**LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
COMMISSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION
Ninth Ordinary Session
8-12 April 2013
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA**

*THEME: "Enhancing the Capacity of the Labour Market Institutions in Africa to meet
the Current and Future Challenges"*

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

2013-2016

Introduction

Work in the informal economy (I.E.) in Africa, implies, by definition, work without social protection. This lack of social protection is a key defining characteristic of the I.E, as well a critical aspect of social exclusion - less than 10% of workers in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia have access to social security. The working conditions of most African informal economy workers are particularly hazardous, and yet it is these vulnerable workers who are least able to access any social protection under current social security schemes. Many are not able, or willing, to contribute a significant percentage of their income to finance formal sector social insurance benefits that do not meet their priority needs - they are disempowered. Therefore, it is informal sector workers themselves that need to (and have) set up health and other social insurance schemes which better meet their needs and contributory capacity.

African Union Leaders have provided policy responses to these challenges. Key Priority Area 4 of the ***Ouagadougou Plan of Action on Employment Promotion and Poverty Alleviation*** *(*EXT/ASSEMBLY/AU/4 (III), calls for *"improving and strengthening the existing social protection schemes and extending it to workers and their families currently excluded, as well as occupational safety, health and hygiene*". In addition, the **Africa Health Strategy: 2007-2015,** and the ***Social Policy Framework for Africa*** (Windhoek, October 2008) emphasises the strategies of the Ouagadougou 2004 Plan of Action and underscores the need to *"develop an extension of social security and social protection to cover the informal workers as well as their families".* Other AU Policies address the challenges of HIV/AIDS, TB-Malaria, and Maternal and Child Health (Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality-**CARMMA, 2009).** The Declaration on "*Creating Employment for Accelerating Youth Development and Empowerment",* **Assembly/AU/Decl.1 (XVI)** calls to **"***ACCELERATE appropriate social protection coverage expansion for the youth, women, informal economy and rural workers and members of their families, in order to reduce poverty and vulnerability*".

The Continent is faced with numerous constraints in effectively reaching the ILO Social Security standards through implementation of the **Income Security Recommendation, 1944 (No. 67),** the **Medical Care Recommendation, 1944 (No. 69),** and the **Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102).** Through Social Protection measures aiming at increasing the level to social protection coverage of the informal economy workers, **SPIREWORK** will contribute to achieving the labour-market related MDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8. SPIREWORK is built on Core Principles, Country Defined Minimum Package (MCDP) and Enabling factors. Considering the importance of implementation and responding to a request from the Heads of States, the AUC has developed a Campaign Strategy (2012-2016) to provide guidance and support stakeholders at all levels. The Communication Strategy pursues the goal of attaining SPIREWORK coverage for at least 25% of the target groups by 2016.

This communication strategy provides a strategic framework that drives the implementation of SPIREWORK. The framework is designed to be participatory and results-focused. Elements of the strategy include advocacy – policy advocacy and media advocacy; behaviour change communication aimed at increased knowledge and community efficacy; social mobilisation for enhanced stakeholder involvement, community empowerment and social change.

Strategy for Advocacy, Communication, Education and Training for the Accelerated Implementation of SPIREWORK

With reference to the implementation of SPIREWORK, the African Union Commission has two main responsibilities[1]:

"Develop at national, regional and continental levels a campaign for universal access to social protection for informal and rural workers and their families", and

"Facilitate international cooperation and resource mobilisation, including south-south cooperation"

Goal, Objectives and Guiding Principles

SPIREWORK Communication Strategy Goal

The goal of SPIREWORK Communication is to improve the well-being index of the most important component/segment of the working population in Africa and reduce poverty levels within the AU Plan of Action on Employment Promotion and Poverty Alleviation, and the MDGs framework. The aim is to increase, by 20%, social protection coverage for the informal economy and rural workers, and members of their families.

SPIREWORK Communication Strategy Objective

The main objective of the Strategy is contribute to the effective, accelerated and coordinated implementation of SPIREWORK at local, national, regional and Continental level through influencing policy, stimulating leadership, building the required capacity, promoting partnership and developing appropriate international cooperation for technical assistance, in particular South-South Cooperation. It seeks to improve access of the informal economy and rural workers and members of their families to appropriate social protection services.

Strategic Directions and Objectives

Strategic Directions:

The Objectives of the Strategy relate to the main intervention areas of SPIREWORK. The main strategic directions are: (i) the Minimum Social Protection Package, (ii) recognition, legal and regulatory framework, (iii) advocacy, statistics and knowledge management, (iv) organisation and networking for empowerment and effective participation of the informal workers, and (v) policy dialogue and social dialogue.

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[1] Social Protection Plan for Informal Economy and Rural Workers (SPIREWORK), AU Assembly, July 2011, Malabo

The SPIREWORK Communication Strategy will build on the three different components of a comprehensive advocacy strategy – *transformational* (citizen empowerment), *developmental* (civil society strengthening) and *instrumental* (policy influence)[2] to best promote and ensure effective and sustained desired political change and policy reform.

Strategic Objectives:

a. To build/strengthen policy and advocacy capacity of the key stakeholders at all levels in Africa, including launching a successful policy influence campaign, relating to the strategic directions identified for the implementation of SPIREWORK.

b. To empower Informal Economy and Rural Workers through organisation, building voice networking, creation of more conducive political, legal and economic environment for mainstreaming the informal economy within the formal economy

c. To establish a knowledge base for SPIREWORK (statistics best practices, research, etc.)

d. Contribute to resource mobilisation (technical assistance and financial support) required for the implementation of SPIREWORK at all levels.

 Expected Outputs

The **SPIREWORK** communication strategy will result in the following expected outputs:

Output 1:   Increased political commitment of AU Member States in developing and implementing a Minimum Package for Social Protection of the Informal Economy and Rural Workers, and members of their families

Output 2:   AUC, RECs', Member States' and CSO's capacities strengthened at all levels (national, local communities, etc), for promoting social protection for the informal economy and rural workers

Output 3:   Improved knowledge on the status of the informal economy, in particular regarding the social protection challenges (effective research, assessments, publications and dissemination)

Output 4:   Increased and integrated international cooperation, in particular South-South cooperation

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[2] Advocacy Strategies for Civil Society: A Conceptual Framework and Practitioners' Guide, August 1997, The Center for Democracy and Governance, United States Agency for International Development

Output 5:   Empowerment of IE and Rural Workers through organisation, CSO, partnerships, and "building their voice"

Output 6.   Enabling environment created in support to mainstreaming IE into legal, political and social frameworks and for inclusive growth (legal and policy reforms, macroeconomic and sectoral development strategies review, etc.)

Target Audience

SPIREWORK Communication Strategy has stakeholders at community, national, regional and international levels. The target audience for the SPIREWORK communication, advocacy and resource mobilisation strategy includes the following:

- Policy decision-makers at national, regional and global levels,
- National Parliaments,
- Labour Inspectorates, Media professionals,
- Agencies responsible for promotion of the informal economy and rural sector,
- Public procurement administrations and agencies, fiscal and social security's administrations, employers and workers organisations/unions,
- Institutions, communities, and NGOs,
- Women and Youth associations in the informal economy and rural sector,
- IE professional organisations and associations, and cooperatives,
- Relevant Continental and regional bodies involved in legislative work (PAP) and policy design (RECs, etc.), and
- Relevant AUC structures (Departments of Rural Economy, Trade and Industry, Gender, NEPAD, etc.) for synergies, complementary and joint programming.

Roles of SPIREWORK Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

Stakeholders' Key Roles

SPIREWORK Communication Strategy provides an opportunity to stimulate action and motivate governments, local authorities, private sector, the media, NGOs, community based groups, international donors, and individuals to undertake activities aimed at improving the health, survival and well-being of women and children.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Member States

a. Develop a SPIREWORK Quick Impact with Quick Win Project
b. Define and implement a Minimum Protection Substantive Package for informal and rural workers and members of their families with special initiatives on of **CARMMA**, HIV-AIDS, TB and Malaria policies in informal and rural workplaces
c. Reassess social protection policies, strategies and programmes, laws and regulations
d. In association with all stakeholders, using the Value Chain Analysis method, determine five (5) informal economy clusters for quick impact interventions, launch special social

protection projects, and undertake sound analytical work with respect to the main vulnerabilities and insecurities of the informal economy by sub- cluster,

e. Encourage and support the organisation of informal economy and rural workers, and their participation in policy dialogue at national and local levels

f. Develop/improve the knowledge base and data on social protection within the informal economy and rural sector (including development of social protection indicators adapted to the sector)

g. Support and work with cooperative systems, NGOs, FBOs and CBOs as change agents for effective channelling of social protection measures to informal economy and rural sector workers and members of their families;

h. Develop and implement information, communication and education strategies;

i. Enhance the technical, infrastructural, and institutional capacities of Ministries responsible for social protection, including facilitation of collaboration between ministries of economy and finance, labour/employment, agriculture, trade, handicraft, and other key line ministries.

Roles and Responsibilities of the AUC

a. Undertake dissemination and popularization of **SPIREWORK** to MS, RECs, international partners and key stakeholders through advocacy and training initiatives targeting decision makers and planners, parliamentarians, social and economic institutions, social partners, local governments, etc.

b. Develop tools for the implementation of **SPIREWORK**, in collaboration with development partners and African institutions - to this effect, a joint meeting with development partners needs to be facilitated to harmonise the respective tools and build up an AU tool and instruments for use by MS, RECs and other actors;

c. Support African countries for formulation, implementation and follow-up, M&E of Pilot Projects on Social Protection for Rural and Informal workers, with special attention for post-conflict countries such as Sierra Leone and Liberia (2 MS/REC);

d. Establish a process for best practice learning and cross-border mechanisms in the sector of social policy;

e. Facilitate international cooperation and resource mobilisation, including south-south cooperation;

The roles and Responsibilities of Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

a. Integrate **SPIREWORK** in the design and implementation mechanisms of social protection policies and programmes;

b. Facilitate and/or support creation and development of regional professional organisations of informal and rural workers; and encourage sector and cross-sector networking and experience sharing;

c. Seek to harmonise or coordinate the social protection policies and legal/regulatory frameworks to facilitate regional integration through improved labour mobility;

d. Conduct research and studies, compile and disseminate best practices

Roles and Responsibilities of Other African Union Organs and AUC structures:

a. Pan African Parliament to work with the AUC to sensitise and enable its member organisations in promoting the **SPIREWORK** through legislative work;
b. ECOSOCC to work with AUC in promoting **SPIREWORK** among its members and provide advocacy toward governmental authorities and private sector;
c. The Inter African Bureau of Animal Resource (IBAR) and the Inter African Phytosanitary Council (IPC) to undertake the implementation of **SPIREWORK** in agriculture, livestock and fishery sectors, including mobilising development partners;

Roles and Responsibilities of UN Agencies and Development Partners:

a. UN Agencies and development partners should provide technical support and financial assistance to AU Member States, AUC, RECs and key stakeholders
b. Review development policies and support programmes in order be more oriented to and supportive of promoting social protection for the informal economy and rural workers, and members of their families;
c. Work towards coordination and synergising planning, funding and monitoring and evaluation of their programmes.

Roles and Responsibilities of Civil Society Organisations:

a. CSOs to spearhead advocacy and capacity building activities at national, local, regional and continental levels for the Minimum Social Protection Package for Informal and Rural Workers to be instituted;
b. The private sector to support and contribute to promotion of appropriate social security schemes for informal and rural workers;
c. Employers' organisations and Trade Unions to provide assistance to establishment and strengthening of informal economy and rural workers organisations.

The role of the United Nations, bilateral and multilateral partners

- Ensure SPIREWORK priorities are on the development agenda and participate in the development and monitoring of national development plans,

- Maximize the allocation of funding for SPIREWORK programmes by supporting existing plans and addressing the human resource crisis while strengthening the implementation of existing programmes.

- Support SPIREWORK by leveraging resources targeted at programmes from AFDB, ILO, USAID, the World Bank and others.

The roles of civil society and the media

- Complement government efforts by actively engaging in planning, implementation and monitoring SPIREWORK programmes.

- Mobilise communities for inclusion in SPIREWORK programmes.

- Implement SPIREWORK education and behaviour change programmes including community sensitisation at grassroots level to promote existing services.

- Lobby government for funding.

- Involve the media in setting the agenda for improved SPIREWORK by engaging in accurate, relevant, and culturally appropriate reporting and analysis of issues on SPIREWORK targeted to specific audiences.

Role of private sector

- Support efforts of government to implement SPIREWORK through social responsibility interventions.
- Support community-based SPIREWORK sensitisation and health promotion programmes focusing on SPIREWORK services.
- Support mass media-based communication activities.

SPIREWORK Communication Strategy and Implementation Plan

SPIREWORK is implemented by the AU, through the AU Commission's Department of Social Affairs (AU/DSA). At national level, Member State governments, through their ministries of Labour, Handicraft/Informal economy, rural economy, health, urban planning and finance, have sole responsibility for coordinating the implementation of SPIREWORK.

Close liaison between the AU/DSA and Regional Economic Communities as well as civil society organisations is the foundation upon which sustainable advocacy and communication processes and activities are implemented.

At the national level, focus will be on designing and facilitating initiatives that are coordinated and supported by Continental communication materials as well as those created locally. Member States could also form district and village SPIREWORK coordinating bodies to oversee and facilitate advocacy, social mobilisation and behaviour change and development for increased social protection for informal economy and rural workers.

SPIREWORK Branding Strategy

SPIREWORK has a logo and a slogan: *'Caring for than 80% of the Workers in Africa, Working Poor is not a fatality.'* With the logo and slogan, target audiences including the media, are able to identify with the communication and messages being disseminated.

SPIREWORK Sub-brands positioning

The SPIREWORK sub-brands are intended to provide means to identify and draw the target audience's attention to the key technical areas within the context of SPIREWORK.

SPIREWORK Sub-brands include the following:

a. Social Protection Minimum Package
b. Empowerment and Knowledge Development
c. Youth and Women
d. Policy Coherence and Inclusiveness
e. Community and Local Development

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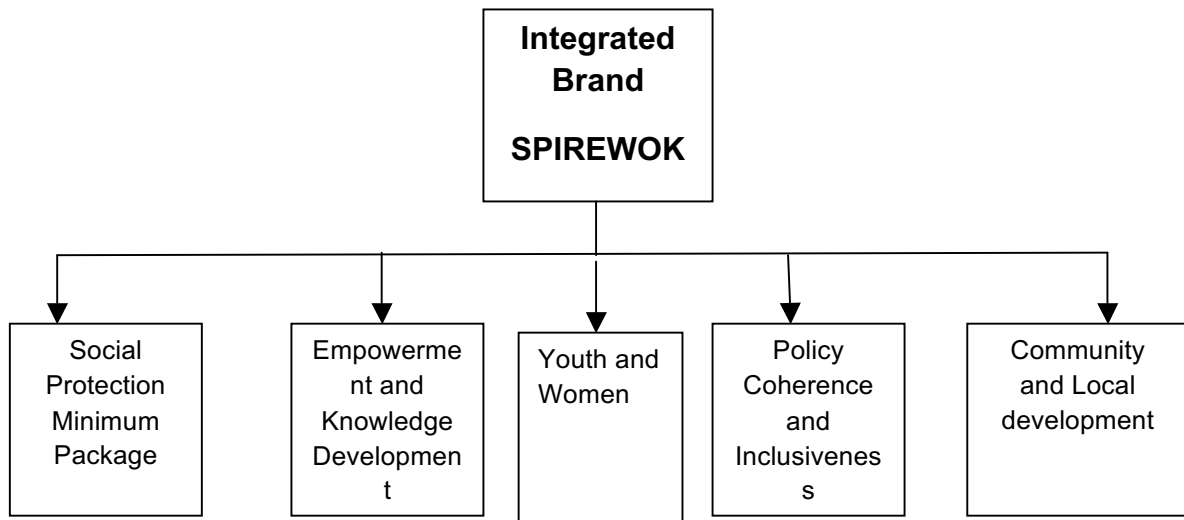
Activities and Timelines

6.1.1 SPIREWORK ADVOCACY and SENSITISATION, 2013-2016						
Activity	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**Lead/Responsible**
Sensitize AU organs (PAP, ECOSOCC, Human Rights, NEPAD) and AUC Departments (agriculture, trade and industry, Gender Directorate, political affairs)	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**AUC/DSA**
Synergy with other DSA Divisions	X	X	X	X	X	DSA
Support for the institution of the Informal Economy Ambassador among former AU M Head of State	15000	15000	15000	15000	15000	AUC
Institute and celebrate the Month of May as the Month of the informal economy in Africa	X	5000	5000	5000	5000	LSAC AUC
Advocate/disseminate through AU Conference of Ministers in charge on agriculture, livestock, fishing, mineral, industry and trade, local development	5000	12000	12000	12000	12000	AUC
Promote Informal Economy as theme of AU Summit		50000				AUC, LSAC,
Advocate through international public events (for educational and awareness raising purposes) organised in t Continent (handicraft, culture, agriculture, agro-procession, minerals, fishing, gender/women, Education and TVET, fiscal, private insurance industry, etc	x	20000	20000	20000	20000	AUC, MS,RECS
Organise mainstreaming and alignment meetings with international partners on their policies, strategies and programmes relation to SPIREWORK	x	15000	x		x	AUC, MS, RECS
Promote education and awareness of poli and decision makers (incorporate curricula in their training, organise workshop for professionals, etc.), in-depth policy dialogu workshops		60000	60000	60000	X	AUC/DSA, MS
Sensitize Private Sector, leverage on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – Oil, Mineral, Forestry Companies, Floriculture, Horticulture, Café and Cacao Companies,	X	20000	X	X		AUC, RECs, MS
Advocate towards Insurance Industry		X	60000	X	X	
Kknowledge management and sharing lessons learned	X	15000	X	15000	X	

Biannual Meetings of Member states SPIREWORK Focal Persons, SPIREWORK Champions at the margins of LSAC meeting		120000		X		AUC/RECs
Special SPIREWORK meetings in Post-Conflict Countries		60000		X		AUC/RECs
Africa Media Network for SPIREWORK		X	X	X	X	AUC
SPIREWORK CAPACITY BUILDING, EDUCATION AND TRAINING						
Develop SPIREWORK Tools (Communicatio Guide, Urban Policy Planning Capacity, Media Kit)	10000	20000	X	X	X	AUC
National SPIREWORK orientation Worksho with key Stakeholders /key target groups (AUC attendance)		18000	X	X	X	MS RECs
Training of Trainers to use SPIREWORK Toolkits Workshop		80000	80000	X	X	AUC RECs
Support development/Empowerment of Informal Economy and Rural Workers Professional organisations and association		X	X	X	X	AUC RECs
Advocacy and Capacity Building for Local Authorities (with Political Affairs)		80000		X		AUC, MS RECs
Training of labour inspectorates and other professionals on SPIREWORK, OHS, Productivity, Health for the I.E worke Urban Policy Planning, in collaboration with ARLAC and CRADAT		160000	160000	X	X	AUC RECs MS
Technical Assistance in Communication Strategy Design and planning, materials development, campaign management, monitoring and evaluation	6000	16000	16000	16000	16000	AUC RECs
Support to creation of the African Informa Economy Centre (AIEC)	13000	65000	65000	65000	X	AUC
6.1.2 SPIREWORK COMMUNICATION AND MOBILISATION, 2011-2015						
Activity	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**Lead / Responsible**
Development of National SPIREWORK Communication Strategy Road Map	6000	30000	30000	30000	30000	MS
Develop the Informal Economy and Newsletter , Online Advertisements	2000	15000	15000	15000	15000	AUC, RECs, MS
SPIREWORK Program Video	X	5000	X	X	X	AUC, RECs, MS
Publishing, documentation, dissemination, knowledge management and sharing lesso learned	X	20000	X	20000	X	AUC, RECs, MS

SPIREWORK Country Launches	4000	15000	15000	15000	15000	MS

6.1.3 SPIREWORK BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION AND NETWORKING, 2011-2015						
Activity	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**Lead / Responsible**
Mailing list of SPIREWORK Partners in Afric & Globally developed	X					AUC RECs
Quarterly email bulletin	4000	4000	4000	4000	4000	AUC
Tap on International Day celebrations: Women's Day 8 March, Human Rights Day 21 March, World TB Day 24 March, World Malaria Day 25 April, Day of the African Child June 16, World AIDS Day 1 December	8000	8000	8000	8000	8000	MS AUC RECs
M&E Country SPIREWORK Reports	X	25000	25000	25000	25000	MS, AUX, RECs

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The M&E will follow the follow-up mechanisms of the Ouagadougou 2004 Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment Promotion and Poverty Alleviation. There will be biennial reports by Member States and the RECs on the implementation of SPIREWORK. The AUC will compile a biennial report to elaborate consolidated regional report which will be submitted to the AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission, as well as, if necessary, to the Conferences of the AU Ministers of Health and Finance.