Rights Based Social Protection Project in Africa

Background Concept Note

_____

Strategic Objective: African countries put programs of social security on a legal basis.

Project Aim 1: **The socio-political discourse is focused on the economic development-potential of basic social security, poverty reduction and democratic participation.**

Indicators

1. In ten countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) experiences from other African countries are active part of the political debate and create democratic awareness and transparency.

2. Political discourses on social security are characterized by gender equality and comprehensive coverage in ten countries in SSA.

3. There are multilingual internet-based communication platforms that enable inter-African knowledge sharing to social security and which are used by the relevant actors from twenty countries.

Impact Relations:

It is the objective of the project to widen the partly existing political will and to enlarge the more technical discourses into a comprehensive societal discussion, that governments use the current time slot in favour of a broad participation and democratization. The time window is fed from the increased resources through the economic recovery of Africa and the significantly increased willingness of donors to build Social Security by start-up funding. This motivates African governments to start social programs in partnership with bilateral donors and UN agencies such as ILO and UNICEF, as well as the World Bank, with increase speed. The generally structurally weak civil society organizations that exist in this policy field, have few opportunities to influence the policy process in the accelerated implementation. In countries such as Kenya and Zambia this has nevertheless worked and there are role models, how with tight budgets and other constraints, the implementation can be embedded in the civil society, thus contributing to a democratic and justice-oriented process. The trade unions are often left out of social assistance programs but have experience in existing social programs in the formal employment sector and how to promote this as part of a democratic economic order, through a process of socio-economic development. The active involvement of civil society and trade unions of the otherwise technically focused approach broadens the integration of the poor and disadvantaged in the society and income generation activities. On the part of AUC this meets their readiness for cooperation since the AUC wants also to promote rights based and comprehensive social protection to overcome the injustice in the African countries. On the

side of the national governments, it seems that in many countries the existing civil society knowledge resources are actively requested and progressive political actors on Social Security are increasingly involved in the programs. The project promotes networking, building network-based exchange and knowledge resources and the connection of the various stakeholders is a dynamic part of the project approach.

The issues require a further lobbying of decision makers and elites about the fact that according to ILO tax financed social safety nets for low income countries are affordable and promote economic activity, mobilize labour productivity and create a strong demand stimulus, in the resource and export-dependent economies. Therefore, social security has a significant development economic importance. Social Justice is a prerequisite for democratic participation and substantial participation. In general, the political debate must also be influenced on how the resource blessed region can overcome the extremely high poverty levels and the redistribution of the wealth leads to more social justice and fair access to resources. The activities will promote the expansion of social security systems and support a regional exchange among experts and engagement of civil society and trade union players.

Project Aim 2: **A network causes that a legal basis for social security enters in national policy-making in the sense of poverty and hunger reduction and equitable access to resources**

Indicators

1. The AU Commission (AUC), the Africa Platform for Social Protection (APSP) and ITUC-Africa cooperate in activities of social security.

2. Relevant civil society and trade union actors in ten countries represented rights-based Social Security as a contribution to social justice.

3. In four countries in SSA national policies in correlation to AU and UN instruments are rights based and legally enforceable.

Impact Relations:

Through the development and expansion of networks, FES can contribute to more transparency and open discussion spaces in African countries. Knowledge management creates transparency and equal access to information and different policy options for all the policy-making process stakeholders. South-South learning and peer-to-peer exchange also leads to greater participation and acceptance among the stakeholders, what encompasses also governments who put themselves increasingly on such avenues, but here rather in the global South (e.g. UNDP Rio + 15-Brazil-AUC-cooperation). Through the active involvement of civil society and trade unions, we enable increased involvement of democratic and progressive forces in the debate. By integrating the trade unions at all stages (design, decision and implementation), the systems of social security are more sustainable and stable. The expertise at trade union level has however to be established or strengthened further. Through cooperation at regional and national level options on social security can be placed in a wider context and will be improved. The activities will include government consultations, focused publications, network-based knowledge management and active networking of the stakeholders.

Through the work of the FES country offices (particularly in Ethiopia, Benin, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Zambia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda), the APSP-country platforms (in most countries)

and placement of the AUC (all countries), the work of the network will influence national policy processes.

Project Aim 3: **Member-based organizations participate actively in the development of social security systems for informal workers**

Indicators:

1. In at least three countries, member-based organizations for informal workers were established

2. Selected member-based organizations increase their members

3. Trade Unions cooperate with organizations of the informal sector

4. Proposals for reforms on social security policies for informal workers are available

5. Issues of social security for informal workers are debated nationally and regionally

Impact Relations:

The FES intends with this project to promote the advocacy of informal workers in general and in relationship to approaches of social protection of marginalized group of workers. The focus is on the establishment of relevant structures, pooling their capacities as well as networking and debate between different stakeholder groups, including at regional level. The project lines aim to strengthen the capacity for advocacy of informal workers through member-based organizations. Trade unions can and should play a major role, but in many cases they are only a part of a broad alliance. With various instruments such as consulting, studies, knowledge management, training, seminars and dialogue measures awareness will be raised. Another step includes the development of knowledge and articulation capability for informal economy. The focus is on issues of providing coverage for informal workers with disability, pregnancy, old age and access to public infrastructure and services. Since women often should represent the majority of workers in informal and precarious jobs these questions also be edited from a gender perspective. On the International Comparison matter and regional debates not only diverse examples and suggestions for including security systems for given informal workers but also questions the portability of social security entitlements between countries or general development potentials informal economies are debated. For goal achievement plans to FES, in particular to take advantage of the experience and existing knowledge of the existing SASPEN- network.