

Social Protection Interagency Board

Terms of Reference

Background

This note outlines the objectives, composition, activities and *modus operandi* of the Social Protection Interagency Board (SPIB), established as a light, lean and agile interagency coordination mechanism – composed of representatives of international organizations and bilateral institutions – to enhance global coordination and advocacy on social protection issues and to coordinate international cooperation in country demand-driven actions.

The establishment of the Board responds to the mandate of the G20 Development Working Group that called “*the World Bank and the ILO, in consultation with other relevant international organisations that provide social protection financing and technical advisory services to developing countries, to develop before the Mexico Summit a mechanism to improve inter-agency coordination in support of country-led social protection measures, taking into account existing institutional and cross-institutional policy frameworks and coordination arrangements*” (2011 Report of the G20 DWG , paragraph 55).

The Board’s setting up will build on already existing mechanisms such as the annual Show and Tell meetings on Social Protection¹ and the UN Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) Social Protection Floor Initiative.² All efforts will be made to ensure that the Board complements existing efforts.

Objectives

The objectives of the Board will be:

- to promote social protection as a top priority at the global, regional and national development agendas;
- to discuss pragmatic approaches in advancing interagency policy coherence;
- to enhance coordination and collaboration among international institutions in providing advisory services, especially at country level, when supporting developing countries in improving their social protection systems;
- to promote the exchange of knowledge, policy experience, good practices, as well as data and information.

Composition

The Board will be chaired by the ILO and the World Bank and include representatives of IMF, UN-DESA, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, Regional Development Banks, Regional Economic Commissions, other relevant international organizations and, as appropriate, bilateral institutions from G20 and non G20 countries working internationally at country level on social protection advocacy, financing and/or technical advice. Social partners and other organizations, including large NGOs with a major work program in social protection, will be invited as observers.

Activities

The Board will promote global advocacy activities and initiatives and advise on the implementation of joint activities to support knowledge-generation and help meeting country demands for social protection systems. This could include the following:

- Evidence-based advocacy on “what works”;

¹ The annual meetings have been convened by the ILO and the World Bank since 2006 as an open space for international organizations, some bilateral development agencies and NGOs involved in social protection issues, to exchange information about ongoing projects and planned future activities.

² The SPF initiative was created in 2009 as one of the nine UN-wide joint initiatives to support countries to cope with the effects of the economic crisis and accelerate recovery. It is led by the ILO, in collaboration with the WHO, and combines efforts of a range of UN agencies, international financial institutions, bilateral agencies and NGOs that cooperate and coordinate efforts in supporting the implementation of social protection floors.

- A research agenda to fill needed knowledge gaps;
- Monitoring global developments on social protection; and
- Knowledge sharing and capacity building (including “South-South” transfers)
- At the request of country governments, multi-agency advisory and technical assistance work in pilot countries, with ad hoc task forces established to address specific concerns as appropriate.

Functioning

It is proposed that the Board could be assisted by a small, professional executive secretariat. This might build on the secretariat of the Social Protection Floor Initiative and could be entrusted with maintaining partnerships between the participating organisations, the preparation and organisation of board meetings, as well as supporting and monitoring the implementation of commonly agreed actions.

The Board would meet at least once a year. A key activity will be to continue the discussion forum modeled on the existing “Show and Tell” mechanism, to showcase and discuss trends and work plans in the different social protection agendas of international organizations and development partners, in order to provide a platform on which to build coordination and collaboration.

Ad hoc country-specific coordination mechanisms could be created if requested by countries, adjusted or scaled up within country-level coordination structures to implement eventual demand-driven joint social protection projects.

The social protection knowledge sharing platform, as requested by the G20, will support the activities of the Social Protection Interagency Board to the extent possible. The platform, designed to enhance the sharing of knowledge among a broad spectrum of users including agencies, governments, academia and NGOs, will broaden the reach of activities of the Board while also facilitating collaboration between agencies themselves.

Reporting

The activities of the Board will be shared and coordinated with, and inform discussions of, the UN CEB High Level Committee of Programme, the office of the UN Secretary General, the World Bank/IMF Development Committee and the G20 Development Working Group.

Funding

Every agency should bear the cost of its own participation in the Board. Specific co-funding arrangements and additional fund raising could be done on a case-by-case basis, according to the activity. In order to guarantee an expeditious start of inter agency operations, the ILO can provide initial funding to maintain the core of the secretariat for the first two years. Further interagency collaboration, including the secondment of staff members and ancillary costs, could also be envisaged. A sustainable long-term financing of the secretariat, if deemed necessary, would need to be agreed upon between the ILO, the World Bank, participating international organizations and possible donors.

Assessing progress

After 2 years of functioning, the ILO and the WB will assess the progress in the implementation and effectiveness of the Board.