



**FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALISED
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (STC-SDLE-4)
04-08 APRIL 2022
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

***Theme: “Building forward Better Well Being and Living Standards in
Africa”***

**Draft Terms of Reference of the African Social Security Coordination and
Cooperation Forum**

1. Background and rationale:

Africa is pursuing the goal of decent work in a context of labour market marked by high level of working poverty, precarious working conditions prevailing in the informal economy and rural sector. Social security coverage is limited to 20% of workers on the continent. SMEs are faced with difficulties to set appropriate and effective social security policies and systems. Challenges also exist on the access of migrant workers to social security and portability of the social benefits.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the prevailing situation, including with millions of workers laid off without set back in the form of unemployment insurance or any other kind of social protection, as underscored during the tripartite virtual meeting of African ministers of labour on the impacts of the pandemic in April 2020. This is coupled with the lack of coordination on social security, both in terms of policy frameworks and legal instruments harmonization, and in terms of cooperation between the social security institutions at continental level.

Mindful of this state of affairs, during its extraordinary session in Abidjan in December 2019, the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE) decided to work towards the coordination of and cooperation between the social security institutions and tasked the AUC to facilitate the process.

Relevant AU Policy frameworks and legal instruments call for coordination and cooperation on social security and social protection.

The Rules of Procedure of the STC make provisions for promotion of harmonization, coordination and cooperation in social protection and social security.

Among the policy and legal frameworks responding to the issues, it is worth mentioning the AU Constitutive Act, the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Ouaga+10 Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development, the Social Protection Plan for Workers in the Informal Economy and Rural sector (**SPREWORLD**), the Social Agenda 2063, the Programme on Decent Work for the Transformation of the Informal Economy, the forthcoming Protocol on Social Protection and Social Security, the Migration Policy Framework, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Accelerated Industrialization of Africa (AIDA), among others.

The Pan Africa Social Security Coordination and Cooperation Forum originate from the above STC decision and build on its Rules of Procedures.

These Draft Terms of Reference provide an operational framework to the 2019 Ministerial Decision by providing a clear operating modality of this forum in terms of the objectives, membership, organization, functioning, meetings, financing and reporting procedures.

The African Social Security Coordination and Cooperation Forum herein referred as "**ASSCCF**" is a tripartite continental platform aiming at improving the wellbeing of all categories of workers on the continent, in line with international standards, policy

frameworks and legal instruments at continental and regional (Regional Economic Communities) levels. It is a platform for experience exchange, policy proposals, capacity building through continental cooperation, etc. As a technical organization, it adopts decision and recommendations for submission to the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment, onwards to the Executive Council and the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the Union.

The Forum will seek contributing to the Aspiration 1 of the AU Agenda 2063 “A Prosperous Africa, based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development”, through a “High Standard of Living, Quality of Life and Well Being for All Citizens”, focusing on the priority area of access to social security and social protection, incomes, jobs and decent work.

Considering the particularity of African economies generally dominated by informal economy and rural sector, the Forum will include non-conventional social security and social protection organizations, providing protection to workers in these sectors crippled by high level of working poverty and limited access to social protection if any. Such organizations include mutual benefits and cooperatives, etc.

This will ensure that the forum plays a crucial role in the implementation of the AU legal and policy frameworks on social security, social protection, poverty eradication and equal justice. The Forum will take into account the policy frameworks and legal instruments enacted by the Regional Economic Communities.

It will also be a strategic forum to build continental common understanding and position on international agenda on decent work, social protection and social security, as well before embarking on engagement with the international community.

2. Definitions and concepts

Coordination: the coordination is in line with the Power and Functions of the STC (Article 5.h, Rules of Procedure)

Cooperation: the cooperation is in line with the Power and Functions of the STC (Article 5.a, Rules of Procedure)

Article 3.k, Objectives, Au constitutive Act “Promote co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples”

(c) Accelerate the political and social economic integration of continent

Harmonization: the harmonization is in line with the Power and Functions of the STC (Article 5.d, Rules of Procedure)

Agenda 2063: Harmonization of Policies, Systems and Processes

While managing Africa's diversities should be built into the process of "Making It Happen", there is the need to ensure universality in certain areas if the integrity of process is to be maintained. Some of the areas of focus include:

- Indicators: The indicators selected by Member States to track the progress towards the attainment of the targets, should be similar and the method for their computation and verification should also be identical. If that harmonization is not maintained, it will be difficult to aggregate / compare the performance of member states at the regional and continental levels
- Monitoring and Evaluation Tools: While member states are encouraged to leverage on their national strengths, there is the need to have a minimum set of tools that will be uniform and enhance comparability of outcomes between /within member states in a region and between Member States across regions.

Contributory social security systems:

Non-contributory social protection programmes:

3. Mission/Vision of the Forum

The mission of the forum is to promote sustainable and All Workers Inclusive social security systems in Africa aiming at guaranteeing safety, health, well-being of workers and members of their families, improving productivity and competitiveness of African economies, in accordance with AU Agenda 2063,

4. Objectives of the Forum

The main objective of the -Africa Forum for Social Security's Institutions is to provide a coordination and cooperation platform for informal and non-binding dialogue on issues and opportunities related to social security's management and their role in the development agenda of Member States and of the African Union.

Specifically, the Forum serves to:

In delivering its mandate, the Forum will undertake the following functions:

- a. Foster cooperation between national and regional social security organizations
- b. Promote harmonization of social security legislations and policies in order to accompany the regional social and economic integration processes
- c. Promote the principle of All Workers Inclusive Social Security by working on the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy and rural sector, and ensuring access of migrant workers to social security and portability of the social benefits, and by leveraging the synergy and complementarity of the

contributory social security systems with the non-contributory social protection programmes

- d. Contribute, through advice and advocacy, to the effective translation of the social security legal instruments and policies of the Union into concrete programmes, as well as the evaluation of these programmes, in order to enhance an African social model and way of life.
- e. Enhance the technical and administrative capacity of social security institutions through training, expertise support, advisory services, exchange and peer-to-peer learning programs, sharing of best practices and Community of Practices, etc
- f. Collect, collate and disseminate information and data on social security matters, and establish a continental Social Security Information System building on regional Social Security Information System in RECS
- g. Promote good governance, democratic principles, and gender equality in social security systems
- h. Spearhead the international cooperation and partnership of the African Union and its Organs in the field of social security with regional organizations existing in other regions of the world, as well as with international organizations such as international Labour Organizations, ISSA, etc
- i. Engage and promote dialogue among all the relevant stakeholders toward the effective implementation of its mandate and activities
- j. Undertake studies research's that are recommended or deemed necessary by any other organ of the Union and submit recommendations accordingly.
- k. Contribute to the promotion of popularization/cascading, popular participation, sharing of best practices and expertise, and to the realization of the vision and objectives of the Union.
- l. Assume such other functions as may be referred to it by the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment of the AUC or any other organs of the Union.

5. Membership of the Forum

Social Security Institutions of AU Member States are Members of the Forum. They are represented by their Director General, CEOs, or officially designated delegates.

The representation will encompass the academia, through faculties of occupational medicine, the diaspora as the 6th region of the Union, the RECs.

The Meeting of the CEOs and DGs will be held on biannual basis and will report to the statutory meeting of the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.

The Forum shall ensure effective representation of the workers in the informal economy and rural sector in its activities, including the Meeting of CEOs and DGs.

International organizations and Observers can be admitted

6. Organization and Office

The structures of the Forum shall be:

- The Bureau
- The Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Forum is ensured by the African Union Commission, Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development

6.1. Bureau of the Forum: Principles, Composition, Duration of Tenure of Office, and Meeting

The Bureau of the Forum is elected by the Meeting of the CEOs and DGs based on the principles of regional rotation, gender and tripartism, after due consultations

The Bureau will consist of:

- A Chairperson who is elected among the CEOs and DGs of National Social Security Institutions
- A First Vice Chairperson, representing the workers
- A Second Vice Chairperson representing the employers
- A Rapporteur

The Members of the Bureau shall hold office for a period of two (2) years renewable once.

The Bureau will meet at least twice every year.

6.2. Functions of the Bureau

The Bureau, shall inter alia,

- a) provide political responsibility for the general management of Forum
- b) coordinate the activities of the Forum in conformity with the Mandate and functions
- c) follow up on the implementation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct developed for members and other organizations affiliated to the Forum
- d) prepare and submit periodic or annual reports of Forum to the STCs
- e) perform such other functions as directed by the STC.

7. Functioning of the Forum:

The Forum shall establish its own Rules of Procedure.

8. Finances: The Social Security Institutions will bear the costs of their participation in the Forum.

9. Reports of the Forum

The Chairperson of the Forum submits Reports to the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment during its ordinary sessions.

10. Decision and Recommendations of the Forum and Linkages with AU Decision making Structures on Labour and Employment

All decisions and recommendations of the Forum meetings will be taken on the basis of consensus. They shall be forwarded to the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Social Development, Labour and Employment for endorsement by the Committee.

11. Operationalization and Amendments to these Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall enter into force after the validation and adoption by the 4th Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Social Development, Labour and Employment.

Any amendments to the Terms of Reference shall only be undertaken by the Forum through its own motion.