Strengthening Capacity for Evidence-based Social Protection Policies for Responding to the Triple Global Crisis in Fuel, Food and Finance

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The Triple Global Crisis in fuel, food and finance

- The Triple Crisis includes the cost-of-living crisis triggered by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, internal and international conflicts, the energy crunch, financial constraints, and related surging inflation.

- All countries have been affected by one or more aspects of the Triple Crisis.

- Project will also address challenges posed by climate change and its impact on vulnerable populations, e.g. current drought in southern Africa and floods in east Africa are a major concern.
The Triple Global Crisis in fuel, food and finance, cont’d

• Rises in price levels, energy costs, disruptions in global food markets have all adversely affected SDG targets related to:
  • No poverty and zero hunger (SDGs 1 & 2)
  • Good health and well-being and quality education (SDGs 3 & 4)
  • Gender equality (SDG 5)
  • Affordable and clean energy and inequality (SDGs 7 & 10)
• Resulting in erosion of incomes gains and declining standards of living in many countries
Government Responses to The Triple Global Crisis

- Provision of various forms of expanded social protection programmes/schemes:
  - Unemployment benefits and targeted financial support to vulnerable households
  - Food assistance (setting up food banks and food distribution mechanisms for people living in poverty and groups in vulnerable situations)
  - Subsidies for fuel, heating and electricity
  - Temporary rent and public transportation subsidies
- Increase in public expenditures has reduced available funding for SDG implementation (how is Namibia closing this SDG funding gap?)
Objective

- To build countries’ capacity to build robust, sustainable, gender-sensitive and crisis-responsive social protection policies and programmes.

- This work is expected to:
  - enhance capacities of target countries to develop integrated social protection policies and strategies that enhance the delivery of social protection services and increase resilience to future crises, and
  - improve the coverage, comprehensiveness, and adequacy of these systems and to leave no one behind
**Expected Results**

- Enhanced capacity of selected countries to design and implement public policies and programmes towards universal social protection, with a focus on identifying and incorporating into the policies and programmes the most affected people and people in vulnerable situations who are disproportionately impacted by the Triple Crisis.

- Effective, and fiscally sustainable solutions to address social protection gaps that are tailored to specific country demographic and social-economic context, based on evidence base.
How?

• (i) Train policy makers on the use of already existing digital platforms that can provide useful guidance on monitoring SDG progress and acceleration by:
  • identifying those groups left furthest behind
  • understanding the factors and circumstances behind the Triple Crisis that affects them, and
  • help build national capacities to accelerate implementation of development plans, including tracking of progress and M&E.
How?

• (ii) Develop local capacities to use the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) as an analytical tool to:

  • identify the most vulnerable people
  • show aspects in which they are deprived
  • target resources and design policies more effectively
  • leverage the MPI to periodically assess progress and make necessary adjustments as conditions evolve
Target Countries

• Project will support 6 selected countries in Africa and Asia and the Pacific

• Zambia – LLDC & LDC

• Cambodia, Senegal, Tanzania: Least developed countries (LDCs)

• Maldives: Small island developing State

• Namibia & Maldives: Upper Middle-Income Countries and the rest are Low Middle-Income Countries (GDP per capita in the range of US$2,800-3,800)

• All countries face significant challenges with poverty and inequality. The situation is likely to have been exacerbated by the Triple Crisis
Poverty rate at $2.15/day (2017 PPP) and Multidimensional poverty headcount (% population)

- Zambia: PR of 64.35% and MDPR of 65.8% in 2022
- Namibia: PR of 5.62% and MDPR of 27.55% in 2015
- Senegal: PR of 9.93% and MDPR of 23.57% in 2021
- Tanzania: PR of 44.95% and MDPR of 54.59% in 2018
Social Protection Coverage

- Social protection coverage is low in these countries – 6 to 25% of their populations are covered by at least one social protection benefit, excluding health

Planned Activities: National and Inter-regional

• Strengthened capacity of policymakers to design integrated social protection policies and strategies by organizing national capacity building workshops, study tours, and case studies,

• Enhanced technical capacities to identify and include vulnerable groups through the development of a unique statistical tool, training sessions, and toolkits

• Contribution towards the development of integrated social protection policies and strategies by conducting policy mapping, diagnostic workshops, and developing costed participatory roadmaps
Outcome 1: empowering inclusive policy design and strategies

- Revolves around elevating the capacity of countries to craft holistic, evidence-driven social protection policies and strategies: achieved by 2026.

  **Output 1.1:** Six national workshops organized with policymakers and key stakeholders to discuss experiences in developing universal social protection schemes and discuss efforts and products of Regional Economic Commissions.

  **Output 1.2:** Six case studies developed with innovative contributions at local level with capacity to scale up, dealing with the triple crisis.

  **Output 1.3:** One technical report developed to improve financing strategies and budget allocation for social protection schemes.
Outcome 2: ensuring inclusivity through enhanced technical capacities

• To create a paradigm shift by ensuring that no vulnerable group is excluded from the embrace of social protection measures: achieved by 2026.

  • **Output 2.1:** Six advisory missions organized (one for each region) to assess participant countries’ capacities to identify and include eligible groups in vulnerable situations not currently covered by existing social protection schemes.

  • **Output 2.2:** Develop a user-friendly prognostic web-based platform, based on an open-source statistical code that identifies the impact different social protection schemes have on population groups in vulnerable situations.

  • **Output 2.3:** Develop training material and conduct training sessions for technical statisticians (expert users/content developers) and policy makers from Cambodia and Maldives around the development and use of the prognostic web-based platform.

  • **Output 2.4:** Content development of 1 advanced training module customized to Cambodia and Maldives for statisticians and technical specialists from National Statistical Offices in target countries as well as a training of trainers’ manual and workshops for technical specialists and statisticians.
Outcome 3: providing coherence, coordination, and holistic integration for the different components of the project

- Underscores the importance of aligning social protection policies and strategies with global agendas and overarching principles: achieved by 2026.

  **Output 3.1**: One training workshop prepared to development officers from Africa and Asia and the Pacific participant countries to access and use UN’s-developed social protection toolset.

  **Output 3.2**: Conduct one intra-regional study tour organized for policymakers and key stakeholders of the participating countries to share knowledge and learn from best practices.

  **Output 3.3**: A toolkit developed to identify landscape of key partners, their inter-connections, and level of engagement to analyze conditions of success for the related social protection service delivery strategy (development of a social network analysis toolkit).

  **Output 3.4**: Conduct a workshop for participant countries to share and discuss countries’ experiences, lessons learned and emerging challenges on the implementation of tools and findings to advance for sustainable results of the project.
Way Forward

• Universal social protection systems and active employment generation programmes should become permanent measures, not merely temporary components of national crisis response measures.

• SDG 1.3 - Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

• Social investments should be accorded priority in recovery strategies and development policies.
Way Forward, cont’d

• Allocate dedicated resources to ensure disaggregated data are collected, processed, updated and shared in a timely manner

• Bridge the data gap to ensure better monitoring

• Build capacity to incorporate administrative data to effectively monitor SDG targets related to social protection, including multidimensional poverty

• Set-up a multi-level governance framework to promote horizontal coordination within government departments (national and sub-national) and vertical co-ordination with other levels of government.
Way Forward, cont’d

• Ensure recovery plans from the Triple Crisis are aligned with the SDGs and national and sub-national development plans and strategies.

• Leverage the recovery phase as an opportunity to:
  • enhance resilience and preparedness for future shocks and crises
  • establish sustainable financing mechanisms (DRM, ODA, private)
  • promote social protection policy coherence across levels of government

• Use SDG indicators and the MPI to assess the impact of the Triple Crisis at the national and local levels, focusing on SDGs 1-5 (the people dimension)
Way Forward, cont’d

• Need a developmental policy paradigm for social protection that is universal and progressive.

• Such as approach ensures building progressively higher levels of protection that is based on a basic floor of social security for all.

• The question is no longer: “Can countries afford universal social protection?”, the question rather is “how can they afford not to introduce schemes that reach out to all quickly, especially during crisis times”?

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Thank you.