





## The importance of social protection curricula

Prof. Esther Schuering notes that the success of social protection is ultimately not only a matter of financing but of the work done by professionals at different levels. It is also essential that ownership of the curriculum is in local hands and that future policy guidance comes from an interdisciplinary staff who can critically evaluate different policy options. Lecturer Emily Ngandu adds that receiving social protection education locally with local case examples is important for learning.

## Experiences from Zambia and Tanzania

Curriculum development broke down to two phases. The first phase was to conduct a survey on what kinds of social protection courses and related courses are already available. To find what was lacking, the list of courses was evaluated against required professional competencies for designing, implementing and monitoring different aspects of social protection. The findings were that the necessary teaching staff already exists but MA and BA level programmes were required to cover the existing knowledge and skills gap.

The second phase was developing the curriculum itself. In Zambia, curriculum development was led by an interdisciplinary team of academics from different departments of the University of Zambia. In Tanzania, the Institute of Finance Management took leadership of a core team representing Zanzibar University, University of Arusha, University of Dar-es-Salaam, and the Institute of Social Work. The Tanzanian curriculum development process also involved ILO, the social security administrator SSRA, and stakeholder groups from the NGO and private sectors. Social protection specialist Patrick Ngwila notes that broad stakeholder inclusion ensured that multiple interests were accommodated, making the curriculum richer. Along the way the core teams of both countries exchanged information on experiences and learned from each other.

Visiting professors from Finland and Germany provided comments and technical support. The role of visiting professors was mainly to review course descriptions, learning goals and reading lists. The peer-review approach was to ensure that all important matters of curriculum development had been considered. The work of curriculum building itself was in the hands of Tanzanian and Zambian experts. ILO and Unicef helped align curriculum development with what was happening in national legislation, which helps the later implementation of policies.





## Future steps in social protection capacity development in Africa

According to the university experts involved in this project, curriculum development benefits from being done locally. Social protection curricula ultimately aim to benefit local people. A local and bottom-up design process ensures that as many local voices are heard as possible and that the curriculum is properly contextualized for local needs. Part of grounding curricula to the local context may be the incorporation of indigenous knowledge. Capacity development projects additionally need to align with other public policy needs and priorities.

Donors are encouraged to fund African research and publication projects. These projects are highly beneficial as they help cultivate local knowledge and expertise and ensure contextualized and up-to-date learning materials. Capacity would also benefit from teaching and research staff visiting between countries in the region.

High quality social protection education is a significant ongoing investment. However, Mutale Wakanuma from the institute for Social Policy points out that domestic education is essential to capacity: “For you to have enough human resource to be able to run competently you need to train quite a number of staff a number of individuals to deliver social protection. So if you are sending out big numbers it becomes much more expensive to do that and very unsustainable in the long run.”

## EU-SPS: CO-OPERATION WITH 11 COUNTRIES AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN AFRICA AND ASIA

*The EU Social Protection Systems (EU-SPS) Initiative supports national, regional and international expert institutions in 11 mainly low income countries in their efforts to develop inclusive and sustainable social protection (SP) systems.*

### **Partner countries:**

*Cambodia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Togo, Vietnam and Zambia.*

### **Funding:**

*the EU, OECD and Government of Finland.*

### **Implementation:**

*OECD Development Centre and Government of Finland’s National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). The four-year initiative was launched in 2015. Germany joined the initiative in 2016, with parallel funding through GIZ on behalf of BMZ.*

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A domestic education furthermore puts students in touch with local issues. This is particularly ensured by a curriculum development process which takes place locally. As Assistant Dean Tamara Chansa Kabali from the University of Zambia puts it: “when you are developing a curriculum, you are developing it for the local people. Having it done here means a lot more people being involved.”

*The views expressed in this briefing note reflect the lessons learned during the 4 years of the EU-SPS Programme, but they are not official positions of the partnering institutions (EU-Commission, OECD, MFA-Finland, THL).*

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