

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has been developing and implementing policies and strategies to alleviate the economic and social problems accumulated over years to reduce poverty through popular participation and equitable benefit to ensure pro-poor, accelerated and sustainable development. This enabled over the past two decades to register an increased economic growth that helped to reduce poverty.

According to annual economic performance evaluation of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, due to the series of poverty reduction programs, the poverty rate of the country fall from 45% in 1995/96 to 26% in 2013/14 In addition, vulnerability to food poverty reduced from 49.5% in 1995/96 to 33.6% in 2010/2011 according to Central Statistics Agency Household Income, Consumption, and Expenditure Survey.

The expansion of different economic and social development programs help mainly to reduce the shortage of supply side and increase the benefit to the entire population. On the other hand, several constrains impede the poor and vulnerable segments of the society to access services expanded. Therefore, to reduce the demand side constraints and to benefit segments of the society that require special attention, it is necessary to take social protection measures.

Social Protection is part of social policy framework that focuses at reducing poverty, social and economic risk of citizens, vulnerability and exclusion by taking measures through formal and informal mechanisms to ascertain accessible and equitable growth to all.

The Policy mainly contains coordinated protective measures to those susceptible to serious vulnerability due to natural and manmade risks, establish multifaceted social insurance mechanisms to prevent exposure to risks, strengthen earnings and improving livelihoods of citizens, improve employment opportunities and living conditions, and provide legal protection and support for vulnerable to abuse and violence.

Without being limited to provid basic services and temporary supports, the implementation of social protection includes measures of strengthening public participation and mobilization, based on the economic, social, cultural, and human rights enshrined in the constitution that have transformative nature, establish coordinated system to reduce economic and social differences and imbalances in the society.

In this policy, segments of the society vulnerable to different social and economic problems, especially, children, women, persons with disabilities, elderly, labour constrained unable to make earnings, and the unemployed who are living under difficult circumstances are given special attention.

The policy serves as a framework for collaboration and coordination system of social protection in order to provide different services, and it also clearly indicates the organizational structures at federal, regional and the respective lower levels of organizational structures with duties and responsibilities.

The Policy was crafted by the coordination and leadership of the National Social Protection Platform through the involvement and adequate consultations with federal, regional and other different stakeholders where in the preparation process the actual situation of the country mainly poverty and vulnerability, legal and policy issues, social protection related national programs, continental and international situations were properly assessed.

The policy document consists of five focus areas. These are:- Promoting productive safety net, promoting and improving employment and livelihood, promoting social insurance, increasing equitable access to basic social services, and providing legal protection and support to those vulnerable to abuse and violence.

In this regard, the policy document consist of:- introduction, the need for the policy, vision, mission, general objectives, principles, scope and focus of the policy from section one to five, and the remaining sections comprise of measures and strategies, focus areas, financial source, institutional arrangement and coordination, as well and monitoring and evaluation system respectively.

2. THE NEED FOR THE POLICY, VISION AND MISSION

2.1. THE NEED FOR THE POLICY

To ensure fair and sustainable utilization of resources from the economic growth of the country and to reduce poverty significantly, it is required to design a social protection policy and establish a system to implement programs. Keeping that government programs being implemented are pro-poor, it is also essential to take social protection measures to ensure access and equitable benefit for the poorest of the poor and vulnerable segments of the society from the social and economic development.

In Ethiopia, expanding social protection landscape is part of the progressive implementation of the main economic and social rights enshrined in different articles of the constitution. In addition to the fundamental articles enshrined in the constitution, especially Article 41 that serves as a base for the establishment of a social protection system in the country, Article 90 which states as “To the extent that the country’s resources permit, policies shall aim to provide all Ethiopians access to public health and education, clean water, housing, food and social security” is a constitutional foundation to design this policy.

African Union member countries, including Ethiopia, have endorsed the African Union Social Policy Framework (AUSPF), have integrated in to their development agendas and strategies are pursuing measures to reduce chronic poverty and vulnerability, which shows the paramount importance of social protection at regional level to bring about equitable and stable growth.

Poverty reduction program under implementation in the country, especially the Growth and Transformation Plan (2010/11-2014/15), resulting in poverty reduction and contributing to safeguard the welfare of citizens directly or indirectly, has laid the foundation for the establishment of sustainable social protection system.

Social protection initiatives are multidimensional that have been executed by different government, non-government, community and faith based institutions; that however, studies indicated services had gaps in: standards, coverage and accessibility, the complementarities of programs, institutional arrangement, data management and exchange of information, vertical and horizontal relationship among different implementing bodies.

Although, the Developmental Social Welfare Policy (DSWP) implemented since 1996 served as a guide for the strengthening of social welfare, through policy gap analysis, it was found to be incompatible with the existing situations. The main gaps identified in the DSWP have indicated that: - the roles of executing bodies and communities in the coordination, collaboration and design process of social welfare program was not clearly articulated; it was incompatible with the demographic change, economic and social development, structural adjustments, policy and legal amendments; it also had no detail strategy and action plans for policy implementation.

Ensuring social protection helps to reduce poverty and vulnerability with a meaningful impact, to protect the poorest segments of society from falling further deep in to destitution, to increase human development and productivity in order to break intergenerational cycle of poverty, to enhance equitable use of resources, to bring social justice and stable peace, to reduce discrimination and exclusion, to strengthen national feeling, and to enhance economic and social development. In general, to sustain social and economic development, to boost social justice, to ensure the respect of dignity and rights of citizens, it was found out necessary to develop a social protection framework.

2.2. VISION

To see all Ethiopians enjoy social and economic wellbeing, security and social justice.

2.3. MISSION

To enhance Ethiopian citizens benefiting from social protection services;

- Provide social assistance to enhance access to basic social services,
- Promote the coverage of social insurance services,
- Promote gainful employment opportunities,
- Strengthen and establish appropriate laws, directives, action plans, and institutional arrangements to enable the poor and vulnerable to equitably benefit from the growth of the country.

3. GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The main objectives of the National Social Protection Policy of Ethiopia are the following:

- 3.1. Protect the poor and vulnerable individuals, households, and communities from different natural and manmade adverse effects of shocks,
- 3.2. Establish social insurance system and increase its scope,
- 3.3. Increase access to equitable and quality health, education and social welfare services to build human capital;
- 3.4. Expand and guarantee employment for the vulnerable to unemployment;
- 3.5. Enhance employment guarantee for the segments of society under social problems through promoting employment opportunities,
- 3.6. Ensure that the society at all levels play roles for the implementation of the policy,

4. PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

- 4.1. Government takes the lead for the execution of the policy and ensures its sustainable implementation,
- 4.2. Community Care Coalitions shall contribute their appropriate role in the implementation of the policy,
- 4.3. Social Protection implementation shall be based on the principle of mutual support and self-reliance,
- 4.4. The implementation of policy shall give special emphasis to gender issues and the principle of equality;
- 4.5. Implementation of the policy shall be based on multi-sectoral integrated efforts of government, community and other concerned stakeholders,
- 4.6. Public mobilization and participation shall play a significant role in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social protection programs,
- 4.7. Implementation of social protection shall be effective, efficient, predictable and reliable,

- 4.8. Social Protection measures shall progressively ensure the economic, social and human rights of all Ethiopians,
- 4.9. Social protection measures shall be implemented without discrimination and exclusion,
- 4.10. Social protection measures shall be implemented with accountability and transparency,
- 4.11. The implementation of social protection services will be mainstreamed and implemented in different government and non-government development institutions programs, strategies and action plans;
- 4.12. Implementation of social protection initiatives shall be decentralized.

5. SCOPE AND FOCUS OF THE POLICY

The policy focuses on increasing access to social services and providing alternative care and support services for members of the society affected by economic shocks, natural and manmade calamities and those who require special support. These include, expanding formal and informal social insurance systems as preventive measures to protect citizens from falling in to destitution and risks as a consequence of livelihood shocks.

The policy focuses on taking measures of enhancing knowledge, skill, and employment opportunities of citizens to increase their incomes and asset building capabilities. Protect citizens from exclusion and ensure their rights and needs by reducing the vulnerability to risk that emanate from economic and social structural imbalances.

The following target groups are given due emphasis in the policy:

- Children under difficult circumstances,
- Vulnerable pregnant and lactating women,
- Vulnerable people with disabilities and people with mental health problems,
- Elderly with no care and support,
- Labor constrained citizens unable to get basic social and economic services,
- victims of social problems such as beggars, commercial sex workers, drug and medicine addicted,
- Citizens affected by HIV and AIDS and other chronic diseases that constrain their ability to work,
- Segments of the society vulnerable to violence and abuse,
- Segments of the society vulnerable to natural and manmade risks,
- Unemployed citizens,
- Citizens engaged in the informal sector and who have not social insurance coverage,
- Victims of human trafficking and repatriated emigrants,

6. POLICY MEASURES AND STRATEGIES

The major policy measures are the following:

- Promote Productive Safety Net;
- Promote employment and improve livelihood;
- Increase social security and health insurance coverage;
- Increase access to basic services;
- Provide legal protection and support to segments of the society vulnerable to abuse and violence.

To realize the above measures, establishing a complete system, allocating the required finance for implementation, developing the social welfare workforce to be engaged in social services, and providing skill development training to create conducive environment for entrepreneurship are the main strategies of the policy.

The following focus areas, specific objectives and implementation strategies are identified to implement the policy measures and strategies.

FOCUS AREA 6.1. PROMOTE PRODUCTIVE SAFETY NET

6.1.1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Many Ethiopians residing in rural areas are vulnerable to shocks such as drought, environmental degradation, flood, and related sudden risks that the government issued and implemented the Disaster Risk Management Policy to respond to the needs of those vulnerable citizens.

Significant number of urban dwellers are vulnerable to food price inflation, unemployment and other social and economic risks that taking in to consideration the peculiar characteristics of the urban areas, due attention will be given for the design and implementation of productive- and social- safety net programs.

Children are one of the most vulnerable segments of the population in rural and urban areas. Since childhood malnutrition begins in the womb, this policy gives attention to pregnant and lactating mothers under difficult circumstances, and children below two years of age.

To improve the nutritional status of children, the productive- and social- safety net programs to be developed shall be implemented in collaboration and coordination with health extension and other structures closer to the communities.

The productive- and social- safety net programs will be based on the establishment and implementation of strategies to address people in social problems, more specifically, vulnerable children, women and the elderly under difficult circumstances, persons with disabilities and people with mental health problems, those labour constrained due to debilitating diseases who are unable to work, and repatriates from emigration.

Public work programs will be promoted to ensure food security and community asset building in order to strengthen and enhance the capacity of poor and vulnerable.

In general, to support the poor and reduce vulnerability, productive- and social- safety net programs to be designed in the rural and urban context shall be coordinated and complementary. In addition, Community Care Coalitions shall be strengthened and expanded to play significant role in the implementation of productive- and social- safety net programs.

6.1.2. OBJECTIVES

- Expand social assistance coverage to ensure food security for the vulnerable exposed to natural and manmade calamities and protect them from falling in to extreme poverty,
- Provide support and care to children, individuals and families under difficult circumstances to lift them out of poverty,
- Establish a social safety net system for the benefit of the elderly with no care and support,
- Promote public work programs to ensure food security and enhance community assets.

6.1.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Establish an early warning system to respond to disaster risk and vulnerability in accordance with the Disaster Risk Management Policy,
- Expand productive- and social- safety net programs in rural and urban areas of the country,
- Establish a system to identify the number and types of the vulnerable to chronic food insecurity and include them in rural and urban productive- and social-safety net programs,
- Action plans in social protection programs shall be nutrition sensitive,
- Community Care Coalitions shall play their appropriate role.

FOCUS AREA 6.2. PROMOTE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVE LIVELIHOOD

6.2.1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The living condition of most Ethiopians is based on the use of their labor. Therefore, it is necessary to facilitate conditions by supporting the unemployed individuals to get gainful employment opportunities to improve their living conditions, and transform those employed to where they can be more productive to make better earnings.

It is expected to support the vulnerable in rural and urban areas to become more productive citizens by promoting employment opportunities. Conditions will be facilitated to ensure the implementation of micro- and small- enterprises expansion strategies and programs for the benefit of most vulnerable to poverty.

Using different structures and systems, special support will be provided and favorable condition shall be created to those who attempt to support themselves by establishing self help groups or associations to lift them out of poverty and improve their livelihoods.

In general, to improve the livelihood of citizens, depending on the rural and urban situations, due attention shall be given: to labour market corrective interventions, to skills upgrading training, to credit and expansion of other related services, encouraging entrepreneurship and income generating opportunities.

6.2.2. OBJECTIVES

- Take economic and social measures to build human capital and improve livelihood,
- Promote employment and income generating opportunities for the vulnerable and unemployed,

6.2.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Introduce and expand off-farm income generating activities,
- Provide agricultural inputs to strengthen the economic capacity of rural and urban population,
- Promote public works programs, income generating and other employment generation schemes,
- Establish labour market information system and take labour market corrective measures,
- Promote micro- and small-enterprise schemes to create employment opportunities for the poor and unemployed to enable them employed and enhance their livelihoods,
- Provide skills upgrading training and micro-finance credit services for the poor and vulnerable to creat market linkages.

FOCUS AREA 6.3. PROMOTE SOCIAL INSURANCE

6.3.1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Social insurance is based on the principle of risk-sharing and involves the pooling of contributions in return for pay-out and service coverage in case of set-back or changes in circumstances. The government has put in place contributory pension schemes for the employees of public and private organizations. The government has also endorsed

a proclamation on social health insurance for the formal sector employees and pensioners to ensure their health rights.

In addition, community-based health insurance scheme is being implemented for the informal sector employees to expand the health service coverage.

The third party vehicle insurance is providing emergency medical treatments of vehicle related accidents, physical injury and death insurance coverage. Compensations are being provided for climate related and other hazards on crop and property losses.

The informal social saving and insurance mechanisms like 'Idir' and 'ikub' play significant roles to reduce pressures caused by different problems and risks.

In general, the government shall facilitate every condition to progressively increase insurance service system to increase coverage and accessibility for the formal and informal sectors.

6.3.2. OBJECTIVES

- Promote and encourage social insurance system,
- Support informal social protection mechanisms and facilitate their linkages to the formal system.

6.3.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Facilitate conditions to expand the existing public and private social security schemes to give coverage for citizens employed in other gainful employment,
- Strengthen informal sector social insurance system,
- Strengthen the coverage of community based health insurance,
- Expand the third party vehicle insurance,
- Expand the coverage of weather-indexed crop and property insurance schemes.

FOCUS AREA 6.4. INCREASE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES

6.4.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Due to the expansion of education and health coverage in the country, especially the coverage to enrolment of primary schools and basic health service has been growing.

The provision of quality health and education services to citizens has significant contribution to build productive human capital of the country to enhance productivity and economic growth and to break transmission of inter-generational poverty.

In the education sector, apart from the expansion of schools, the government has been implementing free primary education strategies to attract children to school. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with development partners, has been

implementing school feeding programme at pilot level in selected schools of six regions that are chronically food insecure areas. The programme is providing school feeding for 650,000 students in 1,200 schools.

Thus, to fulfill the food and other basic needs of children and enable them attend their schools properly, the coverage of school feeding program shall be progressively expanded based on the actual situations of the regions and city administrations.

School feeding programmes shall be implemented in a way to retain children in school, to improve their nutrition status and to avoid child labour. School feeding programs and related social welfare services undertaken by the government, non-government and of community participation shall be implemented in a consistent, standardized and coordinated manner.

In general, the government will expand the coverage of quality health, education and social services to address the demand side constraints that prevent the poor and vulnerable from accessing basic services.

6.4.2 OBJECTIVE

- Increase the coverage and access to health, education and other social welfare services,

6.4.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Strengthen the expansion of conditional health care expenses to benefit the poor,
- Expand school feeding program to increase the coverage and accessibility of education,
- Increase the accessibility of special needs education,
- Expand rehabilitation services,
- Ensure that basic infrastructures are accessible to persons with disabilities, the elderly and those with mobility constraint,
- Expand and standardiz basic services,
- Develop the workforce to be engaged in social welfare services.

FOCUS AREA 6.5. PROVIDE LEGAL PROTECTION AND SUPPORT FOR CITIZENS EXPOSED TO ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

6.5.1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Failing to provide special legal protection and social services for the vulnerable citizens exposed to abuse and violence aggravats social problems. The major forms of abuse and violence are severe physical actions, female genital mutilation, rape and child labour. Children, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities have several constraints that humper there abilities to defend themselves before the law as a result of which their rights are being violated. The government shall give attention to respect and

protect the legal rights of the vulnerable. Providing legal protection to the vulnerable and redressing of abuse help them to have good psychological and moral moods, to become socially responsible and play their roles in economic growth.

Generally, legal reforms and awareness raising activities, and rehabilitation service institutions will be strengthened to protect the vulnerable in order to sustain the dignity, protection and legal rights of citizens.

6.5.2. OBJECTIVE

- Prevent violence, abuse, discrimination and exclusion of the vulnerable and redress the impacts on victims.

6.5.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Design and implement different communication strategies to improve the harmful traditional practices and values that undermine the legal rights of children, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other vulnerable groups,
- Expand and progressively improve community based support services to prevent and redress violence, exclusion, discrimination and abuse,
- Provide legal support and rehabilitation services to vulnerable groups whose civil rights are at stake,
- Strengthen institutions at different levels that provide legal support and rehabilitation services to people exposed to violence, exclusion, discrimination and abuse.

7. FINANCIAL SOURCE OF THE POLICY

Although a huge investment is needed to realize social protection programs, basic social protection services shall be prioritized and budget will be allocated progressively. The source of finance will be from economic growth, expansion of the tax collection as proportion of GDP, reallocation of budget expenditure as required, increasing the efficiency of existing investments, loans and grants. The source budget will be from federal and regional governments, communities, business community, development partners, and others.

Using different ways, the community, civil society organizations and the private sector, contribute significantly towards providing care and support services for people under difficult circumstances. The Private sector plays a great role to improve occupational safety and health for creating better working conditions.

In light of improving the health and occupational safety of their employees as well as the reputation they get from domestic and international market chain, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) system shall be established where investors engaged in trade,

industry, agriculture, and other services can play their roles by contribute towards social protection interventions.

In general, to make the source of finance sustainable and reliable, the community at large, civil society organizations and the private sector will be mobilized and participate to contribute their shares. To enhance participation in a coordinated manner, a Social Protection Fund (SPF) shall be established, and a directive will be issued to establishment the system.

8. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT AND COORDINATION

Based on the duties and responsibilities of each executing bodies, the government will establish uniform system of institutional arrangement at different levels to coordinate the implementation of the policy. To transform the implementation system in to action, duties and responsibilities will be explicitly given to: federal and regional executing bodies, the community, civil society organizations, the private sector as well as to other concerned stakeholders.

Institutions that have responsibilities for the design of social protection initiatives, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, establishing system shall be strengthened through organizational arrangement, training of social service workers and the fulfillment of necessary equipment.

8.1. Institutional arrangement, duties and responsibilities

Since the implementation of the policy requires multidimensional coordination, a Federal Social Protection Council will be established under the leadership of the government. Members of the council shall be government organizations and other concerned institutions.

Members of the Federal Social Protection Council shall mainly be drawn from Labour and Social Affairs, Women Children and Youth Affairs, Education, Health, Agriculture, Justice, Finance and Economic Development, Urban Development and Housing Construction, Trade and Industry Institutions, Public and Private Social Security Agencies, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Coordination Office.

In addition, financial institutions, associations of employers, trade unions, civil society organizations and other relevant institutions will also be members of the Council as required.

The structure and function of the Social Protection Council shall be established by Law. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs shall be the Secretary of the Council. Duties and responsibilities given to the Federal Social Protection Council and the Ministry of

Labour and Social Affairs shall be executed by respective structures at regional states and city administrations.

United Nations Organizations, International Organizations, concerned charity associations and organizations shall participate in the implementation of social protection.

To implement the policy, to coordinate and achieve the mission successfully, implementation strategies, laws and directives shall be issued.

The National Social Protection Council shall have the following duties and responsibilities;

- Give direction on legal and corrective measures of systemic issues to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and overall coordination,
- Build and strengthen the capacity of executing bodies for the proper implementation of the policy,
- Lead and coordinate programs for the implementation of the policy,
- Ensure the integration of social protection interventions in to the development strategies and programs of sectors,
- Strengthen the data management system,
- Establish monitoring and evaluation system for the effectiveness of social protection programs,
- Report to the government on the effectiveness of budget utilization to implement the policy and the impact,
- The Council shall meet twice a year to evaluate the performance of the policy, strategy, and action plans,

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is the government focal at national level to coordinate the implementation of the policy.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in coordinating and implementing social protection, shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

- Coordinate and follow up the relevant federal and regional bodies for proper implementation of the policy, strategy, and action plans,
- Mobilize resource and budget allocation for the implementation of social protection,

- Establish a management information system for effective and efficient implementation of social protection programs and communicate the achievements of the desired outcomes and impacts,
- Report to the Federal Social Protection Council on the achievements and impacts of the policy implementation to facilitate conditions for government to take appropriate decisions on institutional arrangement, system and financial allocation,
- Generate and propose legal provisions to the government and make amendments on issues as required, and perform different capacity building activities,
- Establish coordination and collaboration networking to create a strong partnership among different partners and stakeholders, and follow up the implementation,
- Ensure social protection service provisions comply with the rights of beneficiaries,
- Establish and administer a Social Protection Fund,
- Establish and operationalize a central data management system,
- Other duties and responsibilities that enable for the implementation of the policy shall be determined by subsequent laws and directives.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM OF THE POLICY

The Monitoring and Evaluation system of the policy is a mechanism where the government with the community and stakeholders monitor and evaluate and ensure that the initiatives undertaken to reduce poverty and vulnerability and programs designed for the benefit of people under difficult circumstances are properly implemented.

The monitoring system is a process of follow up about the implementation of programs that are being executed as planned and properly moving in the right direction. The evaluation system is to weigh the achievements of program objectives and desired impacts.

The monitoring and evaluation system is to identify the strength and weakness of program implementation, to check whether the desired services are properly delivered and to take appropriate corrective and remedial measures as required.

Monitoring and Evaluation is mainly for the establishment of adequate and reliable information management and reporting system where programs implemented by different stakeholders are measured in terms of impacts, types of beneficiaries, time, utilized resource etc., comparing against baseline indicators.

A central registry system shall be established to organize and manage complete data and exchange information about beneficiaries disaggregated by place, number, type of service and the like. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is mandated to lead and administer the central registry at the federal level. Similarly, organs mandated for labour and social affairs duties and responsibilities are responsible to lead and administer the registry in their respective regions. In order to have a strong and robust registry system, federal and regional government bodies, community based associations and other non-government organizations providing social protection services have the obligation to submit periodic performance reports to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in collaboration with other concerned stakeholders shall develop and implement relevant performance indicators, action plans, guidelines and proper system to improve the performance of program implementation. The necessary activities, mainly linking source of information through networks, improving the data collection, compilation and analysis, preparation of reports and improving and enhancing relevant activities will be carried out to establish and actually implement the system.

In general, the monitoring and evaluation system shall be established with uniformity and synergy from federal to the lower level of administrative strata and implemented properly for complete, quality and timely reporting and exchange of information.