

A single window service as an innovative mechanism to implement social protection floors and create linkages with employment-related services

PILOTING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Many developing and middle income countries of the Asia Pacific Region are exploring the implementation of a Social Protection Floor and have employment generation and decent work at the heart of their development agenda. However existing programs often face challenges of outreach and effectiveness, and the services are not always delivered to the most vulnerable and the poor. The institutions in charge of these programs do not coordinate sufficiently their interventions and do not have at hand the necessary information systems to monitor and evaluate policies and programs.

There is also an increased need to provide a framework and practical solutions to effectively address the absence of social protection and economic security encountered by informal sector workers and the poor. The integration of social protection and employment services would provide beneficiaries with opportunities to progressively graduate from being mere receivers of basic social protection to finding a decent job and being able to contribute to social security.

In the framework of the decentralization processes, local governments at district and commune levels need to play an active role in the implementation and oversight of social protection and employment policies and programs.

In Cambodia and Indonesia, the ILO is piloting an innovative mechanism that intends to better coordinate, monitor, and deliver integrated social protection and labour market interventions, called the **Single Window Service**.

The Single Window Service would be an office, within government structures at local level, which brings social protection and employment services together under one roof. It would be administered by the sub national level and linked with central level through different layers of reporting.

Figure 2 – The missing link between central level and beneficiaries

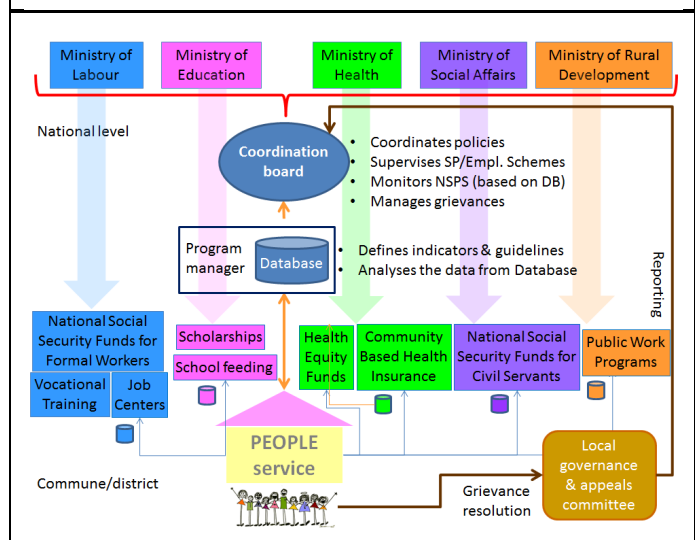
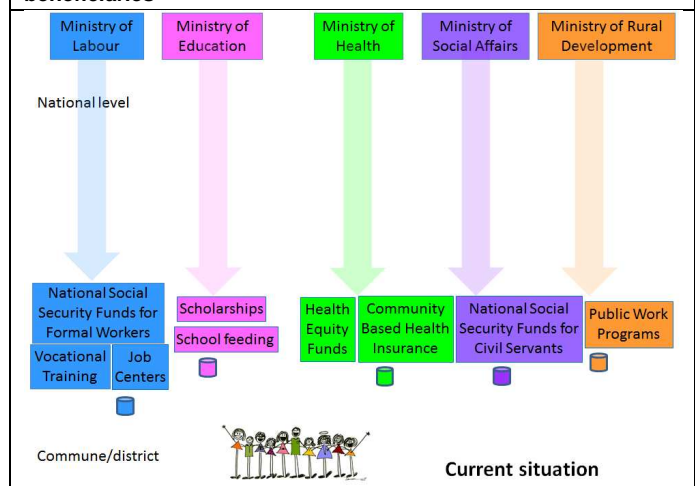
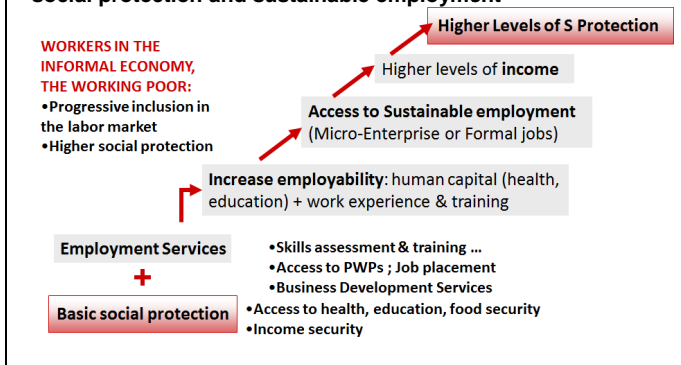


Figure 1 - Moving up the staircase: towards higher levels of social protection and sustainable employment



The Single Window Service would identify the poor households, assess their vulnerabilities, register them under the relevant social protection and employment programs, update the poverty/vulnerability databases (e.g. Id poor in Cambodia, TNP2K in Indonesia) with information on the utilization of social protection and employment programs.

An integrated information system, using the latest technology available, (e.g. Finger prints, Smart cards, internet-based platforms) would allow governments and implementing institutions to track the beneficiaries and monitor their coverage, their progressive inclusion in the labour market and the impact of the services on poverty reduction. It would also contribute to building a coherent system, limiting overlaps and fragmentation of the schemes in place and by doing so improving their efficiency.

The Single Window Service would facilitate access to adequate social protection and employment services. An assigned “case manager” would assess the vulnerabilities and skills of potential beneficiaries, develop a personalized plan with them in terms of skills development, enterprise creation or job placement, channel information on all social services they are entitled to, provide support in the registration under the schemes, deliver social protection ID cards, facilitate access to benefits in cash or kind, collect contributions if any, and so on.

The Single Window Service would represent the interests of the final beneficiaries through a grievance referral system and contribute to increasing availability and quality of social services.

The Single Window Service would contribute to empower local communities as well as decentralized administration by giving them a role in the implementation and oversight of national social protection strategies.

The Single Window Service would increase synergies between existing programs, by sharing some administrative functions (such as the registration of the final beneficiaries, or focal points in the hospitals) and by creating or reinforcing development linkages between programs (such as trainings for people registered under Public Work Programs)

The integrated approach’s ideas and strategy were discussed and endorsed as one of the key recommendations of the Social protection Assessment Based National Dialogue Exercises in Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia between 2011 and 2012, and at the decentralized level during the complementary assessments of social protection and employment security conducted at subnational levels. In Cambodia the Single Window Service was adopted as the central implementation mechanism of the National Social Protection Strategy by the Social Protection Coordination Unit.

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