REPORT OF THE MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL EXPERTS ON SOCIAL PROTECTION:
INTERNATIONAL FRAME AND NATIONAL POLICY

1- Introduction

Background

Within the frame of poverty alleviation, and his full commitment to the expectations of policies and social programs for the economic development in general and human development particularly, the Malagasy State has decided to initiate Social Protection as a tool for the fight against extreme poverty, to address the vulnerability of the population in general, and to enable them to live in conditions of dignity and equity. Madagascar has about 22 million habitants, with 71,50% living under the poverty line\(^1\), 52,7% living in extreme poverty\(^2\), and 91% earning less than 2$ per day\(^3\).

In conformity with the principles enunciated by the national and international instruments, namely the General Policy of the State (Challenge 5 of the General Policy of the State) and the axis 4 of the National Development Plan\(^2\), the Ministry of Population, Social Protection and Promotion of Women has committed itself to elaborate the National Policy for Social Protection, which is in progress. Presently, the country has a draft document which encompasses the basic principles, the decisions and actions related to Social Protection. It will serve as a reference document for the actors and decision-makers in the field of Social Protection. The policy aims at ensuring the coverage of the population by an efficacious Social Protection.

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\(^1\) Proportion of the population living under the national poverty line of 535 603 Ar per individual , per year – Annual Report Madagascar 2013, UNDP.
\(^2\) Proportion of the population earning 374 941 Ar per individual per year,- INSTAT/ENSOMD 2012-2013
\(^3\) Proportion of the population earning less than 2$ PPA par jour (25US PPA : 976,794 Ariary) - INSTAT/ENSOMD 2012-2013
As a matter of fact, in order to improve these documents, it is opportune to effect their betterment by international and national experts in line with the aspirations and particularities of the Malagasy people. This activity requires the effective involvement of all the concerned stakeholders.

For this purpose, in partnership with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and a network of experts in Social Protection from Southern Africa (Southern African Social Protection Experts Network), a meeting of experts in Social Protection will be organized on 18th and 19th August 2015 at the Hotel Colbert. With the general objective of improving the frame document, the topic of the meeting is entitled «Social Protection in Madagascar: International frame and National Policy», and will be a space for exchanges of experiences between international and national experts. The meeting will determine «Social Protection for Madagascar».

The general objective of the meeting is to:

- Determine Social Protection for Madagascar

- Improve the documents on the National Policy for Social Protection and the National Strategy for Social Protection.

Benefits of the meeting

The meeting has been an opportunity to initiate and enhance collaboration between experts in Social Protection, and to capitalize the experience of countries in Southern Africa, in adapting them to the national context. It also enables to integrate the National Policy of the country to the challenges for social justice in Southern Africa, facing the common problematic of poverty and vulnerability. The meeting was a valuable investment for the enrichment of expertise of actors in the field of Social Protection.

2- Results

2.1. Unfolding of the meeting

The meeting privileging the participatory approach was marked by the substantial contributions of all participants who shared their experiences, and proposed recommendations for the improvement of the draft documents of NPSP and NSSP. The meeting has been characterized by the wide representation of all the stakeholders (Ministries- Civil Society Organizations-Technical and Financial Partners- Trade Unions- Political Parties). Such a wide participation can serve as a floor for a continuous partnership between all the stakeholders for the future implementation of the Policy.

The meeting consisted of a set of presentations made by international and national experts on the concepts and systems of Social Protection in Africa and Madagascar, the schemes, programs and instruments of Social Protection and Social Security. On the basis of a comparative approach and benchmarking, the acquirements, challenges and best practices have been
highlighted. The meeting concluded in group discussions which have helped to emphasize the main recommendations for the improvement of the documents, specifically for the aspects of institutional coordination, financing, participation of citizens, and the programs and instruments for Social Protection (cash transfers- food security- social services).

2.2. Concepts and systems of social protection

The proposed definitions of Social Protection consider Social Protection as “a set of public and private policies and programmes aimed at preventing, reducing and eliminating economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation.”

Social Protection encompasses social insurance, social assistance, labour market interventions, livelihoods support and social services.

Another complementary definition comprehends that Social Protection has multiple functions and dimensions:

- Protect individuals and households from adverse shocks that are capable of pushing them deeper into poverty
- Cushion workers and their dependents from consequences of shocks, including income threatening risks and ill-health disasters
- Build resilience: Promote key investments in human capital and physical assets development to ensure resilience and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty
- Systems building and strengthening: Promotes synergy and integration among Social Protection stakeholders for effective and efficient implementation of the NSPP

The transformative approach of Social Protection considers that it must address the social justice that arises from structural inequalities and abuses of power, and transformative Social Protection must aim to achieve empowerment, equity and the achievement of economic social and cultural rights.

The innovative approaches of Social Protection are also observed in the initiatives taken in certain countries for the articulation of the formal sector and Social Security with the informal sector (Ex: Rwanda).

2.3 Coordination, partnerships, Institutional arrangements

Coordination, partnerships and institutional arrangements are pillars of Social Protection that ensure efficacy, and necessitate a particular attention in the drafting of a national policy or a national strategy.

The case of Kenya can be considered as a good practice regarding the mechanisms of coordination, the roles and responsibilities of the central and local structures, and the roles of the beneficiaries at the community level.

The governance of Social Protection is entrusted to a national and local structures. At the national level, a technical team is put in place at the level of the Ministry to ensure the leadership of different programs and decision-making. Technical working groups are established for the
purposes of targeting, monitoring and evaluation, the elaboration of a single register and the management of complaints as well.

Structures are put in place at the level of the counties and sub-counties, namely the county coordinators, the local committees for social assistance, and the local leadership play an important role in the coordination of Social Protection: targeting-validation of the list of beneficiaries, management of complaints.

For the case of Madagascar, the system is singularized by the presence of multiple State and non-State actors (public institutions-social service providers-NGOs—technical and financial partners) and a wide diversity of programs. However, the lack of a political frame of orientation, the overlapping of actions, the lack of coordination and the insufficient complementarity of programs rank among the outstanding weaknesses of the system.

Roles of CSO

The scoping of the fields of intervention of CSO and the common trends in the practices in Africa can serve as references for the improvement of the system in Madagascar. CSO are inherent parts of the actors for Social Protection, owing to their potentials of mobilization and their expertise.

CSO’s are included in the various African policies and instruments, to quote only:


In the implementation of policies, they can support the Government in the application of policies, create their own programs, effect monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the Government.

2.4. Programs and Instruments for Social Protection

The programs and Instruments presented and discussed during the meeting include the programs for food security, monetary transfers, Social Security and social services schemes and programs.

Food security programs

Food insecurity through the life-cycle hits infants, school age children, adolescents, elderly, working age adults, pregnant and lactating women. In the new agenda of Social Protection, the programs of food security and school feeding are focused on income generation, asset creation, human capital formation, inputs subsidies, and access to land. In complement, the home-grown school feeding programs, which replace the imports of food with local purchases, provide benefits for the smallholders, and are an adapted response to the needs of African countries.

In Madagascar, a high prevalence of chronic under-nutrition (27.2% in 2011-2013) and food insecurity (56.7% in 2010) is observed. The country has adopted a National Program for
food security and nutrition, with the objectives of contributing to the reduction of malnutrition of children and mothers and ensuring the diversification of food consumption of households.

**Monetary transfers**

Conditional and non conditional monetary transfers are promising instruments to ensure the provision of minimal incomes for the vulnerable population. The Basic Income Grant was experimented with in Southern Africa and is considered an innovative approach. It consists of monetary transfers to individuals, characterized by the following features:

- The pro-poor nature of the program, as it is based on the taxation of wealthier people
- It is non conditional and can be easily managed, and does not require any targeting, no criteria based on income, residency, size of family.
- The program has been experimented in Namibia in 2009 with the involvement of CSOs. It had impacts on human development, economic development and social benefits – reduction in crime, increase in school attendance, reduction in drinking and promotion of small businesses

**For Madagascar**, the Fund for Intervention for Development has launched and will upscale the programs Conditional Monetary transfer for human development and the productive Social Security nets; the implemented programs rely on the protection against extreme poverty, the promotion of human capital, the access to productive work and the reinforcement of the resilience of the most vulnerable. 32,500 households will benefit from the program Cash for productive work, and 39,000 households from the Conditional cash transfers.

**Social services and social insurance**

Social services aim at addressing the problems of poverty, vulnerability and inequality. Social services include education, health, housing and personal social services. They encompass free education, programs of school feeding, the exemptions of payment of healthcare, the universal coverage of health, the services of social assistance for the vulnerable individuals, including the elder persons and the disabled.

In Madagascar, the programs target children and poor families to enable or improve their access to all the basic social services. They will also enable the beneficiaries to cope with the consequences of the social risks related to inequalities, health and food insecurity and violations of human rights. Such is the case of the activities of SOS Village d’Enfants.

Social Security includes compulsory social insurance and voluntary social insurance for the workers in the formal sector and the retired workers. In certain contexts, the scheme is extended to the informal sector.

**3. Recommendations for the improvement of the National Policy and the National Strategy for Social Protection**

In the perspective of the improvement of the National Policy and the National Strategy, the meeting ended in the formulation of recommendations, based on the successful experiences in Africa, as well the results of group discussions.
The drafting of a National strategy is a continuous process achieved through primordial steps, including:

- Sensitization by the mean of national dialogues, media campaign and advocacy
- Scoping
- Mapping of the existing programs
- Needs evaluation
- Drafting of the implementation plan of the strategy
- Steering, including the mechanisms of service provision, single registry, monitoring and evaluation
- Institutionnalization
- Capacity-building of actors
- Analysis of gaps with regard to vulnerability and the existing programs Capacity-building for actors
- Reinforcement of the fiscal space

The recommendations from the participants concerning institutional coordination, funding, participation of citizens, food security, monetary transfers, social services are presented as follows.

**Funding**

The situation in Madagascar is marked by the weakness of public expenditures for Social Protection which does not enable to meet the minimal needs of the poor and vulnerable groups. The analysis of public expenditures reveals a dependency on foreign funding and the lack of fiscal earnings allocated to Social Protection. Social Protection expenditures represent an average 1% of GDP from 1997 to 2012, which is less than the average of 3.5% in Southern Africa.

The short and long-term challenges and recommendations include:

- Transparency and good governance in fund management
- The widening of tax base
- The exploration of new resources and the mobilization of internal resources
- The review of the legal frame
- The establishment of a control structure of financing
- The reinforcement of the organic law and the finance law on Social Protection
- The creation of a national solidarity fund

**Institutional Coordination**

The lack of coordination and common planning, the scattered and fragmented programs are the shortcomings of the system. Notwithstanding these weaknesses, efforts have been undertaken to improve coordination, resulting in the group for social protection at the level of fund donors, the ad hoc committee which was active for the launching of the elaboration of the policy, and the group of actors involved in transfer programs. The recommendations for this aspect are:
- The definition of the institutional vision
- The formalization of the Public-Private Partnership
- The setting up of sectorial groups at the level of Ministries and Fund donors
- The establishment of a legal frame
- The coordination of all programs
- The legitimation and the reinforcement of the coordination unit
- The elaboration of a booklet of charges for Social Protection

Participation of Citizen

Certain acquirements are observed for the participation of citizens, of which:

- The existence of CSO and groupings (CBO) involved in SP
- The existence of contributory schemes
- The legal frame for the participation of citizens
- Community solidarity
- The presence of trade unions
- Community funds

In spite of these advantages, the following challenges and recommendations are suggested:

- Sensitization and mobilization of citizens on their rights and obligations
- Sustainability and support to the actions of CSO and groupings working for SP
- Consultation and involvement of citizens in the design, elaboration, advocacy and implementation of programs
- Instauration of the culture of accountability to stimulate the participation of citizens
- Civil education at schools
- Identification of social actors: individuals; CSO; political parties
- Operationalization of the Council of orientation of Social Protection, and integration of CSO, representatives of the private sector and political organizations in these structure

Food security

Certain assets of the food security programs are remarked, including:

- The implementation of programs of assistance and food security to respond to the immediate and seasonal needs (e.g.: Community sites of ONN. FFW / CFW PAM-FID- other NGOs and technical assistance)
- The availability of multisector planning tools

The challenges and recommendations are:

- The scaling up of pilot actions
- The unification of tools
- The integrated approach for partnership, synergy and complementarity
- Common coordination and monitoring
- The common definition of targeting criteria for the targeting of the zones of intervention
Monetary transfers, Basic Income Grants

Progresses are ascertained for these programs, namely

- The existence of CMT programs with FID and MPPSPF
- Cash for Work programs in case of emergency
- Cash for work programs with PAM (post disaster)
- Punctual and small Labor intensive work

The following recommendations are reiterated:

- Adopt more structured works (training, technical skills)
- Ensure sustainability: design, training, Communication, coordination
- Think on the financing of social actions (MPPSPF with the actors)
- Intensify sensitization for the dissemination of human rights in relation to SP
- Entrust training sessions- identification- dissemination to the technical services of the MPPSPSF at the level of the district

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

For the social assistance services, the following challenges and recommendations are deemed primordial.

- Effect an inventory of the structures of assistance at the national level
- Mapping of the services and needs for social actions
- Put in place a national program for the assistance and cares for vulnerable individuals (e.g.: homeless children)
- Consolidate the emergency programs (food, nutrition, health, sanitation, access to safe water and security)
- Envisage the extension of programs according to the regions and the categories of population