



## **SEMINAR**

**THEME : “Social protection and retirement schemes in the African Civil Service Administrations”**

*Basic Principles and Comparative Experiences*

## ***TERMS OF REFERENCE***

***Cotonou (BENIN), from 23 to 25 October, 2017***

## **I - Background and Rationale**

Amongst the claims for improved living and working conditions of civil servants and other public staff members, those pertaining to pension and retirement schemes, as well as to social protection, are becoming more pronounced.

The crucial character of these claims cannot be denied. In fact, since the career system represents the common right of African Civil Service Administrations, social protection throughout the career becomes a key factor of the benefits that civil servants and related others are entitled to. Besides, exiting from the carrier system through retirement constitutes, for the concerned public staff members, a prominent event, in as much as they will be claiming, up to the end of their life, their retirement pensions, the rate and consistence of which depend on the duration of their employment in the Civil Service.

Now, in the career system, the pension is structured according to the principle of distribution based on the solidarity of generations. Under such conditions, any reform of the civil service, any modifications or fluctuations of the age pyramid, pace and recruitment standards, remuneration regime and benefits of the affected workers will impact on their social protection and retirement pension regimes. Such is the reality, in as much as economic constraints may prevent the State from restoring or maintaining the stability of the system, which is its obligation. Therefore, the smooth functioning of the social security and retirement schemes constitute an indicator of a performing civil service.

In practice, with regard to the majority of States, it is observed that this manner of managing civil servants could lead to malfunctioning factors that should be kept under control to avoid possible implosion of the civil service management system as a whole. Thus:

Regarding retirees, it can easily be observed that in several countries, the relevant regulations date back to the Independence Era. Most of these regulations are therefore either obsolete or unsuitable to the current human resources management requirements. Certain regulations that were recently enacted are not adequately harmonised with the remuneration systems applied to civil servants. As such, in

many cases, it is not clear whether the retirement is based on capitalisation or on distribution.

As for the civil servant's social protection, disparities and even distortions are remarkable regarding the types of services provided per staff categories, as well as the modes of administration and management of the said services.

## **II - Objectives of the Seminar**

The purpose of the seminar is to :

1. Sensitise the stakeholders (Public Administrations, Civil Servants and Social Partners) on the importance of civil servants' social protection and retirement regimes ;
2. Draw lessons on these issues from the comparative study of legislations and practices, notably concerning the actual operations of structures in charge of administering and managing statutory dues and social benefits ;
3. Draft the guidelines for the reform of social protection and retirement regimes which are compatible with international standards, in consonance with the drive towards regional integration and administrative convergence (simplification of retirement procedures and access to the pension rights ; rationalisation of structures in charge of social protection administration and management, the role and use of ITC, etc...).

## **III - Methodology of the Seminar and Main Issues to Consider**

The seminar will be run by two Senior Experts: one Social Security Specialist and one Retirement Specialist. They will deliver papers on these topics and oversee the subsequent debates.

Country-based experiences will be presented by country Experts or top civil servants taking part in the seminar. It is therefore suggested that they bring along with them full documentation, as much as possible, on these topics. Furthermore, when delivering their papers, they should emphasize the peculiarities of their respective

social security and retirement pension systems, difficulties encountered in the operation of these regimes, relevant solutions, as well as current or intended reform proposals.

As guidance, the main issues to be discussed in the written papers and in debates should be centred on topics such as:

### ***A – Civil Servants’ Social Security***

- practical interests of civil servants’ social protection;
- applied usual concepts;
- international framework: sub-regional and bilateral commitments;
- existing arrangements in the concerned countries (beneficiaries, risks covered and services provided, financing and management mode...);
- organisational chart of a social protection system;
- special social protection regimes (for parliamentarians, members of government, the body of civil servants under a special status, contractual and similar servants).

### ***B – Retirement Pensions***

- provisions of international agreements;
- procedures governing retirement and access to the pension rights (normal, simplified, specific...);
- pre-retirement conditions, early retirement, additional retirement, retirement Allowances;
- mode of calculating retirement pensions;
- pension and reconversion rights, minimum old age;
- reform of retirement systems (distribution, capitulation);
- rights of spouse and orphans;
- validation and recovery of certain periods;
- cumulating pensions;
- retirement pensions related disputes;
- working after retirement.

#### **IV - Target Public Group**

This seminar is organised for the attention of:

- Public Administration Officials of OFPA member countries in charge of issues pertaining to the social protection and retirement regimes of civil servants;
- OFPA's Focal Points designated by the Ministers in charge of Civil Service.

#### **V - Duration and Venue**

The seminar's proceedings will be conducted from 23 to 25 October, 2017, in Cotonou, (BENIN). However, after the seminar, the Focal Points will be retained for a two-day specific training session, namely 26 and 27 October, 2017, pursuant to the implementation of the recommendations stemming from their previous meeting.

#### **VI - Working Languages**

The proceedings will be conducted in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese (depending on the variety of registered participants).

#### **VII - Publication**

The main papers will be posted on the web Sites of OFPA (Observatory of African Civil Service), United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) and eventually on the Web Sites of associate partners.

#### **VIII - Additional Information**

Further information can be obtained from OFPA's Executive Secretariat:

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