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**EXPERTS CONSULTATION MEETING ON CHILDREN AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA
28-30 APRIL 2014
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**

THEME:

***“CHILDREN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS: BUILDING THE
AFRICAN AGENDA”***

REPORT

**REPORT OF THE EXPERTS CONSULTATION MEETING
ON CHILDREN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA
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INTRODUCTION

1. The Experts' Consultation Meeting on Children and Social Protection Systems in Africa was held at the Lord Charles Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa, from 28 – 30 April 2014. The meeting was convened to consider the state of evidence, lessons from implementation, scaling-up and integration of social protection systems in Africa.
2. The Experts' Consultation Meeting also discussed achievements on social protection in Africa, defined and identified opportunities and strategies for scaling-up, broadening the coverage and embedding sustainable social protection systems within the national policy structure of countries across Africa; as well as seeking political commitments on the expansion of social protection programmes geared at improving development and child outcomes in Africa. The Theme of the Conference was ***“Children and Social Protection Systems: Building the African Agenda.”***

ATTENDANCE

3. The Experts' Consultation Meeting was attended by delegates from the following AU Member States: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Seychelles, South Africa, the Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.
4. A large number of UN Agencies, Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations and Cooperating Partners also participated in the meeting. The following agencies were represented: Advocacy Aid, Advisory Committee on future payment system for Social Grants (SA Government), African Platform for Social Protection, African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, African Child Policy Forum, African Institute on Health, American Institute for Research, CREAD Research Centre on Economics, Economic Policy Research Institute, European Union, FOA, GIZ, ILO, Impact Research International, International Policy Centre on Inclusive Growth, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland, National Partnership for Children, Ghana, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, Oxford Policy Management Regional Inter-Agency Team for Children and AIDS, Save the Children, Studies in Poverty and Inequality, UNDP, UNAIDS, UNICEF, Universities: Cape Town, Malawi, Johannesburg, Sierra Leone, UNISA, Witwatersrand, Zambia, and UCT Children's Institute.

OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY

5. The opening ceremony commenced with the singing of the African Union (AU) Anthem and the National Anthem of the host, the Republic of South Africa by learners from a nearby school. This was followed by testimonies of two child-headed households from Langa in Cape Town and from Umsinga in Kwazulu Natal, South Africa, who were the beneficiaries of the South African social grants programmes.
6. In his opening statement, Mr Jeffery O'Malley, Director, Division of Policy and Strategy, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reminded the meeting that the right to social protection ensures that children living in poverty today do not have to continue in poverty as adults in the future. He emphasised that social protection for children is also an economic development strategy in that human capital is being secured for development. Mr O'Malley recognised that African countries have led the way in developing 'home grown' models of social protection which were responding to specific vulnerabilities and social and political realities.
7. In his opening address, His Excellency Dr Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, Commissioner for Social Affairs, African Union Commission, pointed out that investment in children goes a long way in addressing issues of health and nutrition, education, the breaking down of social barriers. He emphasised that African Union initiatives such as the Campaign against Hunger in Africa, the Social Protection Plan for Informal Economy and Rural Workers, and the Campaign on Ending Child Marriage were all addressing the welfare of children while enhancing their rights for a splendid future. Commissioner further stressed that AU Agenda 2063 denotes the meaningful and sustainable management of Africa's resources and the well-being of its people, especially children, youth and women.
8. In her keynote address, Honourable Mrs Bathabile Olive Dlamini, Minister of Social Development of the Republic of South Africa, recalled that the Experts' Consultation Meeting was a precursor to the Forth Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Social Development which is going to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 26 – 30 May 2014. She emphasised the importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD) as seen in South Africa and many other African countries. In conclusion she paraphrased the words of the first President of the independent Republic of Ghana, Honourable Kwame Nkrumah, **"I am not African because I was born in Africa, but because Africa was born in me."**

WELCOMING AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

9. Amb. Olawale Maiyegun, Director for Social Affairs, African Union Commission in his welcoming remarks mentioned that he hoped the Member States at the Experts' Consultation Meeting on Children and Social Protection Systems in Africa will carry forward shared commitments to make Africa a better place for

children. He added that there needs to be a synergy between social protection and child protection services as the core of the Post 2015 Development Agenda, addressing it from a holistic and multi sectorial approach.

10. In her welcoming remarks, Ms Nelisiwe Vilakazi, Deputy Director General, Strategy and Governance, Department of Social Development, Republic of South Africa, welcomed the participants to Cape Town. She presented a brief overview of the social grants programmes in South Africa and stressed the importance of sharing of best practices.

AGENDA ITEM 1: PROCEDURAL MATTERS

a) Adoption of the Programme of Work

11. The meeting adopted the programme of work that consisted of ten (10) proposed items without amendments.

AGENDA ITEM 2: PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING RIGHTS-BASED SOCIAL PROTECTION IN AFRICA

12. A brief presentation by the representative of the African Union Commission, Department of Social Affairs focussed on the AU policy instruments on social protection such as AU Social Policy Framework and the Social Protection on Informal and Rural Workers (SPIREWORK) which is a framework intended for Member States to guide them and adapt according to their own local situations in order to protect and develop workers in the informal and rural sector. The three main objectives of SPIREWORK are, to:
- Provide affordable health care including through community-based health insurance schemes and strengthening viability of existing schemes;
 - Provide occupational safety and health coverage to vulnerable workers especially in agriculture and the informal economy;
 - Encourage and support the development of micro-insurance and innovative decentralized social security schemes to provide social protection through community or group support.
13. In her presentation **Dr Agnes Akosua Aidoo**, from the National Partnership for Children, Ghana, mentioned that social protection is both a human right and sound economic policy. It should be part of the priorities and contribute positively and progressively to the socioeconomic transformation of Africa envisaged in the AU's **Agenda 2063: The Future We Want for Africa**. Dr Aidoo highlighted three of the major broad challenges regarding social protection provisions for Africa's children, as: i) the demographic challenge; ii) challenges to the rights of children to life, survival, development, protection and participation; and iii) limited fiscal space for action. The presenter concluded that the overwhelming number and percentage of children in the total population and their heavy weight of dependency on families, households and communities makes it imperative to

consider children as major constituents of development and to put them at the centre of the development agenda.

14. **Professor Vivienne Taylor**, Head of the Department of Social Development, University of Cape Town, South Africa, noted that countries in Africa that have introduced social protection programmes, point to the protective, the generative and developmental functions of these programmes. Compelling research findings on government led social protection programmes indicates that countries with strong social protection programmes are better able to withstand economic and human insecurity. A “mix” of these interventions is required, addressing the dimensions of decent waged work, literacy (schooling) and health (life expectancy, infant and maternal mortality). Prof Taylor also alluded to the multiplier effect of cash transfers, in terms of local cash circulation and concluded that a ‘pro-rights’ approach, a vision for reform, based on the principle of social solidarity is necessary for the African agenda regarding social protection systems for children.

AGENDA ITEM 3: CONSIDERATION OF COUNTRY EXPERIENCES IN SOCIAL PROTECTION ACROSS AFRICA: EVIDENCE ON IMPACTS, FINANCING, SCALING UP AND IMPLEMENTATION

15. The Representative of the Republic of Kenya, **Ms Winnie Mwasianji**, National Coordinator, Social Protection Secretariat: Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children: Achievements, Key Lessons and Move Towards a National Social Protection System, presented an overview of social protection measures for children in Kenya. It was noted that there are 5 government lead cash transfer programmes aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability. Other social protection measures for children are free primary education, subsidising of secondary school and university students and availing of bursaries, and waivers for health care. Evidence shows, among others that SP measures improved the retention and transition of children in schools. The lessons learned from the Kenyan SP experience are contained in the recommendations of the meeting.

16. **Mr Lawrence Ofori** – Addo, Deputy Director, Social Protection, Department of Social Welfare representing Ghana made a presentation on the evaluation of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) in Ghana: Achievements, Key Lessons and Way Forward. LEAP is a cash transfer programme for the poorest families in Ghana. The evaluation highlighted the positive impacts on education, health, basic food needs, production and on the local economy. The challenges of the programme, as well as lessons learned are contained among the Recommendations of the meeting.

17. **Mr Brenton Van Vrede**, Chief Director, Social Assistance, Department of Social Development, South Africa, presented on the Child Support Grant in South Africa: Achievements, Key Lessons and Way Forward. A brief case study on the South African Child Support Grant was presented, illustrating the strategy used by SA for implementing a major cash transfer program targeted at children with limited financial and other resources; and growing this progressively as the economy of the country

grew. Significant impacts of this programme on both human capital development and economic development were highlighted, specifically its impact against mitigating poverty and inequality. Key issues raised:

- Government action / or inaction influences market forces and the consequent prevailing levels of poverty and inequality in the country
- Social transfers are affordable in formalised growing economies. The level of the transfer however depends on the current state of the economy
- There is a plethora of local and international evidences espousing the benefits of cash transfers to poor households, and even more so those with children.

The lessons learnt from the CSG programme of South Africa were incorporated in recommendations of the meeting.

18. The following points and recommendations were made during the discussions:

- There is need to uplift persons living in absolute poverty, they need support to be able to access services offered by Governments;
- Effective integrated approaches to Social Protection programmes is important such as health, education, persons with disabilities, etc;
- A rights based approach towards social protection affirms the need to promote human dignity and create opportunities for beneficiaries to develop and realise their full potential;
- Through provision of rights, Governments are held accountable and responsible to citizens and mechanisms to enforce and translate the policies and legislation into action;
- Fiscal constraints have often been used as an excuse by Governments to inaction, hence political will is necessary to ensure that resources are allocated for the wellbeing of citizens;
- Equality is strongly tied to economic growth;
- It is important to determine whether Governments see social protection as an investment or as a drain on resources, and also for the leadership of countries to consider research and evidence which confirms the positive outcomes of social protection programmes to influence policy-making;
- Advocacy and awareness raising at higher levels of Governments is important, and civil society and other stakeholders can assist in setting values for social protection and justify not only expenditure on people but also the investment effect and the consequent expanded capacity of beneficiaries.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF COUNTRY EXPERIENCES IN SOCIAL PROTECTION ACROSS AFRICA: EVIDENCE ON IMPACTS, FINANCING SCALING – UP AND IMPLEMENTATION

19. The meeting divided into three Commissions for the Consideration of Country Experiences in Social Protection Across Africa: Evidence on Impacts, Financing Scaling – Up and Implementation

Commission 1: Impacts and Results for Children

20. Commission 1 considered the country experiences of the following countries: and adopted the Report of the Liberia, Kenya, Tunisia and South Africa and took note of the following:

Liberia:

- That the Liberia Social Cash Transfer Programme is co-sponsored by the Government of Liberia and UNICEF;
- Evaluations are carried out using quantitative household surveys, focus group discussions and interviews

Kenya:

- The Government of Kenya Cash Transfer Programme for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) are implemented by the Government with support of UNICEF, World Bank and DIFD;
- It targets ultra-poor households with OVCs; and
- Impact Evaluation was conducted between 2007 and 2012.

South Africa:

- The provision of social protection, the Child Support Grant (CSG) is enshrined in the country's constitution;
- As at March 2014, there were 11 million children on the CSG; and
- A Survey of Children, Adolescents and their Households was carried out in the Provinces of the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Kwazulu Natal, western Cape and Limpopo.

Tunisia:

- The Government Tunisia carried out an evaluation and the results will be released in May 2014; and
- The survey involved mixed interviews with stakeholders, analysis of beneficiary records, census data, multi-cluster indicator surveys and a household budget and consumption survey.

The following observations were made regarding the impact of the social protection programmes in the countries concerned:

- **Health:** there were significant improvements in uptake of health services.
- **Education:** school enrolments and retention improved, coupled with improvements on grade attainments, especially for girls.
- **Wealth and Economic Gains:** there were improved perceptions of wealth, with the large proportion of wealth spent on local economies and reports of future savings, asset bases built, including starting of small businesses.
- **Poverty and Inequality:** there were reduction in poverty rates, Civil and Birth Registrations were reported to have increased, child labour was reduced and the grants impacted on adolescent behaviour by protecting them against sexual exploitation, drug use and substance abuse.

The following were the challenges and questions:

- Problems of identification, inclusion and exclusion;
- Targeting may exclude other vulnerable children; and
- Management of information.

The lessons learnt include the following:

- The size and value of grants;
- The need to adjust the value of cash transfers;
- The impact of cash transfers beyond the original objectives; and
- Recognition that impacts may be different from one country to another.

Commission 2: Lessons on Design and Implementation

21. Commission 2 considered the country experiences of the following countries: Algeria, Ethiopia, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

The following were the observations on Lessons on Design and Implementation:

Ethiopia:

- The National Programme for Public Health (PNSP) is a reform programme based upon a multi-partners' approach to provide food and monetary transfers to households through the use of a unified and harmonised database.

Malawi:

- A multi-actor programme based upon an enhanced consultation with stakeholders (beneficiaries, communities, civil society, technical and financial partners);
- At operational level, participation is by local authorities, beneficiaries, and social workers organised according zones;
- The programme targets orphans, households, the elderly and persons with disabilities; and
- The community is consulted regarding means testing, monetary transfers, their periodicity, and beneficiary identification system.

Algeria:

- Social protection (non-contributory services) is contained in all legal acts as an inalienable right.

Zimbabwe:

- Social transfers represent a doorway for the implementation of other different multi-sectorial programmes such as education, health, agriculture etc.;
- Data is collected which favours the assessment of vulnerability, efficient identification of beneficiaries, and the choice of appropriate services for each target;
- Actors from the base to the summit are put into perspective by enhancing the management structures, evaluation and follow-up;
- The Management Information System (MIS) is an integrated system where other stakeholders can easily mine data for the purpose of providing services.

The lessons learnt from four country presentations include the following:

- Tangible results have been achieved on school attendance and the health of the mother, and financing (fiscal capacity of local budgets) and length of the programmes in order to avoid relapses of the beneficiaries in the poverty cycle;
- Fallibility of the targeting systems (legislation and/or regulation, eligibility criteria, identification system and technical support);
- Roles and responsibilities of the local communities and social workers in the protection systems (identification of beneficiaries, portfolio management, follow-up and evaluation);
- Notion of contributory services and non-contributory services;
- Management of centralised and unified database: updating and refreshing the database;
- Post-procedural monitoring;
- Monetary transfers, social safety nets and dependency of the beneficiaries.

Commission 3: Financing and Scaling – Up

22. Commission 3 considered the country experiences of the following countries: Lesotho, Mauritania, Tanzania, Central Africa Republic, Senegal and Zambia.

The following were the observations on Financing and Scaling – Up:

- **Financing for social protection and scale-up:** significantly, countries are increasing the proportion of government funding towards social protection, with the aim of reaching 100% government funding in the coming years and that of partners and other role players need to be determined. Social protection is not a hand-out but an investment in people.
- **Getting programme design right is important before significant scale-up:** there is need to investigate the right transfer size and whether it should vary according to household size.
- **Targeting:** different ways in which the programmes can improve and adjust were discussed. The issue of universality was discussed as to whether it may be the way to go in order to reach social protection goals.
- **The use of technology:** this is critical in MIS, money transfers and biometric.
- **Integration and coordination:** social protection systems need to integrate cash transfers and other social protection system; establishment of clear and strong coordination structures; and coordination and rationalisation is needed to address programme fragmentation that defeats the scale-up.
- **Capacity to scale-up:** strengthening of administration and delivery mechanisms, e.g. putting robust administrative structures in place from the national to the local levels.
- **Generation of evidence:** conducting impact assessments and packaging them in an understandable manner for different stakeholders, including popularisation of the document for ease of communication.
- **Long-term sustainability:** social protection needs to be embedded in legal instruments and not be constrained in policies and/or strategies only. This will safeguard it against political and other economic intrigues.
- **Political will, including role of civil society** in advocating for social protection and its expansion.
- **Changing landscape in social protection programming:** there is need to take into account of the changing dynamics that may impact on social protection policy and programmes (endogenous and exogenous shocks).

AGENDA ITEM 4: Consideration of the AU Experts Meeting Draft Recommendations

23. Recommendations were considered (see attached)

AGENDA ITEM 4: Closing Ceremony

24. In his closing remarks, Mr George Laryea-Adjei, Deputy Representative, UNICEF, South Africa, mentioned that 30 Member States participated during the Expert

Consultation Meeting. He implored the participants that this was a rejuvenation of the journey which should ensure that social protection was part of the social policies.

25. Amb. Olawale Maiyegun, Director, Department of Social Affairs, African Union Commission, in his closing remarks assured the participants that the AU will faithfully implement its obligations. He informed the Meeting that there shall be a dialogue on the theme and outcomes during the Ministerial Meeting on the 30th May 2014 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting will also launch a programme on ending child marriages. In conclusion he appealed to all to contact their ministers to be part of the dialogue.

26. In his closing remarks, Mr Coceko Pakade, Director General, Department of Social Development, Republic of South Africa, enumerated some of the achievements of the Expert Consultation Meeting, which included the identification of social protection programmes across the continent and the identification of gaps in the provision of services. He underscored the advantage of the collection of minds in succeeding, telling good stories, asking the relevant questions as well as discussing impacts of the programmes.

27. The meeting was then adjourned.