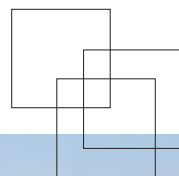




International
Labour
Office

Towards the right to work

**A GUIDEBOOK FOR DESIGNING INNOVATIVE
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES**



Guidance note 7-2 **PEPs and the Social sector: Tackling social Challenges**

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Guidance note 7-2

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Guidance note 7-2

PEPs and the Social Sector: Tackling Social Challenges



Objective

The objective of this module is to expose policy-makers and practitioners to the opportunities to include work in the social sector within the spectrum of work undertaken in public employment programmes¹ (PEP), to examine the kinds of work being undertaken in the social sector, and the particular policy and practical issues these raise. It will also explore the ways in which PEPs are being used to tackle a range of social challenges as part of wider strategies of social development, and some of the innovations in work undertaken that has arisen from using participatory community involvement in the identification and prioritization of work.

Introduction

In many countries, there are a wide range of unmet needs for social services, from healthcare to education, from care of the aged to youth recreation. Existing gaps have often been exacerbated by cuts in social spending.

At one end of the spectrum of 'work' in the social sector are formal, recognized forms of employment – such as nurses, teachers and social workers, often (but not always) employed in the public sector. In many contexts, the demand for social services exceeds the supply of such formal services, and these have had to be supplemented with various forms of auxiliary services. In the face of an Aids crisis in many parts of Africa, for example, a need for extensive home-based care services has arisen, as well as a need to care for orphans and vulnerable children. Many societies have relied on a combination of donor or welfare funding and volunteerism to address such social crises and the associated service delivery gaps; they have often also relied on expanding the scope of unpaid care work, both inside the home and beyond it: drawing on the traditional role of women as caregivers to fill this social need.

The blurred boundaries between what is recognized as 'work' and what is instead seen as the unpaid responsibility of caring members of the community can mean that opportunities to create work at scale in the social

¹ M. Lieuw-Kie-Song; K. Philip; M. Tsukamoto; M. Van Imschoot: Towards the right to work: Innovations in public employment programmes (IPEP), ILO Employment Working Paper No. 69 (Geneva, International Labour Organization, 2011).

sector are missed, along with the opportunity to enable greater participation of women in PEPs, and to place a monetary value on unpaid work they may have been doing – and the skills associated with it.

Yet work in this sector raises its own specific set of challenges. In care work, the ‘care’ dimension is intrinsic to the task, and requires particular capacities and sensitivities. Care of orphans, for example, involves building relationships with children in ways that create support structures and continuity in their lives. All forms of care involve engagement with people who are vulnerable, and extra care has to be taken to ensure that abuse of this vulnerability is not inadvertently enabled. At the same time, the care-givers are seldom unaffected by the human tragedies to which such work may expose them. In addition to equipping them with appropriate skills to deal with this, care-givers may also need forms of emotional support and counseling.

While care work constitutes a significant part of work in the social sector, public employment is also being used as an instrument to respond to a much wider range of social policy issues. Innovation in this area has arisen largely in response to participatory processes in which communities assist in the identification and prioritization of the work to be done. In this context, the discussion often turns to explore how work in PEPs could address the social challenges being confronted in communities: including alcoholism, violence against women, illiteracy and teenage pregnancy. While these are not the traditional focus of public employment programmes, innovation at community level has seen creative response strategies, ranging from youth recreation, community safety initiatives, the development of green spaces and public art, the organization of sports leagues, support to schools, awareness-raising campaigns and many other activities.

Work in the social sector is also characterized by very high labour intensity ratios: up to 65% and possibly even higher. In addition to the advantages of its social multipliers, this also makes it a highly cost-effective sectoral focus.

In the past, some programmes like the Promotion Nationale (PN) in Morocco – launched in 1961 - worked at the boundary of PEPs and public service. It is the PEP with the longest record in Africa funded by national resources with annual allocations sent to provinces. In 1977, temporary jobs in public services were created in urban areas to combat unemployment challenges (*emplois d’opportunité occasionelle* – EOO). The initial budget for these jobs was set at 10% of the PN budget but grew gradually to 50% in 1996. Most jobs were taken up by the poorest strata of the population, especially unskilled women working as cleaning personnel in local hospitals, doing secretarial work in government offices, etc.

In practice and more recently, most of the innovation in social sector PEPs is happening in South Africa; few other countries have integrated social sector work into their public employment agendas to the same extent. In South Africa, this takes place through two mechanisms: through the Social

Sector of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), which is now the second largest component of EPWP after Infrastructure; and through the Community Work Programme (CWP). The CWP is a relatively new component of EPWP that complements the sectoral programmes with an area-based programme in which communities participate in identifying work that needs to be done to improve the quality of their lives. This leads to a multi-sectoral spectrum of work within each site. Within this context, work in the social sector – and work that addresses social challenges – has emerged as a strong component of the work menu.



Types of Work in the Social Sector²

Work in Community Care

Home-based care has become an important part of South Africa's EPWP, both through its Social Sector and also within the Community Work Programme, as a response to local priorities set by communities.

While the need for home-based care was first identified in the context of the HIV/Aids epidemic and the high prevalence of TB, it has become clear that there are serious deficits of other forms of care also; in particular, for elderly people without adequate social support – even if they are receiving an old-age pension – and also for the growing number of orphans and vulnerable children.

Home-based care includes a range of forms of work. Depending on the level of care available within the household, this can include cleaning the person in need of care, changing bedclothes, cleaning the house and yard, house maintenance, washing clothes and linen, cooking, feeding the patient, facilitating the link to social and/or health services, as well as providing labour to a household vegetable garden.

For child-headed households, it may also include relieving the older child of household chores and care of younger children, to enable them to go to school, to do homework – and to participate in sports and recreation activities – enabling them to access moments of 'childhood' also.

While much of the work is unskilled, home-based care workers are often confronted with situations that require basic medical skills. Training is crucial for these workers, and can provide a career path into more formal employment in the health sector.

This form of work also requires informed oversight and supervision, because there are risks of abuse of vulnerable children – and also of vulnerable adults. In the face of these risks, continuity of care has to be kept in balance with the need for a multiplicity of care relationships in order to limit the

² Summarised from Philip 2012.



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scope for abuse. Ensuring quality of care requires close links to relevant social services and health systems, with mechanisms to set minimum standards and provide quality assurance.

In South Africa, the oversight of this work is often contracted to NGOs that already have competencies in this area. This contributes to the sustainability of civil society, at the same time as ensuring that the work is undertaken within an institutional framework geared to the specific requirements of such work.

Support to Early Childhood Development Centres

Support to ECD Centres takes a range of forms. In Social Sector EPWP, the focus has been primarily on offering training to existing staff in ECD Centres, to raise the quality of care, but options for placing workers in ECD centres are also being explored. In the CWP, the support needs of ECD are identified through consultation processes, and typically involve auxiliary work in support of existing staff, that can include support to play activities, reading stories to the children, and assistance with chores such as cleaning and cooking.

Lima Development, a CWP Implementing Agent, sees their role as one of establishing safe environments for children to play in and develop through play. The idea is to establish “safe play hubs” within the communities where children can learn and develop their potential as fully as possible.

Not all the work performed is ‘social sector’ work even if it serves a social purpose; nor does it necessarily involve direct care of children, even if the outcomes of the work enhance the quality of that care.

So, for example, a strong focus of support to ECD centres involves creating and maintaining food gardens. The work can also include landscaping services, repairs and maintenance to buildings, and construction of toilets.

Implementing Agent Lima Development has also involved disabled CWP participants in making toys for ECD centres, transforming wood off-cuts into educational toys, shaping them into squares, circles and triangles and painting them with non-toxic dyes, and the CWP has also helped erect jungle gyms at ECD Centres:

A lot of thought goes into making a good jungle gym. Our jungle gyms are constructed in such a way that each part helps the child to develop a certain aspect of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, for example ‘balancing on the bridge’, ‘climbing the net’, ‘hand-over-hand swinging’, and so on. (TIPS Case Study Series 2011a)

Support to Schools

In many communities, the state of education is a concern. In discussion with school governing bodies and principals, a range of forms of support needs have been identified. While this excludes teaching functions, the support provided nevertheless strengthens the learning environment at the schools. The list of potential activities below is drawn from CWP Implementing Agency Seriti Institute, and illustrates the potential spectrum of work:

- Scholar patrols to see children to and from school safely (across streets, and at violence ‘hot spots’);
- Repair of fences, and security patrols at break, to prevent drug dealing;
- Maintenance and repairs of buildings, and cleaning of premises (costs of paint and cleaning materials are covered by the school, while labour is supplied by CWP);
- Cleaning of grounds;
- Daily cleaning of toilets;
- Organising and overseeing homework classes in the afternoon;
- Helping organise sports activities after school;
- Providing teacher aides, where class sizes are big;

- 
- Establishing and maintaining vegetable gardens, planting trees and landscaping school grounds;
 - Organising recycling at school with school's own refuse, and use this to also raise awareness of the issue among households of learners;
 - Feeding schemes: where schools are nodes of care for support of vulnerable children;
 - Creating or maintaining sports and play facilities;
 - Helping maintain schools as alcohol free zones and weapons free zones; and
 - Responding to other requests from the School Governing Board through the principal.

Schools provide an existing institutional framework, which can, under the right circumstances, provide a ready platform for the absorption of schools assistants, allowing for relatively rapid rollout that can significantly enhancing the learning environment.

Critical design issues include the management and supervision arrangements, which need to ensure that the programme reduces the overall burden on school staff rather than solely creating additional ones. In addition, interaction between schools assistants and school pupils needs to be managed in ways that address risks of abuse in a context in which the school has a duty of care of pupils.

While some of the work is unskilled, there is also scope to integrate more skilled work into the schools programme, including administrative and Computer-based work. Participation in the schools programme can also be ring-fenced for those that have passed their school-leaving certificate, and designed to support a career path into further studies in education.

Community safety

In the context of community consultation on local priorities, the issue of community safety has often arisen, in relation to the incidence of crime and violence, including domestic violence and violence against women and children.

In different contexts, communities have come up with creative ways of addressing community safety needs. These range from cutting the long grass and bushes adjacent to pathways used by women and children, posting street guards at known rape hotspots or areas of vulnerability in the community, as well as partnering with the police in the establishment of community policing forums and associated activities. The risks of

community policing activities enabling forms of vigilantism are off-set by formal partnerships, and by the fact that this work is integrated into a wider menu of activities.

In Manenberg, in Cape Town, CWP transformed a dumping site that was a crime hotspot into a recreational community park now referred to as a 'peace garden'. In Bokfontein, a disused quarry in which two children had drowned was filled in and similarly converted into a public recreational space.

For poor communities, breaking the cycle of criminality is also a challenge. Manenberg, in the Western Cape, is notorious for its gang wars and drugs. An initiative to try to break the cycle of criminality was taken, using the CWP to reintegrate prisoners back into the community when they come out of jail, in a partnership with the Department of Correctional Services. (TIPS Case Study Series 2011b).



Recreation, arts and culture

Recreation, art and cultural activities also contribute to community safety, by keeping young people out of trouble, as well as by creating attractive public spaces and parks, and by planting and maintaining shade trees and fruit trees.

Apart from the more predictable emphasis on the material infrastructure of the community – a road, piped water – the Bokfontein community values a pleasant public space. Their new road is lined with young trees that will provide shade and soften the harsh impression made by the broken stone and glaring heat of the road surface. The new park provides a wide green space for a marginal and impoverished community 'to enjoy nature', in Mohlala's words, like any other more prosperous community. (Langa and Von Holdt 2010).

Another strategy for transforming people's living environment is through public art, with murals and mosaics painted on vacant walls, at taxi ranks, schools and other public facilities.

Food security

Although work in food security is not social sector work, food security is such a vital part of work in the social sector that it is touched on here, with support to the establishment and/or maintenance of food gardens an integral part of support to clinics, schools, and early childhood development centres, as well as to vulnerable households that are labour-stressed and unable to maintain basic levels of food security.

Food security interventions can have high impacts on child nutrition, school performance and on the severest forms of poverty.

Clerical, research and ‘desk-work’

It is often assumed that work in PEPs must be unskilled, but this doesn't have to be the case. Within many of the forms of social sector work described above, there are opportunities for more skilled services, for administrative work, filing, and also for work that makes use of information technology skills, such as data capture.

There are also opportunities to use participants in PEPs to undertake social surveys, using cell-phone enabled data capture methodologies, for example, and to assist with the GIS mapping of programme outcomes and outputs, as has been piloted in the CWP.

These types of opportunities have the potential to attract youth – particularly where the use of IT is involved – including more semi-skilled youth who may nevertheless be excluded from the jobs market. These forms of work also offer particularly strong scope for career-pathing as part of exit strategies.

Literacy training is another area undertaken in South Africa that requires a higher skills level but has a high social impact.

PEPs as an instrument of social development

All PEPs have a range of social multipliers, derived from the impacts of participation in work and the impacts of the incomes earned. These impacts can include impacts on social inclusion, and, through the impact at household level, on child nutrition, school attendance and other social indicators.

In the context of social sector PEPs, there is however additional potential to focus the work directly on achieving social development outcomes, with PEPs providing an instrument for the delivery of such outcomes.

This is evident in the menu of work outlined above, in which the work performed has potentially powerful – and additional – impacts on child nutrition, on improving learning environments, strengthening social institutions such as schools and clinics, enabling the social inclusion of youth not only as participants but also as part of sports and recreation activities, and tackling social challenges such as alcoholism and drug abuse.

The use of public employment as an instrument in this way has arisen most strongly where communities have been involved in the identification and prioritization of work, with the process of community consultation precipitating discussion of the social challenges they confront – and how the public employment programme can be used to address these.

This is a particular feature of the Community Work Programme in South Africa, where the work menu is defined at the local site level – within a set of criteria – rather than being predetermined by the programme. The criteria for work in CWP include that the work must have a labour intensity of 65%, and must be ‘useful work’ that contributes to the public good and/or improves the quality of life in the community.

Within the context of these criteria, communities have tended to give high priority to social sector work, and have found ways to use the programme in creative ways, to address social challenges that affect their quality of life on a daily basis.

A further feature of PEPs contribution to social development is their ability to attract and absorb the participation of women. This is in part because much of the work undertaken fits within traditional gender-based roles, which means that women may feel a level of confidence of their skills even if they have not previously participated in the labour market; it also means that their participation in such work is less likely to encounter cultural constraints in more traditional and patriarchal contexts.

This does not, however, have to mean that social sector work is not attractive to men – nor that women should only do work related to their traditional gender role. The spectrum of work can be designed to achieve a gender balance. Work in community safety, in schools support, in sports, recreation and public art all have the potential to attract the participation of men as well as women. Similarly, social sector work can be designed to attract a range of categories of youth, with scope also to include more skilled forms of work, including the use of IT – as highlighted above.



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Conclusion: Untapped Potential for PEPs in the Social Sector



The scope for innovation in the forms of work undertaken in the social sector has been illustrated; in practice, however, this remains an under-developed area of PEPs in many countries. Yet it has significant potential to contribute to a wider agenda of integrated development at the local level: with potentially significant effects on social development and on addressing challenges – and potentially on economic growth prospects also:

This is the sector where social capital is formed, the originator for all other forms of capital however we wish to define it. In a study of Italy, Robert Putnam (1993) concluded that the presence of social capital and the vibrancy of civil society is a key determinant for socio-economic development and political democracy. He even goes so far as to argue that the strength of social capital and the vibrancy of civil society is a much more reliable indicator for future economic growth. Whatever the arguments for or against it, it must be acknowledged that there is something in the social sector that holds the potential to stimulate growth and work opportunities.'

Oupa Ramachela 2005

Further reading

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-  TIPS (Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies), 2011. Case Study Series: Innovation in CWP. Produced for DCoG, Pretoria. www.tips.org.za Accessed 20 December 2011.
 - a. Early Childhood Development — Giving Children a Head Start in Life
 - b. Manenberg – Breaking the Cycle of Criminality.



Checklist

WORK IN SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES

Respond to the following questions



What is the state of social service delivery in the target area?

Are there gaps in delivery in relation to care services, health services, or other social services that lend themselves to work in PEPs?

Review the main social challenges confronted in the target area. Is there scope to use PEPs to address any of these challenges - or to augment existing programmes?

Assess the support 'infrastructure' for such programmes - will they be able to link with and get support from formal health and/or social services?

Consider what types of work might be defined as 'Useful work'

What risks are specific to social sector work and how will these be mitigated

Work that contributes to the public good, community goods or social services?

Work that ensures freedom, equity, security and dignity

Consider the labour absorption capacity of the work

Without sacrificing quality of work

Using available capacity and technical expertise

What kinds of training does social sector work require?

Consider local resource-based approaches

Methodologies of Community participation

Resources, local material, technology and capacity available

Scope to partner with and build civil society organizations

Geographic or area-based approaches (e.g. from a certain region, municipality, community, households)

Demographic approaches (e.g. by age, gender)

Level of poverty

Time availability

How to ensure that work does not displace existing jobs

How to ensure that work should not include work undertaken by public sector employees

Notes



