

## TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXPERTS

Terms of reference for on-site activities and missions

**Action code and partner country:** *SOCIEUX 2020-09 CAMBODIA*

**Action title:** *Capacity building on social protection for persons with disabilities*

**Partner institution:** *Ministry of Economy and Finance / General Secretariat of the National Social Protection Council, Social Assistance Department*

**Activity number and title:** *Activity #3 – Development of Guidelines for a methodology to elaborate disability-inclusive social protection’s action plan*

**Date of implementation of activity (remotely):**

*September 13<sup>th</sup> to November 19<sup>th</sup> of 2021*

**Expert positions and responsibilities (by activity):**

Activity #3 : Expert #1 (*principal*) – *Expert in Disability-inclusive social protection*

Activity #3 : Expert #2 – *Expert in Legislative frameworks of Disability-inclusive social protection*

**Workload:**

Activity #3 - Expert #1 : 18 days

Activity #3 - Expert #2 : 17 days

**Call for experts’ reference:** **20-09/KHM/3**

**Version - #:** 2

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## 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1.1 Country overview

Cambodia's economy has witnessed a sustained expansion over the past two decades, with GDP per capita increasing two-folded between 2005 and 2013 and the country attaining the lower middle-income status as of 2015. Poverty continues to fall in Cambodia, albeit more slowly than in the past. In 2014, the poverty rate was 13.5% compared to 47.8% in 2007. Despite the Country has achieved the MDG of halving poverty in 2009 and improved infant and maternal health outcomes, and the decline in the Gini index between 2007 and 2012 witnesses a reduced inequality, around 4.5 million people remain near-poor, vulnerable to falling back into poverty when exposed to economic and other external shocks. The last general elections were held on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. With the absence of a credible opposition, the election resulted in a widely expected victory for the ruling Cambodian People's Party, who won all 125 seats in the National Assembly. Various international governments, as well as the European Union, dismissed the election results, and threatened to impose sanctions on Hun Sen's government.

### 1.2 Sector situation

In Cambodia there are many people of all ages and conditions with disabilities, living in every part of the country. Estimates of the prevalence of disability range from 1% to 4% (162.500 to 650.500 persons) of the total population of 16.25 million in 2018. Some have been disabled since they were born, and some were disabled due to circumstances such as road and land mine incidents, accidents, polio, stroke, and meningitis; and others are a result of the civil war and the Khmer Rouge regime that caused them permanent disability.

Most of them are from poor families and live in rural areas of the country where there are no accessible facilities to assist them. As a result, more often they go out to beg money from people to feed themselves and their families. Rehabilitation services are still limited in both the city and countryside; in addition, the financial means and the human resources to cope with the overwhelming needs of people with disabilities are still limited.

There are a few primary factors that really challenge persons with disabilities, including education, discrimination, employment, and, especially, accessibility. The limited capacity and resources of the general education system, especially in rural areas, has resulted in a majority of learners with disabilities being excluded from educational opportunities altogether. Furthermore, the employment rate of people with disabilities is very low. Even if the law states that all businesses and enterprises must hire one person with disability in every hundred employees they have, few employers obey the law. Also, discrimination and low educational skills are another reason why the employment rate is still on the ground floor. People with disabilities, if they are hired to work, are very lowly paid. Finally, the Cambodian physical environment contains so many obstacles for people with disabilities. Public streets and roadways have no accommodation for persons with disabilities so getting around is dangerous at best; in many cases impossible. Almost all public places and buildings do not have any access for persons with disabilities. Even educational institutions do not provide access or facilities for students with disabilities, so this likely discourages them from studying.

The Cambodian National Social Protection Policy Framework 2016-2025<sup>1</sup> was adopted in March 2017. This strategic document reflects the reality of the social protection system development in Cambodia, identifies important challenges that the country is facing, and defines strategic goals and plans to be implemented in the short, medium and long term, including for the people with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/cambodian-national-social-protection-policy-framework-2016-2025#:~:text=Cambodian%20National%20Social%20Protection%20Policy%20Framework%202016%2D2025,=The%20SPPF%20is&text=This%20strategic%20document%20reflects%20the,short%2C%20medium%20and%20long%20term.>

### **1.3 Role of partner institution in the sector**

Mandate of the National Social Protection Council (NSPC) is to coordinate social protection programs and decide on the targeting, design and extension of coverage in various schemes. The General Secretariat for the National Social Protection Council (GS NSPC) is supporting the NSPC in developing comprehensive proposals on the various social protection programs. GS NSPC has been officially set up in 2018 and is fully operational since March 2019. NSPC has ten ministries and other relevant institutions as members and is chaired by the Minister of Economy and Finance. GS NSPC is hosted by the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

The National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) serves as the most relevant policy document for the development of social protection schemes in Cambodia. The document mentions (under "2.4.2.1 Social Welfare of Vulnerable People") persons with disabilities as one of the main challenges that social protection Cambodia shall address.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation is responsible for people with disabilities. It currently has an allowance system in place covering a few districts in three provinces. The NSPPF intends to expand this to all provinces. In 2016, 11.600 people with disabilities have received an allowance.

The Health Equity Fund (HEF) as part of the H-EQUIP World Bank Trust Fund project covers health expense for poor households identified by IDPoor (IDPoor I, II and PostIDPoor). 40% of all people with disabilities are living in families identified by IDPoor. By HEF poor households with people with disabilities can receive health and rehabilitation services without co-payments. There is no provision for covering additional direct or opportunity costs for people with disabilities.

Other people with disabilities might be covered by NSSF (health, work injury, in future pension) once they belong to the coverage groups. It is unknown how many people with disabilities are not covered by NSSF as an own category of insured people.

## **2 ACTION DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 Overall objective**

To increase GS NSPC staff's and relevant stakeholders' knowledge about social protection for people with disabilities

### **2.2 Specific objective (s) (purpose)**

- SO1. To increase GS NSPC staff's and relevant stakeholders' understanding about social protection for people with disabilities as they are conceived and implemented in different countries
- SO2. GS NSPC staff and relevant stakeholders are in capacity to draft a comprehensive national social protection scheme for people with disabilities

### **2.3 Expected results**

Policy options for establishing a social protection scheme for people with disabilities are outlined by the GS NSPC's staff with the participation of relevant stakeholders

### **2.4 Final deliverables**

- D1. A compendium of policies and measures (assessment, benefits, health, education, vocational training and employment promotion, etc.) in the area of social protection of people with disabilities.
- D2. Mapping of the current services and programs dedicated to people with disabilities, provided by different national and international stakeholders in Cambodia.

- D3. A brief assessment of the extent of social protection coverage of people with disabilities in Cambodia, and eventual gaps in terms of targeting, adequacy, assessment and identification, enrolment.
- D4. The finalised version of the guidelines on the methodology to be used to elaborate action plan for disability-inclusive social protection.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 General methodology (of the action)

The [National Social Protection Council](#) (NSPC) has the mandate to develop the social protection system and to ensure better harmonization of the different strategies, policies and other social protection activities and is in charge of the overall coordination of the social protection policies, including for the people with disabilities.

Since most of the staff members at the General Secretariat for the National Social Protection Council (GS NSPC) are new to the domain of social protection and are coming from a variety of professional backgrounds, the technical assistance provided by SOCIEUX+ through mobilized EU public experts shall unfold in three stages.

The **first activity** allowed to present international and EU best practices and cases with regards to social protection coverage of people with disabilities. Concrete examples were showcased to staff belonging to MEF – GS NSPC and other relevant stakeholders identified by the Partner.

The **second activity** gathered a number of relevant stakeholders dealing with social protection of people with disabilities (Cambodian Disabled People’s Organization, EUD, GIZ, UNICEF, ACCESS Program...), with the objective of outlining a mapping of the existing policies, measures, initiatives, both from national institutions, and development partners. The mapping listed the existing items in this regard, but also provided a critical assessment of them, in view of identifying possible coverage gaps or inconsistencies.

Taking into account the inter-institutional EU experience with regards to the coordination of the disability sector, the **third activity** will focus on the development, with the GS NSPC’s staff, of guidelines for a methodology that could be used for the elaboration of action plan/policies for disability-inclusive social protection.

With regards to this third and last activity, the peer-to-peer cooperation between European experts and their counterparts at the NSPC will take place remotely, as the current global health emergency due to the continuation of the COVID-19 infection, and the related ongoing restrictions to international travel, do not allow an on-site mission of the experts in conditions of safety and certainty. SOCIEUX+ will provide to experts a ZoomPro licence for the duration of the assignment.

#### 3.2 Planned activities (work plan of the action)

The following activities are currently planned for the action:

- Activity 1 – Setting the ground on disability policies
- Activity 2 – Mapping and assessment of Disability-inclusive social protection policies.
- Activity 3 –Development of Guidelines for a methodology to elaborate disability-inclusive social protection’s action plan

The present terms of reference cover the services expected for activities of the above work plan:

- **Activity #3 – Development of guidelines for a methodology to elaborate disability-inclusive social protection’s action plan.**

### 3.3 Inclusion of cross-cutting issues

SOCIEUX+ recognises the importance to include cross-cutting issues in social protection, labour and employment policies and systems. The following cross-cutting issues are duly taken into account:

- Gender equality;
- Good governance;
- Human rights (including rights of children, people living with disabilities, vulnerable groups and minorities); and,
- Social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.

## 4 ACTIVITIES DESCRIPTION

### 4.1 Tasks

The principal expert will be responsible for the delivery of all deliverables of the activity (see below Section **iError! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.**). He/she will be responsible for the preparation, coordination, implementation and reporting of the overall activity towards SOCIEUX+.

This third activity will be implemented through a series of tailored workshops on the following topics (these topics cannot be considered an exhaustive list; they will be specified in the intermediate deliverables – see section 4.2.1):

- **modality of inter-institutional consultation:** which actors are concerned? for what purpose? how to consult them?
- **planning over time:** definition of objectives, responsibilities, performance indicators, and resources
- **monitoring and evaluation** for the disability inclusive social protection programmes and action plan: general concept, indicators
- **relationship with international cooperation:** how to create synergies?
- **Exchange on EU good practices**

At the end of this activity the GS NSPC staff would have a complete methodology on how to develop an action plan for disability-inclusive social protection.

The main tasks of the mission team include:

#### Preparation phase:

- **Task #1** – Ahead of the mission, to get substantial knowledge of the local context; review any relevant background documents provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team and/or the Partner. The experts will familiarise themselves with the different templates and evaluation forms provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team.
- **Task #2** - Preliminary contacts with the Partner in view of the preparation of the mission's methodology and agenda.
- **Task #3** - A briefing meeting will be organised between the experts and the SOCIEUX+ team prior to the remote mission. The purpose of this meeting will be to validate the intermediate deliverables, which will have to be approved by the SOCIEUX+ team, as well as to clarify any other aspects to be taken into account. This includes possibilities in terms of production of communication materials and knowledge management. A separate meeting could be arranged with the SOCIEUX+ communications specialist and/or the knowledge development specialist, as appropriate.
- **Task #4** - contact the Delegation of the European Union in Cambodia to arrange a videoconference (briefing and/or debriefing depending on the interest of the EUD).
- **Task #5** – Settle the logistical arrangements with SOCIEUX+ for the implementation of distance activities (Zoom, Moodle...)

Implementation phase (The details of this phase will follow the methodology and agenda prepared beforehand):

- **Task #6** – to conduct consultations with the Partner to define the content of the workshops and the profile of the participants.
- **Task #7** – To organise and animate the workshops. The experts will invite the participants of the virtual workshops to complete the online evaluation forms ([PAF](#)) in English. The actual compilation of these reports by the participants is however not the responsibility of the experts.
- **Task #8** – To present the outcomes of the mission to the partner in order to discuss and take into account comments on the contents of the deliverables before their finalization.
- **Task #9** – The experts will be available for a remote debriefing meeting with the EU Delegation.
- **Task #10** – Depending on the visibility and/or knowledge development possibilities identified during the preparation with the SOCIEUX+ team, the experts will be able to transmit to SOCIEUX+ any useful material to inform the public about the activity (photos, interviews, notes or articles), as well as making short videos presenting the actors involved, the activity and the results, if necessary.

Reporting phase

- **Task #11** - Finalisation of the deliverables of the activity; experts may be invited to make changes/additions to the deliverables, taking into account the Partner's feedback.
- **Task #12** - Experts will complete individually an Expert Mission Report (ExMR) and a Feedback Form ([ExF](#)), to be shared only with SOCIEUX+.

## 4.2 Deliverables

### 4.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables

- P1: A methodological note, detailing the working approach, tools and methods to employ, a risks analysis, etc. The Methodological Note shall not exceed 3 pages (excluding cover page and annexes).
- P2: A activity/mission agenda, detailing the meetings and working sessions to be held, persons to meet, etc. The Activity/mission Agenda shall not exceed 2 pages.

### 4.2.2 Final deliverables

- **D1: An individual Expert Mission Report (ExMR)** in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This report is a confidential product intended solely for and use by SOCIEUX+. The expert team may also submit a single-joint ExMR report if they prefer to do so (see instructions on the template).
- **D2: An individual Expert Feedback Form ([ExF](#))** completed online (see instructions and link on the ExMR template).
- **D3: A collective Activity Report (AcR)** in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This AcR is to be produced jointly by the mission team. It is intended for the Partner Institution, and will be shared, most probably, with key stakeholders of the action. The report will reflect the tasks conducted in during the activity. It shall provide a meaningful contribution towards the final deliverables of the action.
- **D4 - Annex 1 of the AcR:** The materials and presentations employed by experts during the workshops (agenda, videos, PPT presentations ...).
- **D5- Annex 2 of the AcR:** The finalised version of the guidelines on the methodology to be used to elaborate action plan for disability-inclusive social protection

**NB: The Principal Expert is responsible for the overall preparation and transmission of the activity's deliverable, in cooperation with rest of the expert team.**

## 5 REPORTING AND SUBMISSION OF DELIVERABLES

### 5.1 Formats

All deliverables and products of the activity (notes, reports, presentations, etc) shall comply with the formats and templates provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All deliverables are to be submitted in electronic in electronic editable versions [Microsoft Word 97-2003 [doc], PowerPoint 97-2003 [ppt] and Excel 97-2003 [xls]; or in equivalent OpenDocument format). Non-editable electronic document such as in Portable Document Format (PDF) shall not be accepted.

Templates for electronic presentations during the activity/mission are provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team. These templates are in Microsoft PowerPoint format and comply with the SOCIEUX+ Corporate Image standards. These templates are to be used as a sole format by all members of the expert mission team. They are to be used for all presentations by the experts during and for the activity/mission. The use by the experts of their own, or their organisation(s), templates or formats are not allowed unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All versions of deliverables or other products used or produced during activity/mission by the experts shall include the following disclaimer:

*"Disclaimer:*

*The responsibility of this publication sole lies with its authors. The European Union, the European Commission, the implementation partners of SOCIEUX+ and the SOCIEUX+ Staff are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein."*

Please refer to the expert information package for further guidance on communication and templates.

All deliverables are to be provided in English.

### 5.2 Submission and approval

All deliverables versions (drafts, final or other) shall be submitted directly and only to SOCIEUX+ Team, unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

#### 5.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables

- Pre-mission deliverables shall be submitted no later than 5 working days before the start of activity or departure of the mission of the experts, whichever is the earliest.
- Pre-mission deliverables will be shared and reviewed by the SOCIEUX+ and the Partner Institution. Feedback on the deliverables should be provided to the Principal Expert at latest 2 days before the start of activity or departure of the mission of the experts, whichever is the earliest. Comments and recommendation of this feedback shall be taken into account for the implementation of the activity/mission by the experts. Only the mission agenda shall be resubmitted with revision if requested by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

#### 5.2.2 Final deliverables

- The first draft versions of the final deliverables are to be submitted no later than 10 working days upon completion of the activity or return of the experts.
- Feedback to the first draft version of the report should be provided 10 working days after its submission.
- Inclusion of the feedback on drafts versions is expected 5 working days upon reception of the comments by the principal expert. (In general, no more than one round of feedback and revision is required, unless the quality of the deliverables is considered unsatisfactory by the SOCIEUX+ Team or/and the Partner Institution.)
- Final versions of the deliverables should be approved or rejected no later than 10 working days upon their submission to the SOCIEUX+ Team.

- Final payments and reimbursement of travel costs to experts can only be authorised upon approval of the final version of the deliverables by SOCIEUX+.

## 6 REQUIRED EXPERTISE

### 6.1 Expertise profile

#### **Principal expert (Expert #1): Disability-inclusive social protection**

- **Area(s) of expertise:** Disability Benefits (E.10.01) / Social Protection (E.00) /Rights of Disabled People (L.40)
- **Specific skill(s) of expertise:** 1.2 Policy & Strategy making and development (1.2); Monitoring & Evaluation - M&E (5.1)

#### **Requirements (essential/required):**

- University level (Masters or PhD relating to the subject are considered a plus)
- At least 10 years of professional experience within EU public administrations or, international organisations, academia, social partners, civil society;
- Relevant experience in designing, managing and/or evaluating Disability-inclusive social protection policies;
- Significant experience and proved capacities in individual and organizational capacity building of public administrations;
- Acute sense of diplomacy and institutional relations.

#### **Additional assets (advantageous in selection):**

- Fluent in English, written and oral;
- A previous experience in delivering short-term technical assistance in international cooperation;
- A previous professional experience in Cambodia or in the South-East Asia

#### **Expert #2: Legislative frameworks of Disability-inclusive social protection**

- **Area(s) of expertise:** Disability Benefits (E.10.01) / Social Protection (E.00) /Rights of Disabled People (L.40)
- **Specific skill(s) of expertise:** Legislation & Regulation making and development (2.1)/ Policy & Strategy making and development (1.2)

#### **Requirements (essential/required):**

- Education: university level (Masters or PhD relating to the subject are considered a plus)
- At least 5 years of professional experience within EU public administrations or, international organisations, academia, social partners, civil society;
- Relevant experience in contributing to drafting legislative frameworks for Disability-inclusive social protection policies;
- Significant experience and proved capacities in individual and organizational capacity building of public administrations;



- Acute sense of diplomacy and institutional relations.

**Additional assets (advantageous in selection):**

- Fluent in English, written and oral;
- A previous experience in delivering short-term technical assistance in international cooperation;
- A previous professional experience in Cambodia or in the South-East Asia.

## 6.2 Estimated workload

	Preparation	Remote work	Travel	Reporting & deliverables	Total Working days
Principal expert (#1)	4	10	0	4	18
Expert (#2)	3	10	0	4	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>

## 7 APPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Call for experts

All calls for experts for SOCIEUX+ activities are published online on the SOCIEUX+ website. Interested experts should submit their application on the SOCIEUX+ on-line expert database: <https://pmt.socieux.eu> (currently only available in English). The application process is:

1. If they have not already, experts create their SOCIEUX+ account by clicking on "Create an account" using an email address.
2. Login details for their account will be sent to experts by email, experts should create and submit their profile for review by<sup>2</sup>:
  - a. Providing contact details
  - b. Providing information on the competences, skills and working history of the expert. Experts are required to provide only limited information through fields marked with an asterisk. However, *experts are encouraged to complete in most detail de sections on skills and competences as the SOCIEUX+ Team also regularly reviews profiles in the roster to identify and contact potential experts for future missions.*
  - c. Uploading of a curriculum vitae, preferably in Europass format<sup>3</sup>.
3. Once their profile is approved by the SOCIEUX+ Team, they can apply to any available calls for experts accessible under the tab "Call for experts" and click on "Apply."

If more information is needed, please contact SOCIEUX+ by email at [experts@socieux.eu](mailto:experts@socieux.eu) with the reference number of the application.

<sup>2</sup> SOCIEUX+ expert database and other management tools comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

<sup>3</sup> Europass templates for CVs are available here: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

Collaborative or interested institutions wishing to make expertise available for a specific call for application may directly contact the team of SOCIEUX+ at [experts@socieux.eu](mailto:experts@socieux.eu).

## 7.2 Selection of experts

In principle, SOCIEUX+ mobilises experts from the public administrations and mandated bodies of EU member states, and practitioners working for social partners, including:

- Practitioners, civil servants and employees from publicly mandated bodies;
- Collaborators and employees of social partner institutions, such as trade unions and employer associations; and,
- Academic and research institutions.

Active public experts from collaborative institutions are given priority in the selection. Private consultants may also apply. Their application will be considered in case an appropriate public expert cannot be identified.

Only short-listed applicants may be contacted. The selection process may include interviews by phone or other communication means.

Interested candidates may download the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative Institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ at [www.socieux.eu](http://www.socieux.eu)

## 7.3 Contracting of public experts

Public experts can be in active duty or retired. Retired employees from international specialised agencies or cooperation agencies can also be mobilised, without regard to their former employer's collaborating with SOCIEUX+ on a specific action. Retired experts are considered as public experts for all purposes, benefits, and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

Short-listed candidates may be required to provide the contact of employer or proof of their ability to be directly contracted under their status as civil servant or public employee.

## 7.4 Financial compensations

Contract officials or active-duty or retired employees are entitled to standard fixed allowances of 350 euros per working day worked. The fees of private consultants are negotiated according to their number of years of relevant expertise and the standard scale of SOCIEUX+.

Retired experts are assimilated to public employees for all intents and purposes, benefits and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

National regulations on remuneration and compensation of public employees and civil servants applies and may limit the payment of allowances by SOCIEUX+. The responsibility for compliance and verification lies with individual experts and their institutions of origin. The payment of income or other taxes is the sole responsibility of the mobilised experts and/or their organisations.

## 7.5 Travel costs

All travel expenses for the mobilised experts (public, private or international institutions) are covered by SOCIEUX in accordance with the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ (version as on date of signature of the contract).

# 8 COMMUNICATION & VISIBILITY

SOCIEUX + can use its communication channels, such as the web, newsletter and other media, to share information about the implementation and results of the activities. For this, contributions of the experts mobilised are expected. The experts may be requested to provide such contributions in the field of communication as photographs, provide short texts, and interviews.

Short briefings, before and after the mission, with the Communication Officer of SOCIEUX+. This briefings will provide the opportunity to identify communication opportunities and strategies.

For specific activities, visibility products, such as brochures, USB sticks, notebooks and pens, can be made available to experts for on-site distribution.

## **9 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The experts mobilised by SOCIEUX+ will provide technical assistance from the preparatory stages of each activity to the delivery of products. The SOCIEUX+ Team will assist experts to fulfil their assignments by supporting and advising on the preparation of background materials before meetings. The SOCIEUX+ team will collect feedback from partner institutions and relevant stakeholders to ensure that mission reports and recommendations are delivered to national authorities, the EU Delegations in the partner countries and EuropeAid.

The experts mobilised are not representing SOCIEUX+ or the EU. Technical opinions and recommendations expressed are their own. They shall not express negative opinions on the implementation of actions supported by SOCIEUX+ to third-parties. Nevertheless, they shall be aware of SOCIEUX+'s objectives and functioning, and promote its services at the best of their knowledge, whenever possible and feasible.

The experts shall perform their duties in the Partner Country in a way that is fully compliant with and respectful of the local institutions, policies and cultural behaviours. They shall particularly adopt a culturally-sensitive behaviour in their way to deal with the local counterparts.

## **10 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

*If applicable*

## **11 ANNEXES**

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## ABOUT SOCIEUX+

The European Union (EU) promotes and maintains dialogue on social protection and inclusive employment policies with an increasing number of partner countries. This effort has been confirmed by the European Commission (EC) Communication COM (2016) 740 final - "Proposal for a new European Consensus on Development, entitled *Our world, our dignity, our future*. A significant number of cooperation initiatives in these fields are funded by geographic or thematic instruments of the EU in different countries. Those initiatives are highly structured and address the medium- to long-term needs of partner countries. However, short-term measures and peer-to-peer cooperation to promote the development of social protection systems are needed to complement the EU's cooperation with third countries. SOCIEUX+ - EU Expert Facility on Employment, Labour and Social Protection responds to this need.

The SOCIEUX+ facility was setup by the EU through co-funding from France, Spain and Belgium and the resources managed by the European Commission's Directorate for Development and Cooperation (EuropeAid). The facility is implemented by a partnership composed of development cooperation agencies from Member States: Expertise France (the partnership lead), Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas (FIIAPP) from Spain, Belgian International Cooperation on Social Protection (BELINCOSOC), and the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel).

The general objective of the Facility is to expand and improve access to better employment opportunities and inclusive social protection systems in partner countries. Its specific objective is to enhance the capacities of partner countries to better design, manage and monitor inclusive, effective, and sustainable employment strategies and social protection systems through short-term, peer-to-peer technical assistance and knowledge development.

SOCIEUX+ recognises the impact of social protection and employment in reducing poverty and vulnerability. It supports the efforts of partner governments in promoting inclusive and sustainable social protection and employment systems. SOCIEUX+ also complements the efforts made through other European Union initiatives.

The Facility is an expansion of SOCIEUX Social Protection EU Expertise in Development Cooperation, established in 2013.

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