



Concept note for

A capacity building workshop on Social Protection Policies and Institutional Framework in Bangladesh

07 November 2022, Monday

09:00 - 14:00 (Bangladesh Standard Time, GMT+6)

Place: Auditorium, BRAC Centre Inn, 2nd Floor, BRAC Centre, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.



Context of the workshop

Building a rights-based social protection system has re-emerged as a new priority in both developing and developed countries, especially with the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. Countries across the world are now facing the daunting task of tackling COVID-19-impacts which has been further exacerbated by the adverse socio-economic situation triggered by the Russia-Ukraine war and its resultant consequences. Indeed, these crises have put the efforts to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs) under severe pressure and underscore the need to develop a proper social protection system.

The SDG Target 1.3 under Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere) calls for implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and achieving substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable. Bangladesh has made a determined effort to achieve the SDGs and intends to undertake a timely initiative of promoting the social protection system. The country formulated and adopted the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) in 2015, primarily based on the widely accepted lifecycle approach. This approach aims to support all eligible individuals to address livelihood risks at various stages of their life e.g., childhood, working age, and old age. The vision of the NSSS 2015 is to “build an inclusive social security system for all deserving Bangladeshis that effectively tackles and prevents poverty and inequality and contributes to broader human development, employment, and economic growth”. Therefore, properly implementing NSSS 2015 can work as an economic enabler and help the country achieve sustainable and inclusive growth. The NSSS 2015 was planned to be implemented through National Action Plans in a phased manner: (i) Phase I (2016–2021) and (ii) Phase II (2021–2026).

However, some major challenges surfaced with the implementation of NSSS 2015. The progress attained so far under different programmes included in the National Action Plan Phase I (2016–2021) has been quite low. Lack of knowledge and awareness about the key concepts and terminologies of social protection policies, including the social insurance issues among the relevant stakeholders (such as implementing agencies (ministries/departments), employers and workers) is one such major factor constraining the implementation progress as evidenced by the report on Midterm Progress Review of NSSS. It is worth noting that the lack of awareness is more acute when it comes to labour-related social protection policies, namely National Social Insurance Schemes (NSIS) – sickness, maternity, injury, and unemployment insurance schemes. Findings from a recent study conducted by the ILO involving the representatives from the tripartite-plus stakeholders suggest that majority of the respondents do not possess much knowledge about social protection and social insurance-related definitions and terminologies.

Besides, the presence of a well-structured institutional framework is an essential prerequisite for smooth functioning and delivering social protection programmes. However, in the context of Bangladesh, there has been extremely limited progress in implementing the NSIS largely due to a lack of adequate institutional capacities, i.e., the absence of a digital database compounded by a lack of knowledge and awareness. Given these circumstances, the government has adopted and started implementing the National Action Plan Phase II (2021–2026). Similar to the previous action plan, a significant number of targets of the current action plan will remain unattained unless any effective strategy is formulated and implemented to raise the knowledgebase and level of awareness among the tripartite-plus stakeholders.



Envisaged key takeaways of the workshop

In the above backdrop, the ILO Country Office in Bangladesh aims to undertake a series of awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives with the overarching goal of promoting social protection and social insurance programmes in the country. As part of those initiatives, the current workshop is the second one. The envisaged key takeaways of this workshop include, amongst others:

- ▶ To raise knowledge and awareness about technical concepts and terminologies associated with existing social protection policies, social insurance schemes, and relevant institutional framework in Bangladesh
- ▶ To disseminate frontier works on the NSSS and NSIS as well as their implementation status
- ▶ To discuss the existing institutional readiness towards implementing different dimensions of NSSS and NSIS
- ▶ To build a critical mass, including representatives from tripartite-plus constituents, with a clear understanding of social protection policies and social insurance schemes
- ▶ To shed light on the role of various stakeholders in taking forward the social protection agenda and contributing to the social dialogue process in building consensus

Delivery of the workshop

The modality of the workshop will be in-person. The workshop will be delivered through various interactive activities as follows:

- ▶ The workshop will kick-off with a baseline survey to assess the participants' existing knowledgebase
- ▶ After the survey, there will be two technical sessions. In each technical session, the workshop facilitator will deliver a trigger presentation on Bangladesh's social protection policies and institutional framework.
- ▶ The trigger presentation will be interactive in nature and engage with participants through policy debate, group exercises, problem-solving, dialogue simulation, spot quizzes and discussion session.
- ▶ After the workshop, an endline survey will be conducted among the participants to evaluate their knowledge and awareness with a view to comparing the outcomes with their pre-workshop knowledge and awareness level.

Participants

The workshop will involve most of the participants of the previous workshop (1st Capacity Building Workshop on Concepts of Universal and Comprehensive Social Protection and International Standards held on 27 September 2022). This is to ensure the continuity of awareness building and retain the knowledgebase of the participants. In addition, an attempt will be made to bring in new representatives from new constituents (if any constituent is missed).



Participants:

Government officials, employers, representatives from trade union, trade bodies, corporate leaders, think tanks, UN agencies and other development partners

Agenda

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Time	Activities
09:00 - 09:30	Registration
09:30 - 10:00	Inaugural session Welcome by RAPiD Participants' self-introduction Introductory remarks by ILO
10:00 - 11:30	Baseline survey of participants - RAPiD Workshop – Technical Session 1: Conducted by Dr M A Razzaque <i>Social Protection: National Policies and major programmes in Bangladesh</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Conceptual issues▶ Evolution of social protection programmes in Bangladesh▶ Life cycle approach to social protection▶ Group exercise on lifecycle programmes▶ Resource allocation for social protection (participants' policy debate)▶ Group exercise and policy debate on social protection allocation <i>Implementation of various social protection and social insurance schemes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Difference between NSSS and NSIS▶ Policy debate on targeting errors and universal social protection▶ Progress on implementation
11:30 - 11:45	Coffee break
11:45 - 13:30	Workshop – Technical Session 2 : Conducted by Dr M A Razzaque <i>ILO standards in social protection and social insurance issues</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Group discussion▶ Group exercise on designing an unemployment insurance scheme▶ Group exercise on providing the UI support to informal sector workers <i>Institutional Framework in Bangladesh</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Group discussions on where capacity building will be needed
13:00 - 13:20	Endline survey of participants – RAPiD Closing remarks by ILO Vote of thanks by RAPiD
13:20	Lunch and follow-up discussions with resource persons