

# THE EAST AFRICAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION



## EATUC

### ADVOCACY TOOL TO ENABLE PORTABILITY OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS WITHIN THE EAC REGION THROUGH THE DRAFT EAC SOCIAL SECURITY PORTABILITY BILL

#### What is social security?

The International Labour Organization (ILO), defines social security as “a set of public measures that a society provides for its members to protect them against economic and social distress that would be caused by the absence or substantial reduction of income from work as a result of contingencies like sickness, maternity, employment injury, unemployment, invalidity, old age, death and health care”. Social security is instrumental for the wellbeing of workers and their immediate family as well as the elderly and firms or enterprises performance alike. With regard to workers, it helps in providing them and their families with access to health care and with protection against loss of income while for the elderly, it provides them with income security. For firms or enterprises, social security helps to maintain stable labour relations and a productive workforce.

#### Background

The East Africa Community (EAC), Common Market Protocol (CMP), which came in to force on July 1, 2010, provides for free movement of goods; capital, services and more importantly free movement of persons and labour across the region. However, this is yet to be realized despite the fact that the CMP which allows for this process has been in place for ten years. The above fact notwithstanding, a specific directive on coordination of social security benefits was developed and agreed by the Partner States in 2011. Although Partner States have undertaken a number of social security reforms to facilitate harmonization/coordination of social security systems, not much has been accomplished. With a lot of changes having taken place in the EAC region, the

Council Directive on coordination of social security benefits in the EAC has since been passed by events and the EAC is currently revising it. This implies that actions towards consolidating and where possible redirecting the actions of Partner States towards enhancing the portability of social security is urgently required.

**NOTE**

*The most recent publication by the International Social Security Association (ISSA), entitled the 10 Challenges for Global Social Security & Innovation, states that only a dismal 20% of the world's migrants enjoy full social security and portability of benefits. This is despite there being in place more than 2,000 bilateral social security agreements spread over 136 countries to ensure migrants have full social protection and portability of benefits, an indication that there is still a lot of work to be done, intra schemes and intra governments.*

**Why us on the forefront? Who are we? What does advocacy mean to us?**

1. The CMP is inter- alia about enabling free movement of Labour
2. There are players in the region with a key interest in this agenda namely, the workers representatives in the region (EATUC), the employers' representatives (EAEO), Social Security funds of the region, National Health Insurance Funds, the EAC as a representative of Partner states and the originators of the CMP and ECASSA.
3. EATUC has over time facilitated the drafting of a Portability Bill to fast track the portability of benefits.

**What will our Advocacy involve?.**

Our Advocacy	On what?
1. Educate the key decision makers through a workshop or other events	-The meaning and importance of social security for each person working in the EAC Partner states - To appreciate the process and support the SSP bill which we believe is long overdue
2. Continuous capacity building	Those at the forefront of the negotiations & campaigns must have a clear understanding of SS and the value of the campaign to the EAC
3. Create partnerships	More is always better to build the necessary momentum on the urgency for portability of benefits, completion of revision of the

	Directive.
4. Agreement through lobbying	One to one discussions and meetings with key stakeholders on a workable prioritized plan of action
5. Prepare publications / brochures	In simple language highlight the provisions of the CMP and the Draft Portability Bill as regards free movement of labour and anticipated portability of SS benefits to interest other law makers who are not necessarily in the relevant committee *
6. Awareness raising through wider communication/ outreach	Ongoing progress and efforts over the years as regards stakeholders' pursuit of portability of SS benefits.
7. Research and sustained study , data collection and analysis relevant to this cause	-Working models of bilateral and multilateral agreements in the region which are already facilitating portability - Evidence to support request to decision makers
8. Sustained financing	Each step of the advocacy process involves a cost and cannot be limited to any period as legislative diaries are busy.
9. Preparation of a risk management framework	Every venture involves risks. Need to prepare our risk scenario. What are the likely operational risks to us in this process? Reputational risks? Etc How do we manage them?
10. Monitoring and Evaluation	Create clear timelines and expected outcomes to each activity and report for change of approach or other actions

To be more effective and focused, questions we need to attend to so as to concretely develop an Advocacy Plan/ Strategy for the Portability Bill.

	<b>Key Questions</b>	<b>Reflections</b>	<b>Strategic Action</b>
1.	What action do we want to achieve?	Passage of the Bill Portability of SS benefits	Continuous lobbying
2.	Who can make it happen?	Who is likely to gain from the passage of the Bill? Who might be adversely affected? Who complains about this issue? Who are primary stakeholders and who are secondary	Conduct a stakeholder influence, interest & power analysis

		stakeholders with regards to this issue? Who are the rights holders and who are the duty bearers? Are we in conflict with priorities of any groups?	
3.	What do they need to hear?	What are their political interests? What do they already know & What new information are we offering? Who are they accountable to? What are their political interests? Do they already have an opinion or a position? What objections might they have? Can we link portability to something else they are already supporting?	Align our message to suit the key receiver ie EAC legislators
4.	Who do they need to hear it from?	Identify level of influence needed over the target group	Strategic choice of key messengers

What do we hope to achieve?

