



**Economic Commission  
for Africa**

# **Consultative Meeting on Accelerating Progress in Africa towards the targets of the MDGs: What scope for social protection?**

*(ECA support to strengthen poverty reduction strategies)*

## **Draft Programme of Work**

**25-26 March 2009**

**Conference Room 3 (CR3), United Nations Conference Centre  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Acknowledgement:** This meeting and the programme of work that will result from it is made possible through the kind support of ECA's Joint Pool Partners, most notably, the Government of Sweden.

## **DAY ONE: March 25, 2009**

**8:30-9:00**      **Registration**

**9:00 - 0945**    **Opening**

**Chair:** *Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo, OIC/ACGS*

**Rapporteur:** *Adrian Gauci, ECA*

- Welcome remarks by ECA – *Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo, OIC/ACGS*
- Remarks by Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia, *H.E. Jens Odlander*
- Opening Address by the Deputy Executive Secretary, ECA, *Mme Lalla Ben Barka*

**9:45-9:50**      **Brief Recess**

**0950 – 1030**    **Setting the stage**

**Chair:**            *Mr. Getachew Adam, Ministry of Finance, Ethiopia*

**Rapporteur:** *Oumar Diallo/Selamawit Mussie*

This introductory session will present the task brief and provide guidance for the discussions that will follow in the other sessions.

**Presenter:**    *Kasirim NWUKE, “Is there a case for widespread introduction of social protection in Africa?”*

**0945-1015:**    **Discussion**

**10:15-10:45**    **Coffee break**

### **Session 1**

**11:00 - 12:00**    **Examining the African Experience with Social Protection**

**Chair:**            *M. John Kitungwa Ngoy Amury, Democratic Republic of Congo*

**Rapporteur:** *Mr. Adrian Gauci, ECA*

Taken for granted in most industrialized countries, social protection is rapidly gaining support in many poor countries, including in Africa. This Session will explore and interrogate the African experience so far with social protection and social transfers with the aim of drawing lessons. The experience will be examined

in the context major UN Summits including the Copenhagen World Summit on Social Development, the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development as well African Union Social Policy Framework, including the Livingstone Plan of Action and the Outcome of the inaugural conference of the African Union Ministers responsible for social development all of which urge countries to integrate social protection in their national development strategies and development plans. Among the issues to be examined are the following:

- i. What are the common social protection instruments in Africa?
- ii. What has been the experience with respect to funding and sustainability?
- iii. What contribution has social protection made towards protecting the poor?
- iv. What areas require further action

**Presenters:**

- *Ms Rahim, African Union Commission:* “Social Policy Framework for Africa.”
- *ECA* “Social Protection in Africa – Examining the Experience so far”

**Discussion**

**Session 2**

**12:00 - 13:00 Lessons for Africa of the Experience of other countries**

**Chair:** *Mr. Tharcisse Nkanagu, UN ILO*

**Reporteur:** *Elizabeth Woldemariam and Sandra Zawedde, ECA*

Social protection is a common anti-poverty instrument in many developed countries. Some social protection instruments like transfers such as unemployment insurance rise when incomes fall. Many developed countries have universal health coverage for health care. Some provide outright grants to the poor. This Session will therefore examine the experience of non-African countries to identify what lessons they have for Africa as the region expands the adoption and implementation of social protection policies and programmes. The session will be based on invited presentations from:

**Presenters:**

- Sweden – *Göran Hölmqvist, Nördiska Africa Institute*
- United Kingdom – *Mike McCarthy, DFID*
- Norway
- Ireland

**Discussion**

**13:00-14:30 Lunch Break**

### Session 3

#### **14:30-16:30 The Global Financial and economic crisis: what impact on social policy**

**Chair:** Dr. Akim Mturi, OSSREA  
**Presenter:** Kasirim Nwuke, and Susanna Wolf, ECA  
**Rapporteur:** Oumar Diallo/ECA

*The adverse consequences of the global financial and economic crisis are beginning to be felt across African countries. In a number of countries, the continued provision of important social services is under threat. In many others, the scope for expanding social protection has been extinguished. The crisis raises questions as to whether or not this is an appropriate time for African countries to begin to introduce social protection and safety measures.*

#### **Discussion**

**16:30-16:45** Coffee break

**16:45-17:30** Wrap-up of Day One discussions

This Session will explore the research implications of the day's discussions. It will be an open debate on the issues raised and their impact on the scope for the application of social protection as an additional instrument for achieving

**Chair:** Kasirim Nwuke, ECA  
**Presenter:** Dr. Damiano Manda, AERC  
**Rapporteurs:** Elizabeth Woldemariam/Adrian Gauci

### **DAY TWO: March 26, 2009**

*The second day of the Consultative meeting will explore possible research areas. Three broad areas are proposed for discussion: Minimum wage and old age pension; social transfers; and social safety nets. The sessions will be largely informal, with the Chair opening up the debate with a few introductory remarks and inviting participants to consider the feasibility of research in the area.*

### Session 4

**09:00:10:30** Minimum wage and old age pension

**Chair:** Mr. Omar Diop, AU Commission  
**Rapporteur:** Mr. Adrian Gauci, ECA

*According to the UN ILO, less than 52% of Africans in full-time employment earn more than \$1.00/day. This means that a majority of African workers are very vulnerable to income shocks. The global financial crisis and rising inflation in many countries are likely to push many workers into poverty. Minimum wage laws can help to attenuate this vulnerability. However, the scope for minimum wages as an anti-poverty instrument in Africa is still poorly understood.*

**Presenter:** *Kwabia Boateng, ECA – “How feasible is minimum wage as social protection in Africa?”*

*Sangheon Lee, ILO: “Minimum wage and Social Protection: Towards Policy Coherence”*

**09:30-10:30** Discussion

**10:30-11:00** Coffee Break

### **Session 5**

**1100 – 1300** **Social safety nets – The Role of Non-governmental Actors and Faith-based Organizations**

**Chair:** *Mr. Shane Lennon, Catholic Relief Services*

**Rapporteur:** *Ms. Elizabeth Woldemariam and Selamawit Mussie /ECA*

Social protection is not confined to the state alone. Non-governmental actors play an immense role in protecting the poor in several African countries. In countries like Kenya, Zambia, and Malawi for example, non-governmental actors provide the bulk of health services and health care in rural areas, often at very subsidized prices. NGOs such as Oxfam and CRS are also increasingly introducing elements of social protection into their programmes. Oxfam, for example, began in 2005-2006 to implement cash transfer as an alternative to emergency food aid in Malawi and Zambia. This Session will examine the magnitude and types of social protection provided by non-governmental actors and interrogate the experience emerging from it and debate the scope for scale of these measures.

**Presenters:** *Mr. Shane Lennon, Catholic Relief Services*

*Sophie Mosko, Save the Children, UK*

*Ms. Nkonzi, HelpAge International*

**11:30-13:00** Discussion

**13:00-14:30** Lunch Break

## Session 6

### **1430-1630 Social Protection – Is there a role for ODA and Multilateral finance institutions?**

**Chair:** *Mr. Mike McCarthy, UK DFID*

**Rapporteur:** *Adrian Gauci/Oumar Diallo, ECA*

Africa's development partners have and are playing a critical role in the rapid adoption of social protection measures in the region. The UK government Africa Commission concluded that pre-emptive social protection in Africa would cost between \$5-6 bln per annum and argued that it is more cost effective for donors to meet this cost than responding during emergencies. Through their funding programmes and advocacy, the financing argument against social protection measures is relaxing. In this session, participants will explore the issues of the sustainability of donor financed and donor driven social protection and their likely incentive effects.

**Presenters:** *Hailu Mekonnen, African Development Bank*  
Norway  
Ireland  
Sweden

### **Discussion**

**16:30-16:45** Coffee Break

## Session 7

### **16:45-17:15 Wrap-Up – Towards the promotion of social protection as an additional instrument for accelerating progress the MDGs – what areas for research?**

*This session will summarize the outcomes of the discussions and present for approval the agreed broad areas of research and specific topics for investigation.*

**Chair:** *Representative of Nigeria*

**Presenter:** *Kasirim Nwuke, ECA*

**Rapporteurs:** *Oumar Diallo and Adrian Gauci/ECA*

### **1715 – 1730 Closing Remarks**

- *Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo, OIC/ACGS*
- Representative of the Embassy of Sweden
- Closing remarks - *Abdalla Hamdok, Director, NEPAD & Regional Integration Division, ECA*

