

# ACTION HUMAINE

FOR  
**FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT  
IN SENEGAL**



**International Council on Social Welfare**

**Social Protection Floor Initiative - Western Africa Workshop to strengthen the  
capacity of civil society organisations**



## **Final Report**

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## **Introduction**

The workshop was organised by the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) and the Senegalese NGO Action Humaine pour le Développement Intégré au Sénégal (AHDIS) in Dakar on 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2010. The impetus for the workshop came from the joint world conference on social welfare and development held in Hong-Kong in June 2010. The General Assembly of ICSW members adopted the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPFI) as a key part of the ICSW global programme. The nine ICSW regions (including Central and West Africa) were asked to include the SPFI as part of their social policy agenda and to involve national governments and sub-regional institutions in the conception, adoption, implementation and support of the Social Protection Floor.

Of major importance is cooperation with regional bodies including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (WAEMU) and the continental body, African Union (AU).

ICSW supports the SPFI through the conduct of regional training programmes to help national umbrella organisations in the area of social welfare to participate in national initiatives.

West Africa governments have adopted numerous reforms to manage globalisation dynamics which have an impact on politics and national programmes aimed at poverty reduction.

The Dakar workshop had two specific objectives, namely:

- ✓ To strengthen national councils in the West African region working in the area of social welfare and development and poverty reduction
- ✓ To increase the capacity of national councils in influencing government bodies at national and regional level in their provision of social programmes.

The context for social protection initiatives is the continuing financial and economic crises which are having a negative affect on social welfare, health, hunger and education

Many developing countries consider universal social security systems out of their reach. Today, more than three-quarters of the global population do not benefit from social guarantees to enable them to face life hazards. It is thus urgent to have in each country a social protection floor for persons who are fighting for survival.

The Dakar workshop's main challenge was to determine how West Africa civil society could take a lead in the Social Protection Floor Initiative as a method to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

## **The workshop process**

The West Africa Workshop to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisation to have a heightened involvement in the Social Protection Floor Initiative in their countries opened on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2010, in hotel Océan in Dakar.

This meeting, the first one of its kind in Africa, gathered participants from 15 West Africa countries. The representatives from umbrella organisations came from three linguistic areas

within the region. In addition the workshop registered the participation of member organisations of International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW). ICSW has offices in The Netherlands, Uganda and the nine regions).

The importance of the meeting was illustrated by the effective participation of ICSW Executive Director and President.

The first day of the workshop included two main parts: opening ceremony and thematic presentations.

## **Day one**

### **1. Opening ceremony**

The opening was chaired by Mr. Atou Faye, the representative of the Family Minister in Senegal.

### **2. Opening speeches**

The following spoke at the opening: ICSW President, ICSW Executive Director, WAEMU and World Food Programme representatives, the ICSW Regional President for Central and West Africa, and AHDIS NGO President. The speakers outlined the purpose of the workshop and introduced ICSW to the participants. ICSW is an international proponent of the adoption of the social protection floor at global, regional and national levels.

The speakers emphasised the following main points:

- The International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) was created in 1928. It is a network of networks accredited by UN Economic and Social Commission and holds status with the ILO.
- In Central and West Africa which is one of ICSW's nine regions, ICSW's presence and visibility has been made possible thanks to three pioneer ICSW regional presidents that included: Charles Abbey, Emmanuel Komlan Dzifanu Agbemavi, George Ahadzie and Amacodou Diouf the current regional president. Tribute was paid to their work.
- The objective of the workshop was to strengthen civil society's capacity to contribute to the realisation of a social protection floor initiative.
- Social protection is key to fighting poverty with particular emphasis on the most vulnerable people. Fighting for social justice was highlighted.
- From a regional perspective, since 2007, social protection has been part of the WAEMU agenda.

Mr. Atou Faye, who chaired the ceremony on behalf of the Minister, welcomed the participants and introduced them to the Senegalese government strategy on the social protection floor initiative. It is a long-term mechanism. The NECS project is a short-term answer to face food products price increase.



Figure 1. Podium during opening ceremony with, from left to right, Dr Bakary Siriki Koné of WAEMU , Christian Rollet (ICSW President), Atou Faye (Representing Minister in charge of the Family), Amacodou Diouf (AHDIS President/Regional President, ICSW Central and West Africa) and Denys Correll (ICSW Executive Director).

### 3. Participant expectations

In the first session participants introduced themselves outlining their work and backgrounds. There were some common attributes including:

- Determination
- Persistence
- Humanity

Participants enumerated a set number of rules and expectations of the workshop and how best to work over the three days. Some of the rules were:

- \* To proceed theme by theme so that there is time to assimilate the ideas.
- \* To emphasise and express the situation experienced by CSOs and the real constraints they face in different countries.
- \* To speak alternately and without interruption when exchanging mutual experiences.
- \* To leave better equipped to promote social protection.
- \* To take into account gender considerations.

### Thematic communications

The second part of the first day was dedicated to thematic communications that were developed sequentially through successive sessions (see agenda).

### National councils:

Participants exchanged ideas on the advantages and key elements that made a successful national council.

## 1. Advantages

As umbrella structures, participants recognised the advantages of their collaboration and in particular:

- The federated character and concentration of skills provides strength.
- An umbrella structure facilitates mobilisation of resources, dialogue with state structures and the ability to reach consensus in the interest of social development.
- A respected code of conduct between actors is better guaranteed if it is shared.
- The regular conduct of democratic processes within a council is an important element in a national council's viability and credibility.
- Government awareness of social welfare matters is heightened by national councils.
- The opportunity to have working sub-groups inside umbrella organisations.
- The ability to produce reports alternative to those produced by government.
- Umbrella organisations provide a shield for member organisations where ministries try to exert undue influence.

All these advantages were seen by participants as common to all organisations and countries represented.

In addition, national councils must have a high level understanding of society dynamics. Reference was made to an UNRISD study<sup>1</sup> which indicated power dynamics have migrated from a vertical axis towards a triangle: state, private sector and civil society. It was noted that civil society as the third side of the triangle is weak almost everywhere. The challenge to national councils is to provide a balance to the triangle of power and influence.

## 2. Key elements which characterise a national council

National councils have certain requirements that contribute to their success.

- A consensus of members is needed, including the building of consensus on issues like the components of a social protection floor.
- Good knowledge of the political and social environment and strong links with council members.
- Understanding of the nation's economy.
- The council must consult with members to determine common concerns and how they would like to engage policies.

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<sup>1</sup> Mkandawire, T. (2006) Disempowering New Democracies and the Persistence of Poverty. UNRISD  
[http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=660234231C9D6710C125717800248890&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/\(httpAuxPages\)/660234231C9D6710C125717800248890/\\$file/mkand-pp-dghr.pdf](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFramePDF?ReadForm&parentunid=660234231C9D6710C125717800248890&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/660234231C9D6710C125717800248890/$file/mkand-pp-dghr.pdf)

- Effective communication is crucial using all available and affordable technologies.
- Democratic organisation and processes
- Necessary resources to conduct their work.
- Balanced programme that gives recognition of the various themes.

### **Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I)**

The debate on the definition of the social protection floor initiative was very rich. There were unique perceptions of what constituted the social protection floor initiative in the different countries (e.g. Ghana, Sierra Leone).

#### **1. Social Protection Floor Initiative: Origins and definition**

It is the one of the nine initiatives adopted by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). The social protection floor includes:

1. A basic set of essential social rights and transfers, in cash and in kind, to provide a minimum income and livelihood security for all and to facilitate effective demand for and access to essential goods and services.
2. The supply of an essential level of goods and social services such as health, water and sanitation, education, food, housing, life and asset-saving information that are accessible for all.

Social protection floor has two dimensions: a horizontal dimension (a floor for all) and a vertical one (strengthening of legal Social Security schemes).

Social Protection Floor is a reality in a few countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The conditions necessary for the successful introduction of a social protection floor are political will, coherence and transversality, national consensus, then implementation with technical and financial partners.

b) Social Protection initiative objectives:

A social protection floor initiative has four strategic objectives:

- ✓ To promote a coherent and unified approach to development policies.
- ✓ To bring about joint and coherent support from governments to reduce poverty.
- ✓ To have concerted action at UN level and beyond including NGOs, donors.
- ✓ To mitigate the negative impact of exogenous shocks and to set up stabilisation mechanisms.

These SPI objectives translated on the ground give variable results due to their spread and quality according to the particular country. This is the case of Senegal, presented as a model of a national social protection initiative as illustrated by UNICEF.

## 2. The example of social protection in Senegal

UNICEF referred to the Social Protection National Initiative (SPNI) in Senegal. This was implemented since 2005, but with a low rate of success in spite of the political will. Two reasons for limited success were:

- Coordination was difficult between various ministries.
- Inter-structural leadership was absent above the technical ministries.

An inter-agency group was created in February 2010 to harmonise the positions of technical and financial partners with the aim of a more coherent intervention from the State.

However, a striking evolution in Senegal is the adoption of a common position on social protection by the technical and financial partners.

The essential challenge today is intersectoral leadership in making the social protection floor operational.

The inter-agency initiative led by UNICEF in Senegal settled on an objective to inform and, in the medium term, coordinate partners' initiatives. From this point of view, challenges are:

- To agree on which vulnerable groups to target
- To support the government to become the inter-sectoral interlocutor
- To agree on the instruments to be implemented
- To strengthen capacities (inter-agency training)
- To achieve a detailed and thorough social budget
- To contribute to a political dialogue on implementation with the government (PSRP)
- To establish a common position with technical partners on social protection in Senegal.

A set of challenges enumerated below have been met by government, the technical and financial partners and civil society.

- Government side:

The inter-agency initiative will have to resolve at least two main questions:

- Who takes the lead in inter-sector discussion?
  - How to develop social protection coverage in national strategies and budget in terms of a road map to reduce disparities?
- At the agencies and partners level (example: NECS project for women, financed by the World Bank in Kolda), it will be necessary to achieve better coordination of experimental projects on the one hand and that of joint programme integration at national level on the other hand.
  - At civil society level, the diagnostic revealed two major challenges, namely:
    - The targeting of support to the poorest populations.

- Community base involvement

And so it was noted that this Senegalese inter-agency initiative should be seen as a good practice to be valued.



- Figure 2: Inter-agency initiative presentation in Senegal by the UNICEF representative

**Senegalese experience of the Social Protection National Initiative referred to as “*Suxali Jaboot*”:**

It is indeed an accelerated strategy of community development, which emphasises actors carrying on community dynamics (APDEC). This strategy is completed by the implementation of a reference frame of action addressed to vulnerable groups.

The Social Protection National Strategy is integrated to into the PRSP 2 with 4 components:

- Social Security reform and consolidation
- Social protection extension
- Vulnerable groups protection
- Risks prevention and management

In the PRSP, axis 3 is about social protection, but there is more:

- Follow-up systematisation of the evaluation by the populations, even if we note that the strategies have limits for large population groups because of democracy deficits.
- Social upgrade by adjustments, because vulnerable groups remain in poverty due to the final destination of assigned resources.

What changed in the institutional device is the establishment of an inclusive institutional platforms.

In conclusion, it was noted that the Senegalese experience borders on targeting which constitutes an Achilles' heel to the strategy.

In addition to geographic targeting, community and category-specific targeting, with an evaluation follow-up device was set up.

### 3. Social protection and food crisis prevention in Senegal: World Food Programme

There has been considerable evolution in a country where the per capita income is US\$710 per inhabitant. It is the implementation of traditional intervention of food support to the country programme 2007-2011.



Figure 3: Abdoulaye Faye, World Food Programme representative (front view)

Targets are essentially constituted by vulnerable groups, towards whom two types of transfers were considered:

**Nature transfer** (Support for the school canteens in primary and secondary schools in 12 regions, that is to say 3,700 primary schools and 580,000 beneficiaries).

**Cash transfer:** Financial transfers through food purchase vouchers, introduced following the price rises in the urban environment.

The conclusion reached at the end of the debate was the recognition that social protection has a multi-dimensional character (health, education, social security, nutrition), as well as a role of stabiliser in case of natural disasters.

Furthermore, the primary targets of social protection are the vulnerable groups: women, children, old people, disabled persons, disaster victims, and people in rural areas.

#### Day two

The second day of the workshop was arranged in 2 forms: a plenary session and group work.

#### Plenary session - expectations

It includes two parts:

1. Mamadou Sow, Rapporteur of the day, presented a synthesis of the main points derived from presentations and discussions from day one. The report presented was approved by participants

## 2. Participants' expectations

The main expectations were:

- To learn more about social protection
- To learn how to lobby for a social protection floor
- To know more about the role of social protection in West Africa
- To understand the place of social protection for informal workers and unemployed people
- To share and exchange experiences
- To broaden the contacts, in particular with fellow participants
- To learn more of the characteristics of a good leader
- To know more about resources mobilisation
- To be informed on how to consolidate ICSW members

Analysis of the evaluation responses from day one.

With the exception of two participants, all the responses revealed approximately seven constants:

- Communication is effective and sharing of experience did happen
- Documentation is available
- The strengthening of the capacity of networks is an important need
- The creation of a national council is a necessity and an opportunity to get involved in the decision-making process
- Relations with governments must be improved, and for most of them, dialogue with government happened at least once in recent times
- The organisations are ready to commit themselves to working on social protection
- Lessons learnt from Senegalese experience:
  - National consensus
  - Different dimensions of social protection taken into account

- The model of social protection could build on the alternative perspectives of civil society

All documents presented were adopted in plenary and the observations made were discussed and taken into consideration.

### **Country Presentation on the state of Social Protection**

Each participant outlined their national perceptions of social protection, its nature, the main actors, the state and non-state actors, the approaches etc.

The presentations were very rich and diversified both in the approach and relations between civil society organisations, state institutions and donors were taken note of in the varied presentations. At the conclusion of the presentations, the plenary considered three main conclusions in terms of convergences of differences, but also of difficulties to be resolved:

#### **1. Three main positive observations were noted in the various presentations:**

- Civil society is organised in represented countries.
- Civil society attempts to define social policies within the context of economic policies.
- Society needs to coordinate its strengths and its programs with a certain caution shown towards donors and State.

#### **2. Differences in the National Councils in the countries represented**

Three striking scenarios emerged from debates and exchanges:

- Countries where civil society is highly involved and works with the state within a defined framework (for instance Senegal).
- Countries where civil society is not yet developed in spite of favourable conditions (Cape Verde) or unfavourable conditions, in particular during the period following conflicts.
- Countries where civil society has relations with donors but need resources.
- Countries where civil society is involved in the process of sector-based programmes but is not conscious of the necessity of capitalising all this in social protection.

#### **A difficulty to be resolved for all the countries**

The difficulty for all the countries was how to articulate social policy in the context of the social protection floor initiative:

Before closing the meeting, French-speaking and English-speaking groups were organised and tasked with group assignment on how they perceived the social protection floor Initiative – its definitions and different components.

## Group work



Figure 4 – English-speaking work group



Figure 5 – French-speaking work group

Group work ended the second day. Presentations on the group findings were made by both groups on the next day.

On the same day, there were plenary discussions on Resource Mobilisation strategies and sources. Discussions centred on how the resources were acquired. All participants shared their funding sources and interacted on how these were accessed

The sharing of experiences in resource mobilisation strategies, types of donors and areas of intervention was lively. This exercise provided the opportunity for information exchange on potential technical and financial partners in the region.

## Day three

The third day was dedicated to the reporting on the group work and the advocacy session, followed by a general debate before the closing ceremony.

### Advocacy

The advocacy presentation permitted to examination of the concept itself, the conditions for implementation, as well as the attitudes of advocacy actors.

Advocacy constitutes a combination of individual and social actions to obtain an effective change in the political environment. Mr Correll suggested that community and political support is necessary to achieve social change.

Advocacy must be based on precise, clear and relevant principles and objectives

Messages must be common to the advocacy actors, with the following characteristics:

- Conciseness and avoiding ambiguity

- Focus on relevant questions
- Conceived in association with the media
- Have authority to recruit partners or to involve other persons and other organisations delivering the same message, or which can carry the message.

Mr Correll made recommendations to the participants on the attributes of a good advocate:

- To be tactical in order to know the moment when a position or policy can be advanced
- To be enthusiast and firm, which is necessary to convince the interlocutor
- To assume the best of the others
- “No” is not a good answer. It is necessary to avoid it and to propose to examine the question later
- To have realistic objectives with several strategies, and especially take the best opportunities

At the conclusion of the group presentations and Denys Correll’s session on lobbying and advocacy an important debate took place around three major questions raised by participants on "how to advocate on social protection". This was introduced by Denys Correll, ICSW Executive Director.

These questions were:

- Migrants and social protection: how to include them in social protection measures?
- The role of the press in a social protection strategy
- Legal assistance under various modalities within the framework of social protection coverage

The good news announced in prelude to the session on advocacy is that UNDP is publishing a collection of social protection good practices.

Participants were tasked with drawing up work plans that demonstrated how their national councils would engage their national governments on the Social Protection Floor Initiative on their return. These work plans will be used as a follow up instrument for the next training. Progressive reports will be shared in the regional newsletters and global newsletters.

Before the closing, participants did fill in an evaluation form which is important in identifying gaps and areas of improvement for future meeting

### **Recommendations and conclusions**

Conclusions, recommendations and synthesis of the workshop were considered before the closing ceremony.

Finally, some recommendations were formulated towards the technical and financial partners, regional groups and ICSW global network.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations to technical and financial partners (TFP)

- Promote support to poor countries governments through participative programmes in the struggle against poverty
- Support social protection national strategies through supporting programmes
- Support endogenous initiatives fostering all actors adhesion to the social protection floor initiative
- Promote a better coordination and better coherence of social protection policies through a steering (committee) and a regular and participative follow-up (secretariat)

### Recommendations to UN agencies and to other technical and financial partners:

- Promote information about the social protection floor initiative with national development actors
- Strengthen the partnership with civil society organisations on the social protection floor initiative
- Promote the exchanges with governments on activities concerning the social protection floor initiative within technical committees and during sector-based politics reviews

### Recommendations to civil society organisations

- Promote a strong involvement of civil society organisations in the elaboration, the follow-up and the evaluation of social protection policies
- Take into account the social protection floor initiative in the programmes, poverty reduction programmes being implemented for the population's benefit
- Conduct information and awareness programmes in all the regions about social protection floor to facilitate their portorage in development local politics development

## Conclusion and synthesis

A synthesis was presented by the Central and West Africa ICSW President and meeting organiser. It consisted of 6 essential aspects for the region, which we can be summarised as: a special mention, two commitments, two challenges, and a road map

- A special mention to World Food Program, both for its contribution and the quality presence of two members of its staff during the 3 days of the workshop
- A firm commitment to meet the challenge of maintaining contacts and exchanges between ICSW members and the new members

- A common commitment to bring support to ICSW member and further mobilise West and Central Africa
- A Challenge for ICSW to meet in one year and to conduct a similar programme in Central Africa
- The success of the programme was thanks to the important contribution of ICSW staff, colleagues, interpreters and the participants
- An Action plan was adopted for West and Central Africa ICSW, which was one of the expected results from the meeting.

### **Closing ceremony**

ICSW President, Mr. Christian Rollet presented his closing remarks full of imagery of a sea expedition aboard an ICSW company, with captain Amacodou (Regional President), a crew (all participants) where everybody played a precise role.

Following the president, The ICSW CWA Regional President Mr. Amacodou Diouf to thank all the participants and to wish them all a good return home, hoping to hear from them very soon on their progress in influencing the implementation of social protection floor initiatives.

To illustrate the ambition of the workshop, a regional ICSW 4-page newsletter was produced outlining the Dakar meeting process and challenges.

Denys Correll, workshop facilitator, thanked ICSW team as well as the steering committee for the enormous efforts made, for the proper realisation of this workshop.

A vote of thanks was presented by one participant - Ousman Yabo from Gambia on behalf of all the participants.

A participation certificate was presented to each person.

## Annex 1 List of participants

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## Annex 2 Programme

**Annex 3 Media coverage**

**Annex 4 National plans**

