

Global Programme 'Social Protection Innovation and Learning' (SPIL)

Towards social protection for all through innovation and partnerships

Context

Social protection is a human right and key to sustainable and inclusive economic and social development for individuals, communities and countries. All people can be exposed to illness, unemployment, natural disasters or other risks in the course of their lives, yet over half of the world's population still have little or no access to any form of social protection. Attaining Universal Social Protection (USP) by the year 2030 has been enshrined as Target 1.3 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic, the intensifying climate crisis and mounting food insecurity, among other challenges, have drawn unprecedented global attention to the importance of USP.

Germany was a pioneer in developing social protection, and is today a major partner in promoting USP in its partner countries and worldwide, including as a founding member in the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection 'USP2030'.

Approach

Commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Global Programme 'Social Protection Innovation and Learning' (SPIL) aims to support countries in the application of innovative approaches to social protection. It takes a three-pronged approach:

1) It furthers the development and dissemination of the digital public good openIMIS, which enhances the efficiency of social protection programmes through digitised information management;

1 NO POVERTY	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	5 GENDER EQUALITY	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
Programme title		Global Programme 'Social Protection Innovation and Learning' (SPIL)			
Commissioned by		German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ); openIMIS component co-financed by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)			
Region		Worldwide, including Rwanda and Uzbekistan (in-country technical assistance). openIMIS is used in 8 countries in Africa and Asia.			
Duration		09/2020 - 08/2023			
Financial volume		28,650,600 € (including 2,350,600 € from SDC)			

2) It facilitates cross-border knowledge exchange and global learning on Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) for strengthening social protection systems' resilience to large-scale shocks and crises; and

3) It provides technical assistance for the implementation of dynamic, inclusive and responsive social protection systems at the national level.

Coordination desk for openIMIS

openIMIS is an open source software which facilitates the management of the large volumes of data needed to administer health and social protection schemes. What started as a small-scale management information system for health insurance in Tanzania has evolved into an internationally recognised digital public good that brings together a vibrant community of developers, implementers and academia. Since 2016 the coordination desk of the

openIMIS Initiative is hosted by GIZ. The coordination desk supports its communities of practice with essential services such as feasibility assessments, and promotes the use, continuous development and further integration of the software with other digital systems. openIMIS is used to manage the data and processes of 10.6 million beneficiaries in eight countries. It has branched out from health insurance to also manage cash transfer schemes (The Gambia) and employment injury insurance (Bangladesh, Nepal) - especially relevant for the USP agenda. An emerging collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) positions openIMIS for major scale-up in the domain of social protection.

Adaptable to different scheme and country needs, and interoperable with various data exchange formats, openIMIS is free to download, customise and use. This can save partners important resources on software development. Nonetheless, as with any digital tool for managing complex processes, additional investments are required for deployment, e.g. customising openIMIS for the specific use case, training of users, and establishing the initial IT infrastructure. To support operators interested in deploying openIMIS to overcome such initial obstacles, BMZ and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) have established a Catalytic Implementation Fund providing resources to complement partners' existing means.

Learning and innovation in Adaptive Social Protection

From extreme weather events to conflict and displacement, food insecurity, disease outbreaks and environmental degradation, countries around the world are confronting overlapping crises which have major social and economic consequences for their populations. Linking social protection with disaster risk management and climate change adaptation, ASP proposes a comprehensive approach comprising four 'building blocks' – programmes, data and information systems, finances, and institutional arrangements and partnerships – to foster resilience and promote adaptation in the face of multiple crises.

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In collaboration with partners such as socialprotection.org, the World Bank and the Partnership for Economic Inclusion (PEI), the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), SPIL applies a multi-stakeholder strategy to disseminating, implementing and further developing the ASP concept. Activities include high-level public events to foster global knowledge exchange, focussed specialist workshops to expand the conceptual boundaries of ASP, and tailored advice to operationalise ASP at country level. Learnings from these activities will feed into an international conference on ASP to be held at the end of the programme (June 2023). With coordination offices on three continents, SPIL supports the integration of internationally available experience for designing and implementing ASP in nine focus countries, including the fragile Sahel region.

Strengthening the implementation of social protection

As the demand for social protection has grown, many countries are challenged to adapt their social protection systems to meet changing needs. As part of its global collaboration with the World Bank, SPIL provides technical assistance to strengthen social protection systems in selected countries. The aim is to increase the impact of investments by the World Bank and other multilateral institutions by strengthening the capacities of national and local governments to plan, steer and implement social protection systems, including via the development of effective digital architectures.

In Rwanda, SPIL works to improve social protection service delivery, beneficiary satisfaction and the quality of registration and targeting by developing data-based steering capacities and supporting the roll-out and operation of a dynamic social registry and digital payment channels. In Uzbekistan, it works to strengthen the inclusion of poor and vulnerable people in the country's social assistance system by supporting the implementation of the country's social protection strategy, strengthening evidence-based steering capacities, and professionalising social protection service delivery.

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