



International  
Labour  
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## Progress Report - Burundi

13/12/2021 - 30/11/2022

BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS FOR ALL - PHASE II

Project Code (GLO/21/34/MUL)



**Belgique**  
partenaire du développement

**LUXEMBOURG**  
AID & DEVELOPMENT



10 December 2022

Donor: Belgium, Luxembourg  
Admin Unit: SOCPRO

Project title:	<b>BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS FOR ALL - PHASE II</b>
Report type (pick one):	<b>Annual</b>
Reporting period:	<b>From December 2021 to November 2022</b>

Linkages:

Strategic Policy Outcome: Outcome 8: Comprehensive and sustainable social protection for all

Country Programme Outcome: BDI202: The regulatory and institutional social protection frameworks are strengthened.

Sustainable Development Goal: SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

UNSDCF Outcome: Result 3: More Burundians of every age group, in particular the most vulnerable, use an adapted protection system by 2027.

Preparation and Review

Report prepared by: Aurélie Klein, 06/12/2022

Report reviewed by: Andrew Allieu, 08/12/2022

Report approved by: Wellington Chibebe, 09/12/2022

# ► ILO Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All

## Annual update 2022 - Burundi

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### 1. Country context

Burundi is in the process of revising its National Social Protection Policy. This Policy identifies gaps in protection and strategies directed towards more comprehensive social protection schemes. The Policy's first component identifies different measures to improve protection for children, the working age population and the elderly. These measures are very comprehensive and include: a focus on education; the introduction of family benefits; support for the economic integration of young persons; support to agricultural and solidarity groups; public works programmes; and unemployment protection. The Policy's second component focuses on transversal issues, including social health protection, specific protection of vulnerable groups, protection of the population against environmental shocks and strengthening governance of the social protection sector.

The Policy provides an overarching framework for the social protection sector for the next ten years, bringing together contributory and non-contributory schemes. While the fragmentation and duplication of different programmes are identified in the policy as a challenge, specific measures for addressing these problems have still to be developed. A further challenge is financial sustainability. The National Social Protection Strategy is still under development and specific quantitative objectives and a related costing have yet to be developed. The Permanent Executive Secretariat of the National Social Protection Commission anticipates that both the policy and the strategy for approval will be submitted to the Government before the end of 2022.

The revision of the National Social Protection Policy and the National Social Protection Strategy underline the strong commitment of the Government of Burundi to increasing social protection coverage. However, the sustainability of interventions is a concern given that there is limited fiscal space. Furthermore, a new regulation increasing the replacement rate to 100 per cent for pensions of workers in the public sector, including members of the police, army and the Government's contractors affiliated to the National Social Security Institute, seriously puts at risk the financial sustainability of the contributory scheme managed by the National Social Security Institute. This could also pose a threat to the development of new schemes, such as family or unemployment benefits as proposed by the revised Policy.

### 2. Progress report

A ministerial ordinance for the creation of the project steering committee is under approval by the Minister. An internal regulation for this steering committee has been drafted and is awaiting adoption by the committee together with the Programme work plan during its first meeting that is expected to take place in January 2023. A tripartite steering committee at technical level to guide the study on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy is already active.

In Burundi: The design of a social protection scheme responding to the needs and priorities of workers in the informal economy and other vulnerable groups has been developed and endorsed by the Government and social partners

Output 1: Feasibility studies defining the parameters, institutional arrangements, and incentives for the participation of workers in the informal economy are validated by ILO constituents and other organizations representing the target population

***Support for the review of the policy, legal and institutional framework for social security in Burundi***

The ILO Programme team with support from regional and global experts has been providing inputs to the revision of the National Social Protection Policy and the National Social Protection Strategy. The feedback provided has resulted in a stronger reflection of international social protection standards, including the requirement that social protection be the primary responsibility of the State, a rights-based approach to social protection and the need for adequate benefits. The Programme supported the organizing of the validation workshop for the revised National Social Protection Policy, which took place in Muramvya province from 14–16 November 2022. This workshop allowed all stakeholders to discuss and validate the content of the revised version of the National Social Protection Policy, integrating all inputs provided during previous consultation meetings and including ILO comments. Consultations and feedback on the National Social Protection Strategy are still ongoing and the National Social Protection Policy is now in the process of submission to the competent authority for final approval.

In addition to the initially envisaged support, tripartite partners have requested a feasibility study on the introduction of family benefits under the contributory scheme, targeting the private sector and managed by the National Social Security Institute:

***Feasibility study on the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy, identifying linkages and drawing lessons from existing health insurance schemes and other interventions in the informal sector***

The terms of reference for the study on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy have been developed in consultation with tripartite partners including the Permanent Executive Secretariat of the National Social Protection Commission. A technical tripartite steering committee approved the terms of reference on 4 October 2022. The process of identifying and recruiting a team of consultants to implement the study is ongoing.

***Feasibility of piloting social health insurance/community-based health insurance schemes in selected sectors***

The World Health Organization (WHO) is currently supporting stakeholders in the development of a health financing strategy. This strategy will also feed into the National Social Protection Policy and the National Social Protection Strategy. Once the health financing strategy is available, the feasibility study will be designed to contribute to the new strategy.

***Support for the National Social Security Institute and the National Commission for Social Protection on extension of social security***

This activity will be based on the findings and recommendations of the study on the extension of social protection to the informal economy.

*Output 2: Increased awareness of key stakeholders of the importance of social protection to support the implementation of the National Development Plan 2018 – 2027*

***Policy and advocacy briefs on building a comprehensive and sustainable social protection system, including social health protection, in Burundi***

Based on discussions conducted with constituents, the Steering Committee will provide input and guidance to identify specific areas of focus, based on the orientations of the revised National Social Protection Policy and Universal Health Coverage Financing Strategy.

***Support for the development of information, awareness raising campaigns and communication materials/toolkits on social protection, including the social protection law***

An awareness raising event on the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) is planned for early 2023, in possible collaboration with other partners. Consultation meetings conducted by the national project coordinator with key stakeholders, notably the Ministry of National Solidarity, Social Affairs, Human Rights and Gender and the members of the Permanent Executive Secretariat of the National Social Protection Commission tasked with the coordination of the social protection sector have helped to create a stronger awareness in Burundi of international social protection standards.

*Output 3: Social protection stakeholders and agencies have the capacities and tools to effectively drive the horizontal and vertical extension of coverage towards building social protection floors*

***Capacity building***

A training programme on social health protection in collaboration with WHO is under preparation. The concept has been finalized and agreed upon with WHO and the training will take place in January 2023. It will target all stakeholders involved in the ongoing process of developing the national health financing strategy. They include: the Prime Minister's Office; the Ministry in charge of social affairs; the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning; the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS; the Ministry of Public Administration, Labour and Employment; the National Commission for Social Protection; the most representative organization of employers (Association des Employeurs du Burundi, or AEB) and of the workers (Confédération des Syndicats du Burundi, or COSYBU); the Health Insurance for the Private Sector (MSP); the National health Insurance for the Public Sector (MFP); the National Platform for the Community-based Health Insurance (PAMUSAB), as well as key development partners such UNICEF, Enabel and Cordaid.

A francophone regional training programme on social protection statistics will be organized in early 2023. Participation from Burundi will allow the National Commission for Social Protection to acquire the requisite knowledge to compile the coverage data for inclusion in the report that will form part of the ILO's Social Security Inquiry questionnaire. This data will be crucial for updating the World Social Protection Database and the SDG indicator 1.3 on social protection coverage.

Additional training needs will be identified in collaboration with tripartite partners and the steering committee, while also taking into consideration the findings from the study on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy.

## ***Costing national social protection floor and fiscal space analysis for Burundi, including poverty impact analysis as part of the National Social Protection Policy and its implementation plan***

The National Social Protection Strategy is very ambitious and comprehensive. A rapid initial costing is anticipated, but additional needs for more detailed financial analysis are also likely. The exact needs for financial analysis will be clearer once the Strategy nears a final stage of development.

### **3. Collaboration and partnerships**

Strengthening social protection is an important priority for the AEB and the COSYBU, which are respectively the employers' and workers' most representative organizations. Both have requested the creation and involvement of a specific tripartite steering committee to guide the study on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy.

The ILO has provided input to the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Burundi, ensuring that the document reflects international labour and social protection standards. In the framework of the social protection programme, the ILO is closely collaborating with UNICEF and the WHO, including in the discussion of a cofounding agreement with WHO on occupational safety and health-related interventions.

### **4. Issues and actions**

Several project activities are linked with ongoing processes upon which they depend and without which they cannot be implemented until these processes have been completed. Such activities include the feasibility of piloting social health insurance/community-based health insurance schemes; the support to the National Social Security Institute and National Commission for Social Protection on the extension of social security; the development of advocacy and policy briefs, as well as the development of awareness and communication tools, which will have to be aligned with the National Social Protection Policy under revision; the Universal Health Coverage financing strategy, which is in the stage of finalization; and the feasibility study on the extension of social security to the informal economy. Consequently, the effective implementation of the Programme could only get under way in August 2022 and then with a measure of adjustment for certain activities. In addition to this, the prolonged recruitment process of the project team was a further challenge. It has therefore been proposed that activities will be implemented over a 24-month period starting in August 2022.

Within the aforementioned context, consultations with tripartite partners identified slight adjustments to activities that caused them to differ from the initial proposal. These changes will be submitted to the steering committee for additional guidance and approval.

### **5. Summary and outlook**

Given the project team's late start, activities have thus so far concentrated on the support for the revision of the National Social Protection Policy and Strategy. Several activities are in preparation, including the conducting of a study on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy, a training course on social health protection and also an awareness-raising event on the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).

The support provided by the ILO is timely and a strong focus of the Programme will be to support the implementation of the revised National Social Protection Strategy, including through policy work on

the extension of coverage, capacity building of the different stakeholders and support for data collection and monitoring.