Maternity protection for the informal economy

Three core messages

• Very few women have access to MP
• Who is it for
• The rationale
What about maternity protection for the informal economy?

- Most low-income informal economy workers cannot afford to take maternity leave
- Half of the world has no social protection; over 90 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa
- Two important objectives for the ILO:
  - To achieve universal social protection
  - To ensure that social protection benefits include maternity protection

Maternity Protection: is also for the informal economy?

- Convention No. 183 applies to all employed women, including those in atypical forms of dependent work
  
  Convention No. 183, Article 2

- Employed women: all women in an employment relationship, irrespective of the form of contract (written or oral, express or implied), type of work, where it takes place, type of pay (wage or salary, cash or in-kind).

- Atypical forms of dependent work include:
  - Fixed-term, contract, casual, seasonal and part-time workers;
  - Homeworkers, pieceworkers; temporary agency workers;
  - Unorganized, informal employees in all sectors;
  - Women in disguised employment relationships (disguised self-employment).
MP project

• **Objective**: Improve and extend maternity protection in the framework of national social protection floors

The role of maternity benefits in national Social Protection Floors

• Universal access to essential health care for all in need;
• Family/child benefits, to provide access to nutrition, education, and care;
• Income support for the working-age poor, underemployed, and unemployed,
• to be provided as cash benefits or through public works programs; and
• A universal basic pension for all persons in old age or with disabilities.
Examples of national initiatives

- **South Africa**: coverage of domestic workers by Unemployment Insurance Fund,…
- **Zambia**: the National Energy Sector and Allied Workers Union (NESAWU) negotiated 1 month’s paid maternity leave and 7 days’ maternity leave for casual workers.
- **Namibia**: Social insurance cash benefits for maternity in Namibia
- **Mauritius**: casual and part-time workers are included in maternity protection legislation

MP project

- **Outcome**: contribute to the goal that more low-income women have access to well-designed maternity-related benefits (cash and in-kind benefits, including childcare services)
Building Blocks for the Project

• Social dialogue
• Social Protection Needs and Gaps Analysis
• National Road maps

Raising Awareness and Building Capacity

• Development of dedicated tools
• Training stakeholders

Implementing new schemes

• Economic Feasibility
• Legal recommendations
• Organizational development studies
• Pilot projects

Outputs

• Situation analysis:
  – gaps and needs
  – existing social protection schemes/programmes with potential for synergies and mainstreaming of MP and social care
  – using good practices from comparable contexts.

• National action plans/road maps:
  – Institutional consultations, social dialogue and knowledge sharing forums at the national level.
  – Sub-regional tripartite dialogue forum: obstacles, opportunities, good practices and lessons learned on MP at the policy and implementation levels.