



CONCEPT NOTE

Early childhood development and comprehensive care in early childhood in the framework of universal social protection: a global perspective

Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, Mexico City

Wednesday October 2, 2019 (1-2.30pm)

Background

Universal social protection (USP) refers to the specific social protection systems in each country, with policies and programs that provide all persons with an equitable access, protecting and promoting welfare along the life cycle, and confronting poverty and different kinds of risks. USP's mechanisms may vary widely, including cash or in-kind transfers, contributory or non-contributory programs and programs aimed to strengthen human capacities, productive assets and access to employment.

The concept of USP is contained in the Universal Human Rights Declaration of 1948, in which it is formulated as the objective of comprehensive social protection for every human being: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control". Likewise, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reaffirms in target 1.3 of the first Sustainable Development Goal that it is necessary to "Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable".

In order to achieve its goals, social protection systems must consider fully in its design a rights-based approach and a life cycle perspective. Currently, in Latin American and Caribbean countries, as well as globally, there is wide consensus regarding the relevance of universalizing social protection policies and programs for children, in order to guarantee the rights of boys, girls and adolescents. This is further promoted when considering the impacts of this investment in the individual and collective wellbeing. It is not only most likely that children are more exposed to the consequences of poverty and extreme poverty –even in developed countries-, but also that the effects of poverty will remain in them for the rest of their lives, leading to poor health conditions, malnutrition, lags in development or lack or scarce access to education. This also has a great influence in their future work performance. Thus, investing in early childhood is one of the most cost-effective public policy measures that a country can adopt to stop the intergenerational transmission of poverty, close the inequality gaps and promote development among the population.

Within the region, the linkages between social protection and early childhood development have intensified in recent years, in line with the construction of comprehensive care in early childhood policies; some of these have become subsystems of countries' universal social protection systems. These policies comprise a series of intertwined interventions in the areas of health and nutrition, early education, care, and in some cases, family income. Their enforcement coexists with the discussion on a new global initiative for the promotion of universal child grants, which could be analysed for its inclusion as part of these policies.

On the basis of these elements, this event aims to gather social protection specialists from different regions in the world to exchange knowledge on universal social protection and early childhood development.

Methodology and questions

The event's main approach will be promoting and exchanging best practices for progressive coverage and local implementation of comprehensive social protection programmes for early childhood development.

The event includes a 15-minute opening speech on social protection for children, followed by a conversation panel. In the conversation panel, in which no use of Power Point presentations will be made, each panellist will have 10 minutes to conduct her intervention, on the basis of the questions formulated by the moderator.

The questions which will guide the conversation are: which are the links between social protection and early childhood development based on the experience of countries that have promoted joint actions in both dimensions? What institutional challenges confront the implementation of comprehensive answers from social protection for comprehensive care in early childhood? And what components and benefits should be prioritized in these comprehensive systems?

Objectives

- To promote progressive universal coverage of comprehensive social protection programs for early childhood development
- Interregional knowledge exchange on the local implementation of comprehensive social protection programs for early childhood development and malnutrition

Date and venue

The workshop will take place on Wednesday 2 October 2019, from 1.00 to 2.30pm, at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs in Mexico City, in the framework of the Third Session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Participation

The workshop is oriented to government representatives and the public of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Limited seating.

Language

Spanish and English (with translation)



PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

- 13:00-13:10 Welcome remarks and moderator: Christof Kersting, Director, Global Alliances for Social Protection II, GIZ
- 13:10-13:25 Monica Rubio, Regional Advisor on Social Policies, UNICEF, "Towards universal social protection for children"
- 13:25-14:15 Panel discussion on the challenges to implement comprehensive early childhood development programs
- Julio Bango, National Secretary of Care, Minister of Social Development, Uruguay
 - Nicolás Reyes, Director of the National Council for Intergenerational Equality, Ecuador
 - Simone Cecchini, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division, ECLAC
- 14:15-14:25 Questions and discussion
- 14:25-14:30 Final remarks: Youssouf Abdel-Jelil, Deputy Regional Director at UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean