DAC Network on Poverty Reduction

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE POVNET TASK TEAMS ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT, AND EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKETS

4 - 5 September, 2007, OECD, Paris

This document also includes a summary record of the joint meeting with the POVNET Employment and Labour Market Task Team held in the afternoon of September 4.

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A. SUMMARY RECORD OF THE JOINT SESSION OF THE POVNET TASK TEAMS ON
SOCIAL PROTECTION & EMPOWERMENT AND ON
EMPLOYMENT & LABOUR MARKETS

4 September 2007 (p.m.)

I. Welcome and presentation of participants

1. At its last meeting, POVNET encouraged the Task Team on Social Protection and Empowerment and the Task Team on Employment and Labour Markets to connect up, explore synergies and pursue joint outputs and events. Therefore, the two Task Teams met jointly to identify potential linkages between their two work programmes and to identify concrete opportunities for collaboration in specific areas. The Task Teams’ Chairs emphasised that this meeting offered the opportunity to strengthen both agendas and their potential impacts.

II. Briefing on the work in progress by the two task teams

2. The Task Teams’ Chairs briefed participants on work in progress and illustrated how the two agendas can link up. For example, social protection schemes can improve the employability of the poor whereas having a decent job protects the poor from risks by reducing their vulnerability.

3. A presentation by Michael Sampson (EPRI) documented the impact of a cash transfer programme on employment in South Africa and showed that there is a potential virtuous circle between employment and cash transfers. In particular, significant improvements in labour market participation can be explained by improved human assets and capital accumulation within poor families.

4. Participants appreciated this discussion. The possibility of broadening the scope of this research to include a wider range of social protection programmes and their potential impact on employment may be further explored in the future. This could be elaborated as a joint product prepared by the two Task Teams.

III. Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

5. The Employment and Labour Market Task Team Chair commissioned a paper to look at corporate social responsibility as an instrument to improve both employment and social protection outcomes. The paper illustrates different CSR concepts - social, environmental and economic - and sets out various approaches donors can follow to promote responsible business conduct.

6. Two discussants, one from the OECD Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) and the other from the OECD Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) started the discussion on the paper. In particular, they highlighted the need to: i) better explain how CSR practices can create more jobs and improve social protection and ii) promote the adoption of CSR practices by developing country enterprises. In the view of BIAC, CSR should be a voluntary and business-driven process. TUAC highlighted that, to promote more and better jobs, greater priority could usefully be given to existing tools, such as social dialogue or enforcement of labour standards.

7. Overall, participants appreciated the presentation by Sune Skadegaard Thorsen (Lawhouse.dk) but felt that the paper - as it stands now - outlines a broad agenda that goes beyond the objectives of the two Task Teams’ work programmes. While some members emphasised that CSR can be an instrument for improving job quality and promoting decent work, others highlighted that enforcing international labour
standards through labour inspections is a more appropriate mean to ensure decent working conditions for all. Moreover, several words of caution were expressed concerning suggestions to create standards and definition for CSR practices, as this goes beyond the current POVNET mandate.

8. The Employment and Labour Market Task Team’s Chair concluded that, to pursue more work on this specific theme, it is necessary to narrow its focus on issues that are relevant to employment and social protection and to align its objectives with the POVNET work programme. A revised version will therefore be prepared to be discussed during the next meeting of the Employment and Labour Market Task Team on 29 October 2007.

IV. Working on common themes

9. Besides identifying general linkages between the two work steams, the participants also discussed potential overlapping themes of interest for both Task Teams. Topics identified so far are informality, fragile states and gender. Sweden will lead the work on informality in both groups and is considering preparing a joint product for both Task Teams. The UK, from the Social Protection and Empowerment Task Team, and the Netherlands, from the Employment and Labour Market Task Team, will share information on their work in progress on fragile states. As for gender-related issues, the Social Protection and Empowerment Task Team aims to mainstream gender issues in each of its papers. A specific paper on Social Protection and Gender will most likely be prepared by DFID in 2008. The Employment and Labour Market Task Team has already produced a draft good practice paper on promoting employment for women.

10. The Chairs concluded that the joint meeting was useful for paving the way for future collaboration between the two Task Teams. Work on overlapping themes will be pursued through bilateral electronic consultations and further joint meetings can be organised in the future as appropriate.
B. SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE TASK TEAM MEETING ON SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT

5 September 2007

I Election of new Task Team Chair and Vice Chair(s)

11. Rüdiger Krech (GTZ) was elected Task Team Chair. Catherine Arnold (DFID), Ylva Sörman Nath (SIDA) and Reto Wieser (SDC) were elected Vice Chairs.

II Adoption of the Agenda [DCD/DAC/POVNET/A(2007)10]

12. The agenda was adopted.

III Tour de Table

13. Task Team members reported on recent and anticipated developments and activities related to social protection and empowerment. These included:

- A number of social protection programmes supported by Task Team member agencies have been approved and/or upscaled (e.g. Dutch Health Insurance Fund; DFID supported Social Protection Programme in Kenya and Mozambique; Global Trust Fund (ILO); ILA and DFID funded extension of social protection coverage project in Zambia and Tanzania).

- Capacity development in Social Protection has gained increasing attention. DFID organised a number of training and learning events for African government officials. Further capacity development in Asia is planned. Capacity development for civil society is also envisaged. For the last seven years, ILO has run a master course in social protection financing at University of Maastricht – in cooperation with the University’s Graduate School of Governance.

- The EU is preparing a new member state meeting on social protection and employment on 25-26 October. Roundtable discussions on social protection will take place on 17 October. On 24-25 January 2008 the EU will organise a conference on decent work.

- Help Age and DFID are continuing to support the Livingstone II process. A conference at ministerial level (African Union Member States) is planned for March 2008. In preparation of the ministerial meeting, consultative meetings in Africa will take place.

- The heads of state of Germany and the UK have signed an agreement on a new International Health Partnership. The Partnership will bring together major bilateral donor countries and key international agencies (e.g. World Bank, World Health Organisation).

- GENDERNET is preparing ‘new directions’ on gender equality and women’s empowerment. The intention is that this work be endorsed at the DAC High Level Meeting in 2009.
• The Chairs of the DAC subsidiary bodies will meet on 21 September to discuss preparations for the 2009-10 programme of work and budget as well as working better together and with the DAC.

IV Draft Advocacy and Policy Statement

14. The Task Team on Social Protection and Empowerment confirmed its commitment to produce a Policy Statement targeted to policy makers (Output 1). The Policy Statement will be finalised by the end of 2008. The Task Team aims to submit the Policy Statement to the HLF in 2009.

15. The Statement should be guided by the following questions:

• Why is the topic relevant for poverty reduction and pro-poor growth, e.g. increasing the impact of growth on poverty reduction? What other positive impacts does social protection have?

• What are the key issues and debates?

• What are the good (and bad) practices based on lessons of experience – with particular focus on outcomes and impacts of social protection in partner countries?

• What are the policy implications and recommendations?

16. Michael Samson presented preliminary ideas on the main messages the Statement should contain. These included:

• Social protection is not only a cost, it is an investment that societies cannot afford not to make (including in the face of climate change).

• The vulnerability to poverty is a major brake on human and economic development.

• There are different and often mutually reinforcing dimensions to social protection, e.g. rights-based approaches, human development, economic growth, democracy and security.

• Social protection helps the poor accumulate assets and adapt to changing circumstances.

17. The discussion highlighted that the Policy Statement should address the debates on affordability/financing, dependency, cconditionality, targeting vs. universalism and capacity building. A rights based approach is useful to prepare the stage for social protection. The Task Team members decided that the Statement will encompass positive outcomes of social protection, not only with regards to pro-poor growth, but including the possible positive impact on, for example, citizenship, nation-building, good governance and above all sustainable development. Good practice examples will be included (e.g. in boxes) but not be presented as blueprints. The Statement will draw from the policy recommendations of the Good Practice Papers (Output 2).

18. The Task Team decided that it does not aim to find agreement on a clear-cut definition of social protection and empowerment. Instead, the Statement will describe a conceptual framework of social protection and empowerment that covers policy areas.
V Review of Good Practice Notes

19. Four draft Good Practice Notes, at different stage of development, and three Terms of Reference were submitted prior to the meeting and discussed thoroughly. All drafts and ToR were well received and the importance of the topics confirmed. Two additional topics were identified (see Table 1).

20. It was recommended that all papers should consider long term impacts of social protection and set their individual topics within a wider framework of social protection policy, including institutions and capacity development. The link to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the MDGs should equally be strengthened in all papers.

21. The structure of the papers should follow the guiding questions suggested above for the Policy Statement. However, they may also cover good practice and lessons learned on the technical level and cover implementation issues.

22. The discussion on the individual draft papers included the following recommendations:

- **Social Cash Transfers (EPRI):** The advanced draft was well received as it exemplifies the multidimensional positive impacts of cash transfers. It was suggested to add information on why social cash transfers (as opposed to food) were developed. The final paper will include more discussion on the key controversies and challenges: affordability, sustainability, targeting, conditionality, institutions and capacity development. It was also suggested to elaborate on intra-household dynamics, gender aspects and empowerment issues.

- **Health and social protection (GTZ):** The draft was considered as well advanced. It was suggested to discuss in more detail the mix of health protection instruments, especially with respect to reaching the poorest within a society. The paper will expand on different financing issues (including co-operatives, private foundations, global funds, public private partnerships, tax-based systems), affordability and accountability.

- **Social protection and empowerment in the context of HIV/AIDS (Ireland):** The draft provides a good overview on what is at stake when looking at HIV/AIDS with a broad perspective. It was suggested to condense the discussion on why the topic is important for pro-poor growth and at the same time include other links, e.g. to empowerment. The paper will also highlight how social protection can prevent HIV/AIDS. Additional discussion on financing and affordability was considered useful.

- **Agriculture, climate change adaption, disaster risk reduction and social protection (DFID):** the Terms of Reference were considered as clear and well structured. Some agencies regretted that landless farmers were excluded in the ToR’s methodological approach. The results of this paper will be an important input for POVNET country workshops on agriculture due to be held in Mali (last quarter 2007) and Malawi (2008).

- **Social protection in fragile states (DFID):** the ToR were particularly welcome as they focus on an area that is relatively new and challenging for donors and their partners. It will highlight the different challenges that social protection (policy) needs to address in the context of fragile states. Participants agreed to send the lead agency any relevant material they might have.

- **Targeting / Universalism (DFID):** This was considered a very important area of work as it discusses the different challenges, advantaged and disadvantages of universal and targeted social protection schemes. Participants agreed to send the lead agency any relevant material they might have.
• **Informality (SIDA):** The paper was very well received as it directly links to the Task Team on Employment and Labour Markets. Suggestions included the need to highlight the different informal sectors (affluent – not affluent), the reasons that might influence individuals’ decision to remain in the informal sector and how legal frameworks influence the informal sector.

23. The Task Team confirmed that a consultation process with partner countries is necessary before consolidating the Policy Statement and the Good Practice Notes.

24. The Task Team decided that Corporate Social Responsibility is not an immediate priority area for its present work programme. The Task Team’s efforts should rather aim at supporting developing countries to build sustainable national systems.

25. The revised good practice papers’ matrix (Table 1) indicates individual responsibilities for leading work on specific topics, along with support agencies.

**Table 1: “Advocacy Statement” and “Good Practice Papers” (Rev.2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lead agency</th>
<th>Supporting agency</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Next draft expected</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy and Advocacy Paper</td>
<td>EPRI</td>
<td>Task Team</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 Sept. 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social cash transfers</td>
<td>EPRI</td>
<td></td>
<td>Second draft</td>
<td>30 Sept. 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social protection</td>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td></td>
<td>First draft</td>
<td>15 Oct. 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and empowerment in the context of HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>DFID, Help Age</td>
<td>Second draft</td>
<td>31 Oct. 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk and exclusion during lifecycle</td>
<td>Help Age</td>
<td>GTZ and DFID</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 Oct. 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and social protection</td>
<td>DFID</td>
<td></td>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>18 Sept. 2007</td>
</tr>
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<td>Social protection in fragile states</td>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>NORAD</td>
<td>ToR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeting / universalism</td>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>30 March 2008 (final paper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and the informal economy</td>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td></td>
<td>First outline</td>
<td>26 Oct. 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social protection and empowerment</td>
<td>NL</td>
<td>SDC</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Financing of social protection</td>
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<td>Social protection and gender</td>
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<td>Ireland, Help Age</td>
<td>First quarter</td>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>Capacity development for social Protection</td>
<td>ISSA</td>
<td>DFID, EPRI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VI Other business**

26. The Task Team recommended continuing its search for an appropriate **icon**. The icon needs to be a simple, every day object.

27. The date and location of the next Task Team meeting will be arranged by e-mail.
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04 SEPTEMBER 2007

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