

TRANSFORM

Developing technical skills and leadership to achieve social protection for all in Africa through South-South cooperation

Challenge

Despite some success stories and champion countries, sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the world's lowest social protection coverage.¹ The challenges include a lack of technical skills and awareness among African civil servants at all levels with regard to the importance and successful pathways towards universal social protection coverage. Capacity is particularly lacking in the operational and administrative processes for successful governance and implementation of social protection policies and programmes in Africa. This is also manifested by the discrepancy between the rights-based aspirations often articulated in national legislation, development plans or social protection strategies and the weak performance of social protection systems and schemes in practice. While a wealth of experience exists in Africa, these experiences are not harvested systematically and no African curricula or learning opportunities are available to acquire the technical, practical skills relevant to the African context. Yet social protection is paramount in terms of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular for its potential to deliver on the promise to leave no one behind.

Towards a Solution

The prime objective of TRANSFORM is to build critical thinking and capacities of policymakers and practitioners at national and decentralized levels to improve the design, effectiveness and efficiency of social protection systems. TRANSFORM aims both to impart state-of-the-art knowledge that is appropriate to the challenges faced by countries in the region and to encourage learners to take leadership on the change and transformation of nationally defined social protection systems.

Given the importance of social protection in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, in particular goal one on extending poverty (target 1.3 of the results framework), the ability of social protection to facilitate structural transformation of the economy, and the slow transition towards nation-wide state-administered social assistance systems in many African countries, the capacity of African governments to improve their social protection systems must be strengthened. This is achieved through South-South cooperation and peer learning among experts.

The TRANSFORM learning package is available to social protection practitioners at the national and subnational levels and includes a full set of modular materials for trainers and learners to deliver a range of customizable learning events (trainings), face-to-face or online.

The TRANSFORM methodology is unique and innovative in that it recognizes the importance of practice. **TRANSFORM encourages learners to learn from each other and to assume leadership to change and transform nationally defined social protection systems. The learning package focuses on the participants' concrete environment. It is not limited to describing what works, but grapples with the complexities of how and why things work. In this regard, it stimulates South-South cooperation and peer learning.** The methodology places an emphasis on promoting change. To the extent possible, the training sessions should lead to the development of personal commitments or action plans for taking leadership in transformation.

¹ ILO World Social Protection Report 20017-19, p.9

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Valentina Barca



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Most importantly, TRANSFORM is developed by and delivered through African experts and practitioners, empowering the experts to become trainers and continue learning from each other, thereby generating a South-South network of trainers and experts. The package is designed in a format that allows national trainers to replicate it easily. The initiative is structured to facilitate and institutionalize ongoing joint development and updating of the materials.

The first TRANSFORM Training of Trainers was conducted in October 2017 in Zambia. The 23 trainers represented government, academia, the private sector and the UN system from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Participants were selected through a call for applications distributed through TRANSFORM regional partners' networks. To obtain certification, trainers first participated in the training. In the second step, they provided a training themselves, with the support of the head trainers. This will enable the creation of a pool of trainers across Africa. A community of regional TRANSFORM trainers will facilitate interactions among Southern countries.

The project also forges partnerships with local academic institutions and capacity-building initiatives at national and regional levels to ensure sustainability and impact. It also seeks to institutionalize a real community of practice that will assume leadership to transform social protection systems in Africa. Efforts are also underway to adapt and tailor the content of the curriculum to other regions in West and Northern Africa and Asia. Plans are underway to tailor the TRANSFORM package to the needs of specific national-level trainings in Kenya, Malawi, and South Africa, and to translate the materials into Portuguese and French.

Approximately 250 practitioners from five countries in Southern and Eastern Africa participated in face-to-face TRANSFORM training workshops between 2017 and 2018. Offering online versions of the course helps to achieve maximum outreach; participants from 19 countries across the world are following the first online version of the course.

Strengthening social protection systems involves building institutions, which is a longer-term process. It is too early to assess TRANSFORM's contribution to building better performing social protection systems in Africa. However, TRANSFORM is certainly the correct first step on this journey. Trainings that present ready-made solutions in the form of good practices run the risk of recommending predetermined approaches that are not suited to local circumstances.

The TRANSFORM initiative has also been instrumental internationally in improving coordination and consistency in social protection approaches across UN agencies, as the package is being integrated with ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, IPC-IG, Irish Aid and EU-SPS capacity development programmes. Establishing institutional partnerships and aligning the learning package with existing social protection capacity development initiatives in the region is critical to ensure sustainability and impact. Institutionalization and delivery strategies take a three-pronged approach, involving the national, regional and global levels.

TRANSFORM's structure and methodologies could be replicated in any region and for any of the issues included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The content regarding leadership and transformation can be easily transferred, while substantive content would need to be developed on a case-by-case basis, respecting the principles of:

- Building on local and practical knowledge;
- Minimizing the "lecture" approach that transmits pre-fabricated knowledge and, rather, maximizing experiential learning through demonstration, practical exercises, problem-solving approaches and discussion;
- Institutionalizing knowledge-sharing and developing/ updating materials; and,
- Increasing South-South cooperation.

Contact:

Dr. Luca Pellerano, Technical Advisor on Social Security for Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, ILO, pellerano@ilo.org

Project name: TRANSFORM - Leadership and Transformation: Curriculum on Building and Managing Social Protection Floors in Africa

Countries/Regions: Africa regional, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia

Nominated by: ILO

Sustainable Development Goal target(s): 1.3, 3.8, 5.4, 8.5, 10.4

Supported by: African Union, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, IPC-IG, EU-SPS, Irish Aid, Southern Africa Social Protection Experts Network-SASPEN

Implementing entities: ILO, UNICEF, IPC-IG, UNDP

Project status: Ongoing

Project period: 2015-2020

URL of the practice: <http://socialprotection.org/institutions/transform>



ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy

Building regional and interregional networks and platforms for knowledge and experience-sharing

Challenge

The Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) exists in various forms across the globe. Social economy, solidarity economy, popular economy and third sector are only a few of the terms used to refer to a concept that designates enterprises and organizations that, through the production of goods, services and knowledge, pursue explicit social and, often, environmental aims and foster solidarity. Because of their responsibilities and agendas, the many SSE stakeholders (including policy makers, academics, workers' and employers' organizations and SSE practitioners) do not necessarily communicate, leading to policies disconnected from local realities. This is even more so for SSE stakeholders in the Global South, who have little opportunity to influence policy, and those in greatest need of favourable SSE policies.

Towards a Solution

To address this challenge, the International Labour Organization (ILO) introduced the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Academy to:

- Contribute to a better understanding of the SSE concept;
- Emphasize the relevance of SSE as an alternate/complementary development paradigm, both within the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, specifically Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: Decent work and Economic Growth;
- Build new and strengthen existing SSE networks;
- Facilitate sharing of best practices and knowledge; and
- Create and foster an SSE community of practice.

Thanks to scholarships funded by the ILO's SSTC programme, the ILO SSE Academy includes participants from the Global South. Covering travel, accommodation and participation fees, the scholarships allow selected individuals to attend the Academy and share knowledge, best practices and challenges with other SSE stakeholders they usually would not have the opportunity to meet, thereby breaking down the barriers that usually exist among them, in line with SDG 17, target 17.9 (Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation). The Academy's flexible and interactive dynamics allow for an enriching experience for both new and experienced SSE stakeholders. It includes a series of plenaries that set the scene for the elective sessions, which are designed to generate deeper discussions and interactions on specific topic within the Academy's broader theme.

The Academy also features field visits, during which participants gain a first-hand view of concrete SSE initiatives in the host city and country. Field visits allow participants to discuss directly with SSE stakeholders and take stock of local experiences. This allows the policy makers in attendance to translate their realities into their policy-making, fostering



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a bottom-up approach. Furthermore, participants gain access to the Distance-Learning Platform before the Academy, so all participants can become familiar with the basic principles and notions of SSE. **South-South and triangular arrangements can expand the impact of the Social and Solidarity Economy in national contexts by building regional and interregional networks and platforms for knowledge and experience-sharing. Many SSE networks already exist among countries from the South**, for example, the Latin American Coordination Bureau of Fair Trade (MCLACJ), MERCOSUR Solidario, ASEC network in Asia and RIPESS.

The participants are asked to write an article about SSTC in general and the Academy's theme specifically. Articles have addressed topics such as youth employment, sustainable development, social innovation for decent work, local development, innovative SSE ecosystems and the future of work. The articles are used to stimulate discussions during the sessions of the Academy, including the elective session on SSTC.

The Academy is demand-driven, with the constituent asking the ILO to host an Academy in its country. Nine academies have been held (Turin, Italy; Montreal, Canada; Agadir, Morocco; Puebla, Mexico; Campinas, Brazil; San José, Costa Rica; Seoul, Republic of Korea; and Luxembourg City, Luxembourg). The 10th Academy will take place in Spain in 2018.

In some instances, the Academy has led to further development cooperation projects with the funding ministry or directly with constituents themselves.

Contact:

Mr. Roberto Di Meglio, ILO, dimeglio@ilo.org

Ms. Laura Ciccirelli, ILO, ciccirelli@iloguest.org

Project name: ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy

Countries/Regions: Global (as of now Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, Spain)

Nominated by: ILO

Sustainable Development Goal target(s): 8.3, 17.9

Supported by: ILO and partnering constituent

Implementing entities: ILO, relevant constituent (usually Ministries of Labour)

Project status: Ongoing

Project period: 2013-Present

URL of the practice: <http://www.sseacb.net/>



Partnership for Action on Green Economy

Mutual learning between Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia on green economic policies and practices to advance the 2030 Agenda

Challenge

Kyrgyzstan is a landlocked country and its economy is mainly driven by agriculture, extractive industries and hydropower energy sectors. The economy relies heavily on agriculture (around 40 per cent of total employment) and natural resources. Land degradation and desertification pose serious economic, social and environmental challenges.

The Kyrgyz Government is committed to reversing environmental degradation and promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The transition to more sustainable development pathways has been recognized as a national priority in various policy frameworks. However, the country faces challenges in implementation.

Towards a Solution

To address the above challenge, tailored support to sectoral, macro-economic and thematic policy analysis is a key area for Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) support. PAGE seeks to place sustainability at the heart of economic policies and practices to advance the 2030 Agenda and supports nations and regions in reframing economic policies and practices around sustainability to foster economic growth, create income and jobs, reduce poverty and inequality, and strengthen the ecological foundations of their economies. PAGE brings together five United Nations agencies – UN Environment Programme, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Their combined mandates, expertise and networks can offer integrated and holistic support to countries on inclusive green economy, ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication. PAGE countries are engaged at different stages of a green economy transformation, which provides an ideal platform to initiate South-South cooperation among countries.

South-South and triangular cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia provides an opportunity to build and strengthen mutual exchange on green economy policy development and practice between the two neighbouring countries, which is key to the successful implementation of green economy objectives.

This initiative emerged within the framework of an agreement between ILO and UNITAR to strengthen South-South cooperation between PAGE countries. Kyrgyzstan was beginning to promote a green economy and was interested in learning from the PAGE Mongolia experience, including lessons learned, challenges and achievements, as Mongolia was approaching the end of its PAGE-supported programme.

Accordingly, two study visits took place to facilitate peer-to-peer learning between the two countries. The Kyrgyz delegation attended a PAGE Week in Mongolia devoted to green economy issues in September 2017. The delegation included representatives of the



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Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Council on Business and Entrepreneurship Development under the Parliament, the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry, as well as the Business Association, JIA.

This visit provided an excellent opportunity for peer-to-peer real-life exchanges among stakeholders directly involved in developing and implementing the policy reform for green economy. The participation of the Kyrgyz counterparts in a number of PAGE events organized throughout the week provided insights into how specific areas of work can be implemented more effectively in Kyrgyzstan, including: sustainable finance strategy; Mongolian Green Credit Fund; platforms for bringing global climate capital to the country; non-banking sustainable finance instruments; and a better understanding of the principles of sustainable finance among business and banking associations and others.

Kyrgyzstanis greatly appreciated the Mongolian experience in the introduction of green procurement at the government level and have made a commitment to replicate the best practices in the Kyrgyzstani context.

During the second study visit, a Mongolian delegation visited Kyrgyzstan in November of 2017 and participated in the forum, "Green Economy from Theory to Practice: New opportunities for business." The Mongolian counterparts shared their achievements in introducing the green economy at the national level and learned about Kyrgyz experiences in the use of green technologies in business. The Mongolian delegation included representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, HacBank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in Mongolia.

The sustainability and replication elements of this South-South exchange were strong. Due to the similarities in the two countries' political, historical, cultural, economic and social contexts, peer-to-peer learning was effective and practices from one country were easily adapted to the

other. The benefits gained are being put into use over the medium- and longer term. There are plans to continue this successful South-South cooperation in 2018 and beyond both with PAGE and non-PAGE countries. The workstreams include sustainable financing, sustainable public procurement, green economy in education and green skills/jobs. There are plans to explore the Green Employment Projection Model under ILO's leadership in 2018.

The green jobs agenda has been a cross-cutting and integral element of the exchange. Both countries received the findings of the Green Skills Assessment, conducted in Mongolia by ILO in 2014 and in 2017 in Kyrgyzstan. Within PAGE in Kyrgyzstan, the work on green employment projects is scheduled to continue with the ILO in 2018. In addition, with respect to sustainability, the two countries are using the opportunity provided by other similar United Nations or government programmes to maintain the momentum of the exchange. The new workstream on sustainable finance led by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Kyrgyz Finance Ministry initiative on sustainable public procurement offer two examples.

The Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia exchange can serve as a good practice that includes true triangular cooperation, based on the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Programme for Sustainable Economic Development (PSED) assistance in the form of technical expertise and financial contribution to support the study tours. In addition, the knowledge shared on the Mongolian experience served to integrate new and targeted elements in the implementation of the PAGE programme in Kyrgyzstan to incorporate the inclusive green economy into its policy framework on sustainable development.

Contact:

Mr. Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Coordinator, Green Jobs Programme, Enterprises Department, ILO, gueye@ilo.org

Project name: Partnership for Action on Green Economy: Mutual learning between Mongolia and Kyrgyzstan on green economic policies and practices to advance the 2030 Agenda

Countries/Regions: Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia

Nominated by: ILO, UNEP

Sustainable Development Goal target(s): 8.3, 8.4, 13.2, 17.6, 17.7

Supported by: ILO

Implementing entities: Partnership for Action on Green Economy (ILO, UNEP, UNITAR, UNIDO, UNDP)

Project status: Ongoing

Project period: 2017 -2019

URL of the practice: goo.gl/M9qWLT; goo.gl/VC8guw; goo.gl/vs8jNz