by the spring

SP and informal workers

- Not many examples of national SP programmes targeting the informal workers
  - Actually, in many cases, even workers in the agricultural sector are not covered (Zimbabwe has made attempts for them to join NSSA)
- There are many small programmes being implemented (with food for work programmes having been tried for a long time indeed but with little impact)
SP and the Informal workers

• One good example is around the concept of community health programmes (mutuelles de sante) – found in several countries of Africa (both Anglophone and Francophone)
• Rwanda for instance, has introduced a programme based on its Vision 2020
  ✓ It covers all the 30 districts of the country
  ✓ It uses the ubudehe (traditional targeting mechanism)
  ✓ It is a programme into which all the Rwandese can contribute and benefit
• There is a case to be made for traditional SP mechanisms found across the continent (Zunde ramambo, etc)

Way forward

• African governments should take ownership of the development and implementation of social protection processes
• Recognise the value of the informal sector and regulate it so that it contributes to national economies as well as absorbing and supporting large numbers of people
• Make rural areas attractive (e.g. Growth points in Zim) to arrest rural/urban drift
• Scale up pilot programmes to national the national level
Way forward....

• Improve the coordination of existing schemes to improve efficiency
• Combine the small programmes scattered in various Ministries into larger programmes that have better impact
• The same goes for NGO’s and Development partners (collaborate and not compete, pool resources)
• Resolve land tenure and land use issues to improve food security and create jobs

Way forward......

• Strengthen and scale up traditional social protection mechanisms to improve coverage of those in the informal sector
• Workers in the informal and rural sectors should be assisted to join formal social protection mechanisms
• Create awareness on social protection mechanisms in place at country level and how to access them
Way forward....

• The Civil Society Community is a partner and not a competitor of governments and should play a role in supporting the development and implementation of comprehensive social protection programmes.

• The donor community is crucial in supporting programmes at the national level. However, that support should be based on national priorities and aspirations.

End

• Thank you

• Thank you