SPARCS PARTNERSHIPS AND PROCESS

SPARCS is designed as a multi-year, programmatic platform for global collaboration on SP&L. A central element of SPARCS is the establishment of strong links across governments, donor agencies, experts and key stakeholders working on SP&L operations and policy.

SPARCS tools and data will be publicly accessible and available for broad application, in line with the existing commitments within the development community to collaborate on developing SP&L systems and operationalizing the Social Protection Floor initiative.

Partners interested in SPARCS are invited to collaborate in the development and country applications of SPARCS instruments, including in taking a leadership role in developing instruments, in financing knowledge generation and in knowledge sharing. Initial efforts will concentrate on a core diagnostic instrument and selected service delivery and program assessment instruments.

SPARCS is linked to ASPIRE (Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity), which aims to develop a core set of harmonized indicators of SP&L programs environment, design and performance for country benchmarking. ASPIRE is also executed in partnership across agencies and includes collaborative work on data harmonization and coordination, standards and definition, and country-level coordination in low- and middle-income countries in data collection strategies.

For more information, please visit: www.worldbank.org/sp
or contact socialprotection@worldbank.org
A pproaches to social protection and labor are often fragmented and uncoordinated, reducing their effectiveness at providing resilience against shocks and pathways out of poverty. To address this, countries are increasingly taking a systems approach to social protection and labor to improve harmonization across policies, programs and delivery instruments.

The Social Protection Assessment of Results and Country Systems (SPARCS) initiative aims to improve the performance of Social Protection and Labor (SP&L) systems by creating an “open source” platform for collaboration, based on defining and assessing key system metrics and outcomes.

SPARCS provides systematic and comparable information on the design and implementation of SP&L systems. The objective is to move towards a more standardized, shared approach to assess country SP&L systems, building on existing work. SPARCS tools can be used by country policymakers and their development partners to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of SP&L systems and to guide their improvements.

ELEMENTS OF SPARCS

SPARCS encompasses three inter-related pillars:

i. **Guidance:** “What Matters” guidance notes for assessing and benchmarking SP&L system design, implementation and performance, building on established evidence and expert knowledge. These guidance notes are also intended to inform choices for design and implementation improvements

ii. **Diagnostics:** Country assessment instruments, of three types:
  - A core diagnostic systems assessment instrument (CODI) to provide an overview of key SP&L systems elements in a country
  - A suite of delivery assessment instruments, such as identification, eligibility, and transactions
  - A suite of program assessment instruments, such as public works and cash transfers

iii. **Knowledge Sharing:** A sustained global knowledge sharing process to support learning and collaboration across countries, partners, and stakeholders, with feedback loops to improve the SPARCS process itself. This encompasses country reports, databases and South-South Learning fora.

APPLYING SPARCS IN COUNTRIES

Each SPARCS country systems assessment is prepared in collaboration with country policymakers and experts, together with partner agencies and other external advisers, as appropriate.

Each assessment is based on:

- a “What Matters” guidance note
- a standardized assessment instrument
- a structured country report

The country reports are the result of data analysis and dialogue with stakeholders to produce an assessment across objectives and an outline of policy options and recommendations.

SPARCS is designed as a collaborative tool to track progress over time, not for ranking.

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