



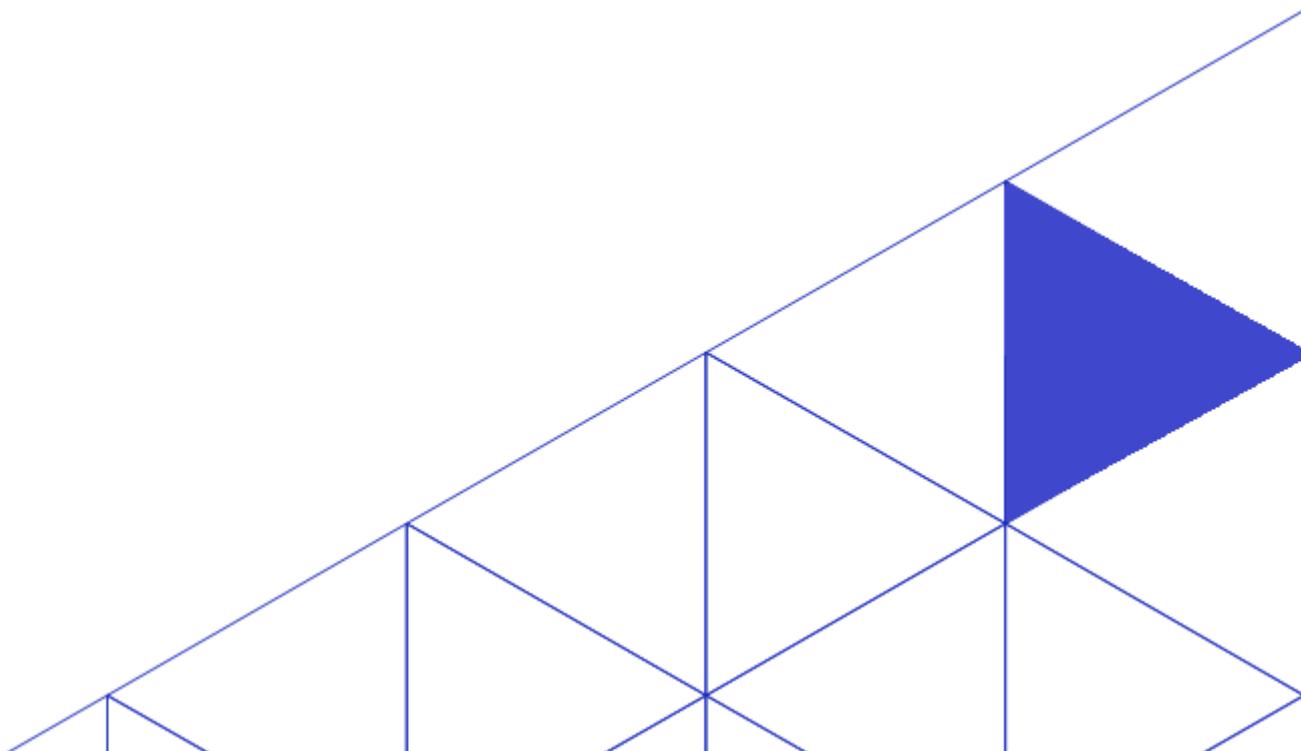
International
Labour
Organization

▶ Building social protection floors for all

ILO Global Flagship Programme

Thematic areas prioritized in the second phase of ILO Flagship Programme (2021-2025)

Social Protection Department



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► Expanding social health protection towards universal health coverage (including health, maternity, sickness and long-term care)

Baseline

The right to social health protection is not yet a universal reality. Each year, 100 million people fall into poverty as a result of health-care spending, while 800 million people spend at least 10 per cent of their household budget on health care, a situation that disproportionately affects the poorest.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that two thirds of the world's population are covered by a social health protection scheme, mostly in high-income and upper-middle-income countries – only one third and one fifth of the population are covered in lower-middle-income and low-income countries, respectively. Gaps in the adequacy of coverage also persist and a growing number of households face catastrophic spending.

As reiterated by Member States at the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2021, the extension of social health protection is a priority for improving access to care, avoiding impoverishment and improving productivity. Despite commendable progress, barriers to health-care access remain in the form of direct payments by households, physical distance and limits to the range, quality and acceptability of health services.

There is also an urgent need to strengthen the coordination between health coverage and cash benefits in order to address the social determinants of health. Integrated social protection approaches are needed to respond to emerging needs, including those related to migration; the growing burden of non-communicable diseases; ageing populations; and health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approach

Social health protection is a central contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on universal social protection (SDG target 1.3) and universal health coverage (SDG target 3.8). A number of countries have shown that it is possible to extend social health protection coverage to all, even in low-income countries where informal employment is predominant, demonstrating how sustained political and financial commitment is essential to ensure that no one is left behind.

The ILO promotes a rights-based approach to social health protection, with the objective of ensuring effective access to quality health care without hardship and impoverishment. This rights-based approach is rooted in the body of international human rights and social security standards, which represent a global consensus that guides the development of social health protection systems.

The ILO provides a range of services in the area of health care as well as sickness and maternity cash benefits within the framework of the international social security standards adopted by its tripartite members; in particular:

- the Medical Care Recommendation, 1944 (No. 69);
- the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102);
- the Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130);
- the Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Recommendation, 1969 (No. 134); and

- the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).

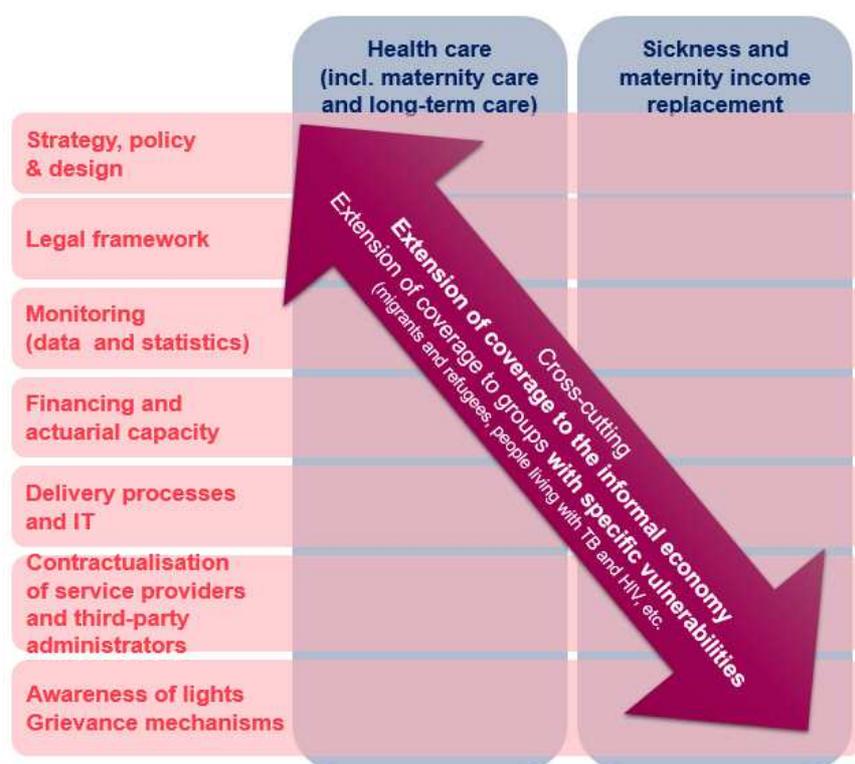
The ILO articulates its support to Member States throughout the process of formulating, developing, implementing and evaluating social health protection policies.

Based on Recommendation No. 202, the ILO supports the extension of coverage to more population groups, including formal and informal households and people with vulnerabilities; supports the improvement of the scope and adequacy of benefits; and ensures that rights and entitlements are translated into concrete and effective access to health-care services for beneficiaries.

To that end, the ILO does not apply a prescriptive model but rather provides specific technical guidance based on the national context and the objectives of the institutions that request support.

In the coming years, the ILO will increasingly support social health protection schemes as they face emerging risks and needs (see figures 1 and 3), including in adapting to the growing demand for long-term care; providing prevention and promotion services; and improving pandemic responsiveness.

► **Figure 1. Range of technical areas of support to social health protection schemes**

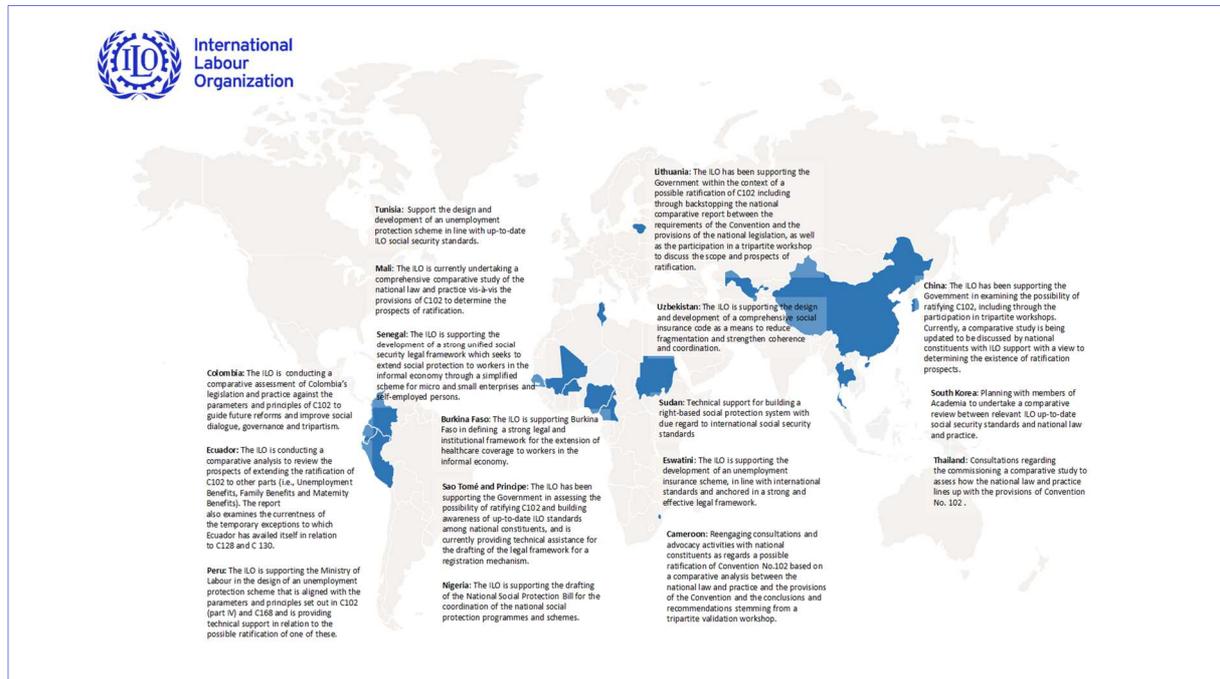


Priority countries

The ILO works with line ministries and social health protection institutions, especially those in low-income and middle-income countries, that request technical support on social health protection.

Country support includes deepening the ongoing support provided to countries that have engaged in structural reform processes to expand coverage and/or improve benefit adequacy (see figure 2). In this respect, additional countries may be considered in the course of the second phase of the Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All, as they request support to fulfil their commitment to achieve universal social protection and universal health coverage.

► **Figure 2. Priority countries in which the ILO supports the expansion of social health protection during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



A few examples of countries in which the ILO supports the expansion of protection against the costs of health-care services

Burkina Faso: The ILO supports the definition of the legal framework and architecture of the National Universal Health Insurance Scheme and its benefit package, as well as pilot initiatives on extending coverage to the informal economy and introducing an information system platform.

Senegal: The ILO supports the finalization of the legal and operational framework for the inclusion of craft workers, tradespeople and other skilled workers into a simplified health scheme for small taxpayers.

Madagascar: The ILO co-leads advocacy efforts for the prompt implementation and operationalization of universal health coverage under the newly formed National Solidarity Fund for Health and leads costing, poverty impact assessment and actuarial analyses to support those efforts.

India: The ILO supports the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Employees' State Insurance Corporation in the strengthening of the country's largest social health protection scheme through an institutional diagnosis, the identification of potential and current beneficiaries' social health protection needs and technical support.

Sudan: The ILO supports the National Health Insurance Fund in the identification of key areas for institutional strengthening through an institutional and sustainability analysis.

Viet Nam: ILO supports the National Health Insurance Fund in improving its financial and actuarial management and in legislative reforms.

Lao People's Democratic Republic: The ILO supports the Ministry of Health in the consolidation of health insurance schemes and the review of a national health benefits package, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank.

Lebanon and Jordan: The ILO supports national social security institutions in the establishment and enhancement of social health insurance schemes as part of the national social insurance system, including from the perspective of extending coverage to informal economy workers.

Ecuador: The ILO works with the Pan American Health Organization to bring health and social protection agencies together and foster greater access to primary care.

A few examples of countries in which the ILO supports the creation of sickness and maternity cash benefits

Somalia: The ILO supports the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the design and introduction of maternity and sickness benefits for civil servants through a feasibility study.

Kenya: The ILO supports the National Health Insurance Fund in its extension to the informal economy and in the design and introduction of maternity cash benefits through an actuarial valuation.

South-South learning: Support to knowledge hubs



- The ILO is a founding member of the Regional Hub on Social Protection in Health in Asia, (CONNECT), which provides a pool of technical expertise to expand coverage.
- Similar needs for technical exchanges of social health protection exist in other parts of the world and the second phase of the Flagship Programme will seek to develop such hubs in other regions and foster exchanges among regions.

Technical support

The ILO articulates its support to Member States throughout the process of formulating, developing, implementing and evaluating social health protection policies.

Since the ILO promotes a systemic approach to social protection extension, the technical support offered under this thematic priority is integrated with other thematic priorities (especially those concerning the extension of social protection to the informal economy; social protection for migrants, refugees and host communities; and legal, statistics, financing and actuarial work).

► **Figure 3. Social health protection service offer throughout the stepwise approach to the extension of coverage and adequacy**



Dialogue and strategy

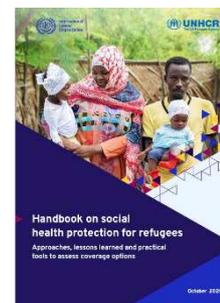
Social health protection goes beyond the mandate of a single institution or ministry and requires coordinated action between the ministry of health and the ministries of finance, labour and social affairs, among others. Furthermore, coordination with other social protection policies is essential to address the socio-economic determinants of health in a holistic manner. The ILO has developed tools and expertise on:

- **National dialogue on social health protection and coordination of social policies.** Through assessment-based national dialogues (ABND) on social protection, all stakeholders work together on extending coverage in order to reach consensus and foster inter-institutional cooperation. The exercise builds capacity and leadership.
- **Cost estimates, financial projection and analysis of the fiscal space for the extension of social health protection coverage.** The ILO Rapid Assessment Protocol (ILO/RAP) is a tool to assist priority-setting; it provides a first estimate of the necessary budget to finance social protection benefits and its projection over ten years. The rapid analysis of the associated fiscal space needs makes it possible to propose concrete avenues for financing and, along with the ex-ante poverty impact assessment, is a tool for strengthening advocacy on extending social health protection.

Design

Guided by international social protection standards, the ILO supports the extension of social health protection, with particular emphasis on covering the informal economy and the most vulnerable (see thematic priority on the informal economy). The ILO has developed tools and expertise on:

- **Analysis of needs and participation. Needs analyses and dialogue, participation and training activities** support the identification of characteristics, perceptions, knowledge, attitudes and willingness to contribute to social health protection, as well the capacity-building of stakeholders, allowing for effective participation and a detailed analysis of the needs and constraints to the establishment of social health protection systems and/or their development.
- Definition of coverage parameters, affiliation modalities, reimbursement methods and financing approach:
 - **Parameters.** Definition of coverage parameters – benefit packages and level of financial protection – that are in line with up-to-date international standards.
 - **Technical and financial feasibility.** Identification of the institutional, organizational and financial impacts of the introduction of a new scheme or the reform of existing scheme(s). Costing and projections of the benefit package and establishment of contribution levels and/or financing need for government transfers.
 - **Communication on rights.** Social marketing and engagement of actors, including in the informal economy, to improve knowledge and perceptions of users' right to social health protection.
 - **Response to specific needs.** Reaching particularly vulnerable populations, such as **migrants, refugees and host communities**, sometimes requires the use of tailored approaches and tools. Through its partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the ILO developed and implements a step-wise approach to integrate refugees in social health protection schemes (see thematic priority on social protection for migrants, refugees and host communities).
- **Normative frameworks** (see also thematic priority on international standards and legal frameworks). The principles and parameters set out in the ILO's social security standards are more relevant than ever for achieving universal health coverage. Support is provided through:
 - **Capacity-building and awareness-raising.** Training on international standards relevant to social health protection (adoption process, scope, implementation and ratification process), adapted to the needs of different tripartite constituents and other stakeholders involved in social dialogue, is provided to guide the design of social health protection mechanisms and their implementation.
 - **Formulation of the legal framework.** Comparative analysis of national legislation in relation to international standards, along with support for the development of social health protection legal frameworks (guidance, training, facilitation and technical support for drafting units and parliamentarians), are provided.
 - **Support for the ratification of ILO standards.** Practical support is provided to constituents who wish to ratify up-to-date Conventions on health care, sickness and maternity benefits.



Implementation

Strong institutionalization, with capacity for the efficient and transparent management of social health protection systems, is essential to ensure the effective use of benefits and the confidence of users (and, where applicable, contributors) in the system. The ILO has developed tools and expertise with regard to:

Economic and actuarial analysis

- The ILO supports the **creation and strengthening of economic and actuarial analysis capacities**, which are essential for social health protection institutions to monitor and plan operations; anticipate and respond to economic, epidemiological and demographic changes; and maintain adequate financial governance of social protection schemes. To do so, the ILO has developed the ILO Actuarial Model on Health (ILO/HEALTH), a tool for projecting the demographic and financial situation of social health protection programmes and simulating changes in their parameters in line with international actuarial standards and practices. Capacity-building services are central to this axis of work and the ILO provides structured and tailored capacity-building packages on actuarial modelling for health.
- 
- **External periodic actuarial valuation and capacity-building.** The ILO is equipped to provide on-demand actuarial services for social protection institutions and/or their supervisory authorities wishing to perform an external actuarial valuation of social health protection schemes (see thematic priority on actuarial work). These periodic assessments provide external evidence on the financial sustainability of such schemes.

Governance and management of operational processes

- **Organizational reforms.** The ILO's diagnostic tool makes it possible to take stock of the institution's situation in relation to its mandate and identify the opportunities and risks arising from the environment in which the social protection scheme operates. It includes a component on governance and helps identify bottlenecks in decision-making.
- **Monitoring, evaluation and satisfaction of uses and providers.** The ILO has developed survey tools to monitor the satisfaction of users and health-care providers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation and the expectations of the various key stakeholders. Those tools also provide a basis for supporting improved communication and awareness on rights and pathways to access services for beneficiaries.
- **Modernization of operational processes and strengthening of social health protection functions.** The ILO supports institutions in their efforts to modernize their information and management systems and their digital transformation efforts for the improvement of their operational processes for affiliation, validation and processing of benefits, the collection of contributions (if applicable) and complaints and grievances. In particular, the ILO is part of the "open IMIS" initiative,¹ which aims to make a tool for the management of social health protection in all its aspects available in an open-source format. Similarly, the ILO developed through the International Training Centre (ITC-ILO) a training package on digital health for social health protection institutions. The ILO also provides tailored technical support to contracting processes with front office service providers (registration of beneficiaries, awareness-raising, collection of contributions and so on) in particular mutual funds.
- **Purchasing.** The ILO supports social health protection institutions in the process of partnership and empanelment with health-care providers. This is primarily done through

¹ An open source information system platform for social health protection.

the study of providers' payment mechanisms and third-party payment mechanisms. The ILO also support institutions in conducting regular benefit package analysis and adjustment.

- **RESEARCH to document implementation and inform policymaking.** The ILO supports continuously the production of evidence to inform policy reforms based on priorities identified by the partners. This includes research on the equity of financing and health service utilizations and public spending in the health sector through benefit incidence analysis/financial incidence analysis, which provides evidence on the linkages between financial allocations to the health sector, utilization of services, out-of-pocket spending and the socio-economic status of users.

Indicators of result and impact

The thematic approach aims to expand the coverage of social health protection benefits to more people and improve the adequacy of such benefits so that they contribute effectively to reducing the risk of impoverishment related to accessing health-care services, being sick or pregnant.

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through the thematic approach on social health protection, based on the following indicators:

- number of countries that have adopted a law or regulation stipulating the design or reform of a social health protection, maternity protection, sickness or long-term care scheme;
- number of countries that have implemented or improved the governance of such schemes;
- public spending on social health protection as share of gross domestic product (GDP);
- number of persons covered by health, sickness, maternity or long-term care schemes (SDG indicator 3.8.1); and
- number of persons that receive higher levels of benefits (and reduced out-of-pocket payments) or more comprehensive protection (for instance, they are protected for an additional risk).

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent results have been achieved, while applying the principles of ILO Conventions Nos. 130 and 102 and Recommendations Nos. 69, 134 and 202, through effective social dialogue.

Knowledge development

Through the development of international labour standards in the form of Recommendations and Conventions and the development of knowledge products on social health protection, the ILO provides evidence-based policy advice and technical support to its constituents for the establishment of social health protection systems. In view of the challenges arising from the COVID-19 public health crisis and current demographic and epidemiological trends, the second phase of the ILO Flagship Programme will focus on developing a solid knowledge base in the following areas, in line with the Conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 109th Session in 2021.

- **Monitoring global coverage for health, sickness and long-term care benefits.** The first phase of the Flagship Programme uncovered important gaps in the monitoring for health, sickness, maternity or long-term care benefits and the need to reinforce the World Social Protection Database on those aspects. A crucial focus of the next phase of the Flagship Programme will be on closing this knowledge gap in a sustainable manner, including through devising sustainable data collection pathways through country support and tools developments, such as the online Social Security Inquiry (SSI). Another crucial focus will be

on the collection and analysis of data on the legal coverage of health benefits and the identification of key factors in the legal framework that support the human right to social health protection (see thematic priority on statistics).

- **Identifying best practices in long-term care.** As the UN Decade on Healthy Ageing has begun to respond to the demographic trends affecting an increasing number of countries, the ILO has contributed primarily by documenting and supporting long-term care benefits within social protection systems. Some countries have included in the scope of their social protection systems the provision of personal and home-care services under health-care benefits, disability benefits and, more recently, newly created long-term care benefits. Such developments are meant to expand as social protection systems are increasingly called upon to respond to new and emerging needs. The lead driving forces include the demographic transition towards an ageing population; the global disease burden shift towards non-communicable diseases that cause long-lasting morbidity and higher prevention needs; and the increase in female labour force participation and the related demand for a more equitable sharing of family responsibilities. In order to stay responsive to populations' needs, social protection systems should devise solutions to expand access to collectively financed health and social care. In addition, making health care and long-term care an integral part of rights-based social protection systems – as recommended in the Conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2021 – creates an obligation for such systems to shape financial and regulatory incentives to guarantee the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of the services provided and therefore to influence both the delivery models of care and the employment conditions of health and social care professionals.
- **Providing evidence and tools on the expansion of social health protection coverage.** The new phase of the Flagship Programme will contribute to strengthening the evidence base and tools on health, sickness and long-term care benefits in all their aspects (design, legal framework, financing and actuarial modelling), including on coverage of households in the informal economy.
 - **Compendium on social health protection systems.** A compendium on social health protection systems in Asia and the Pacific, which documents country experiences and lessons learned on the extension of legal and effective coverage in terms of both scope and the adequacy of benefits, was developed during the first phase of the Flagship Programme. Building on that success, a demand for similar products covering other regions has emerged and will be a focus of the second phase.
 - **The resource package on the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy** and their families will be enriched with tailored material on health, sickness and long-term care benefits, as well as their linkages with promoting a healthy workplace. The survey tools piloted in the first phase of the Flagship Programme in India and Madagascar will be further strengthened to provide a solid basis for developing a diagnostic and providing support for the design of practical measures to expand coverage towards universal health coverage.
 - The Flagship Programme will support the formulation of **guidance based on relevant up-to-date standards**, the dissemination of knowledge on the extension of social health protection coverage and the organization of South–South knowledge exchanges on the topic.

- **Building capacities.** The ILO's Global Technical Team (GTT) on social protection leads capacity-building and training in social health protection.
 - In collaboration with the **ITC-ILO**, the Flagship Programme will reshape the social health protection training course and reinstate it as part of the ITC-ILO's permanent training offer.
 - **Training course on digital health policy and strategy.** Based on a pilot training developed for the Lao People's Democratic Republic under the first phase of the Flagship Programme, the GTT will offer a comprehensive training course on the development and synchronization of digital health policy and strategy. The course is based on practical knowledge and focuses on key digital health issues, such as understanding how digital health interventions strengthen health systems; how to develop digital health strategies; how to enable the effective coordination of digital health systems; and what is required to manage behavioural change.
 - Similarly, the new phase of the Flagship Programme will build on the lessons learned in the first phase on the **expansion of health coverage to migrants, refugees and host communities**. In this respect, the Flagship Programme will focus on enriching the guide for the extension of social protection coverage to migrant workers, refugees and their families by providing evidence on health, sickness and maternity benefits, as well as on reinforcing the knowledge base on the significance of such benefits in the development of bilateral and multilateral social security agreements.
- **Supporting the adoption of the ILO/HEALTH online actuarial model** by social health protection institutions in partnership with the International Social Security Association (ISSA). The first phase of the Flagship Programme focused on the development of the new ILO/HEALTH tool. The introductory course offered for its launch attracted more than 800 participants from 88 countries. Based on this success, the second phase of the Flagship Programme will further support the development of tailored features of the tool and the definition of the different levels of its accessibility to social health protection institutions based on the professional profile of users and the actuarial literacy of the senior staff of those institutions. A full-fledged capacity-building package for both actuaries and decision-makers will be an important focus of the next phase of the Flagship Programme. The dissemination of the material and its accessibility in several languages are key components of this work.

Partnerships

The ILO takes an integrated approach with other development partners working on health. In particular, the ILO works in a complementary fashion with the member organizations of the main networks on social health protection and health financing and provides a normative and technical contribution.

In particular, the ILO supports the high-level coordination of the Global Network for Health Financing and Social Health Protection (P4H) and the WHO and the fostering of joint activities and contributes to the network of P4H country focal points. Within this network, the ILO also takes part in technical exchanges to raise awareness and promote its social health protection approach. The ILO also works within the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All to promote alignment and better coordination between 16 international health agencies and participates in the International Health Partnership for UHC2030.

The ILO partners with the ISSA in the promotion of the ILO/HEALTH model; contributes to an initiative led by the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GIZ) to develop and roll out the ILO's openIMIS, an open-source information system platform for social health protection; supports research development with the SPARKS Network, an international interdisciplinary research

network on health and social health protection for poverty-related diseases with prominent social determinants and consequences; and with “Working for Health”, a joint ILO/WHO/Organisation for Economic and Social Development programme to expand and transform the health and social workforce to drive inclusive economic growth and achieve the SDGs.

► Unemployment protection

Baseline

The ILO estimates that, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown measures, 255 million full-time jobs were lost in 2020 relative to the fourth quarter of 2019, approximately four times more than during the global financial crisis of 2009.² The pandemic highlighted the crucial role of unemployment protection schemes in ensuring income security for workers and their families. By facilitating structural change and a just transition for enterprises and workers in all sectors, unemployment protection programmes are also essential to support those adversely impacted by technological innovations and environmental and climate change.

Globally, 96 countries have established an unemployment protection scheme in law, mostly through social insurance mechanisms. Only 18.6 per cent of unemployed workers worldwide actually receive unemployment benefits (SDG indicator 1.3.1), with large regional disparities. This is due to the absence of unemployment protection schemes in many countries, the legal exclusion of certain categories of workers, high rates of long-term unemployment and restrictive qualifying conditions.

Further efforts are required to adapt unemployment protection schemes to ensure coverage for workers in all types of employment, as well as young people, persons with disabilities, older workers, women, the long-term unemployed and persons engaged in flexible work arrangements.

Approach

At its 109th session in 2021, the International Labour Conference called for urgent action to create a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic,³ outlining the importance of enhancing access to unemployment protection to ensure support for workers who have lost their jobs and livelihoods due to the pandemic and to facilitate transitions. The ILO Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All supports countries to design and implement unemployment protection schemes that are adapted to national context and founded on social dialogue, applying the international social security standards, in particular the [Social Security \(Minimum Standards\) Convention, 1952 \(No. 102\)](#), the [Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 \(No. 168\)](#) and the [Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Recommendation, 1988 \(No. 176\)](#). The ILO approach pursues a twin objective: to ensure that individuals enjoy income security when they lose their earnings due to the inability to obtain suitable employment; and to promote full and productive employment. That objective can be achieved through unemployment insurance or assistance and is strategically linked with active labour market policies (ALMPs), which include high-quality public employment and social services; lifelong learning, skills development and vocational/ labour orientation and training services; and incentives for enterprises to facilitate work transitions and build more inclusive labour markets and social protection systems, paying special attention to marginalized groups. Unemployment protection schemes can cover full or partial unemployment, as recommended by ILO instruments. They can take the form of unemployment benefits and employment retention schemes that help mitigate the adverse impacts of lockdowns on both

² ILO, [“ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the World of Work”](#), seventh edition, Jan. 2021.

³ ILO, [Global call to action for a human-centered recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient](#), International Labour Conference, 109th Session, 2021.

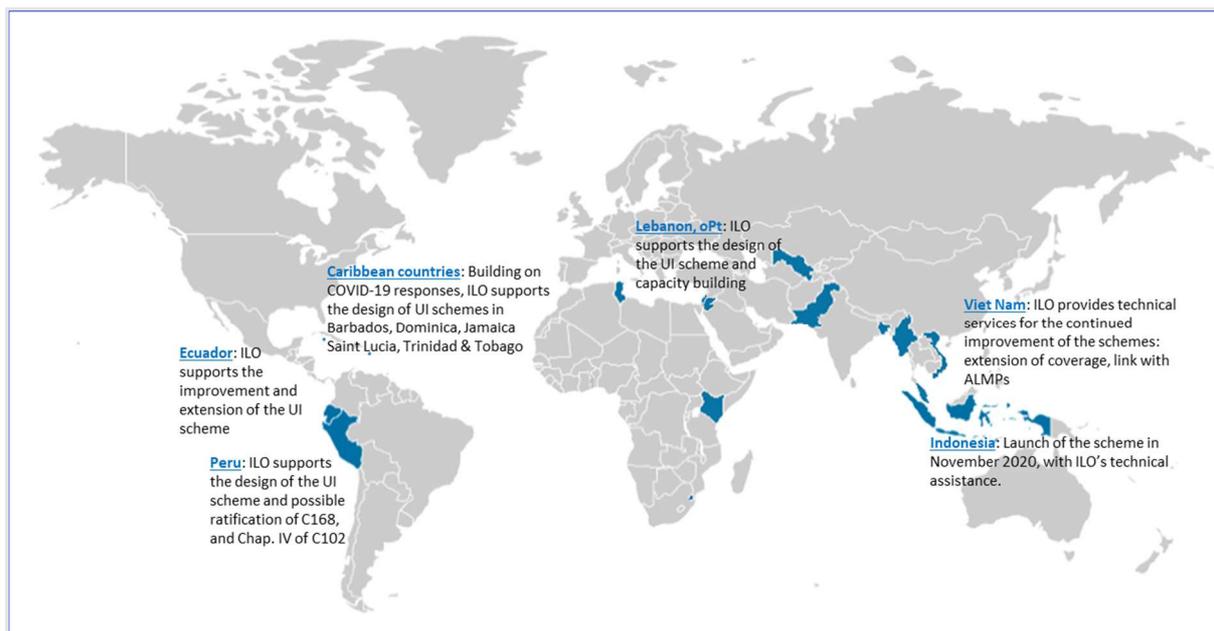
workers and enterprises. Strengthened social dialogue and policies on the transition to the formal economy are also essential to ensure effective unemployment protection.

The ILO’s support for Member States in improving unemployment protection systems within the Flagship Programme encompasses the following elements and following countries (see figure 4):

- The design and reform of unemployment protection schemes are guided by and apply Conventions Nos. 168 and 102, as well as Recommendation No. 176.
- The development of unemployment protection schemes builds on an effective social dialogue between governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations, based on evidence and analysis of the labour market, legal provisions, social security and labour activation programmes and institutions and the economic and financial contexts.
- The ILO supports countries in ensuring close coordination with the strengthening of public employment services and other ALMPs in order to promote decent, productive and freely chosen employment by combining the expertise of its social protection and employment departments and specialists across the regions.

Priority countries/territories

► **Figure 4. Priority countries/territories in which the ILO supports the development of unemployment protection during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



Caribbean countries. Following the COVID-19 related economic slowdown, countries implemented temporary, emergency unemployment protection programmes to support the unemployed. Following the ILO’s advocacy to convert these programmes in a permanent branch of social security schemes, a number of countries requested the ILO’s technical support, which included capacity-building and actuarial assessments of the cost of an unemployment insurance scheme in Dominica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. In Jamaica, more comprehensive support was provided through initial assessments (legal, administrative and labour market assessments); an actuarial assessment of the cost for the implementation of the unemployment insurance; and the development of the legal and administrative frameworks for unemployment insurance. Social dialogue has been present since the inception of the project, which is guided by a tripartite technical oversight committee.

Ecuador. Following an increase in the demand for unemployment benefits due to job loss resulting from the COVID-19 crisis, the ILO, through a project funded by the European Union (EU), supports Ecuador with an actuarial valuation and the design for setting the parameters for the extension of the unemployment insurance scheme and the development of a strategy for improving linkages between unemployment benefits and ALMPs. Also, the ILO is creating a detailed workplan and creating awareness through social dialogue activities with a view to the ratification of Convention No. 102, Part IV, and Convention No. 168.

Peru. With the financial support of the EU, the ILO provides technical services and analytical work to help tripartite constituents define and adopt the design of the unemployment insurance scheme, linking with ALMPs, in particular for legal and actuarial analysis. The ILO also conducted a legal analysis in view of the possible ratification of Convention No. 102, Part IV, and Convention No. 168.

Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The ILO provides technical support to tripartite constituents on the legal and operational design of unemployment insurance schemes under the ongoing reforms of national social insurance systems as well as on the development of appropriate capacity for scheme administration.

Indonesia. With the financial support of the Fast Retailing Co. Ltd. and the Government of Japan, the ILO contributed to the development of the unemployment insurance scheme. The law was enacted in November 2020, the implementing regulation was enacted in February 2021, and the first payment will be made in February 2022. The ILO will continue to provide technical assistance for its implementation and regular monitoring in order to ensure financial sustainability and continuous improvement of the policy design.

Viet Nam. Since 2009, the ILO has provided advisory services to the tripartite constituents for the continued improvement of the employment insurance scheme in Viet Nam.

Technical support

The ILO provides the following policy and technical support to Member States:

- facilitating the tripartite dialogue between ministries of labour and employers' and workers' organizations to achieve informed decisions on the design and reforms of unemployment protection schemes;
- analysis of labour market indicators, as well as legal provisions and social protection programmes, in order to protect against the risk of unemployment, identify broad options for the unemployment protection scheme and support its articulation with existing provisions (such as severance payments);
- assessment of the social protection systems and their linkages with employment support and ALMPs, programmes and institutions with a view to defining the institutional set of the unemployment protection scheme and its linkages with activation programmes;
- actuarial assessment to determine the cost and financial sustainability of various design options for the unemployment protection scheme (contribution rates, duration and level of benefits, qualifying periods), in agreement with the international social security standards. For this, the ILO/Unemployment Insurance generic actuarial model can be easily adapted to the specific context of each country;
- design of the operations and procedures and development of management information systems for registering applicants, processing claims and payments and providing job placement and counseling services;
- support for the design of the extension of unemployment protection policies and schemes to workers in all types of employment, focusing on access to decent and productive employment and linking with policies for the transition to formal economy; and

- o support for the dissemination, ratification and application of Convention No. 168 and Recommendation No. 176, including through legal and policy assessments and capacity-building to advance a better understanding of its strategic fit and content.

Because the demand for technical support is increasing in Asia and Latin American Member States, the ILO is exploring the establishment of regional technical support facilities and the promotion of regional exchange through the development of a regional network of experts, in particular in Asia and Latin America.

Indicators of results and impact

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through the thematic approach on unemployment protection and monitor the following indicators:

- o number of countries that have adopted a law or regulation stipulating the design or reform of an unemployment protection scheme;
- o number of countries that have implemented or improved the governance of unemployment protection schemes; and
- o proportion of unemployed receiving a benefit (SDG indicator 1.3.1).

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved, while applying principles of Conventions Nos. 102 and 168 and Recommendation No. 176, through effective social dialogue.

Knowledge development

Under the thematic area of unemployment protection, the Flagship Programme will work on the following knowledge products and outputs.

- Country briefs will be developed on good practices and experiences to extend unemployment protection, including learning from the COVID-19 pandemic responses.
- A global guide will be developed on designing and implementing unemployment protection schemes, in application of Conventions Nos. 102 and 168 and Recommendation No. 176.

Partnerships

- Technical assistance to Member States to design or reform their unemployment protection schemes may be funded through trust-in-fund projects between the ILO and governments or social security institutions.
- The ILO maintains a long-standing partnership with the Government of Japan and the Republic of Korea for strengthening capacities and fostering the sharing of experiences among Asian countries.
- Building on the experience of the public-private partnership between the ILO and UNIQLO on strengthening unemployment protection in Indonesia, the ILO continues to explore similar initiatives with the business sector.
- The Emergency Unemployment and Stabilization Employment Fund in Jordan, which links emergency funding from multiple partners with the building of sustainable social insurance systems, is also an interesting example of partnership.
- Following the partnership between the ILO and the EU on responding to the COVID-19 crisis through the global programme on the theme “Improving linkages between social protection and public finance management” and between ILO and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ) on supporting the garment industry, the ILO seeks to strengthen such partnerships with the EU and EU Member States in this area.

► Extending social security to workers in the informal economy and protecting workers in all types of employment

Baseline

A total of 2 billion workers – 61.2 per cent of the world's employed population – are in informal employment.⁴ Most of them are among the 4.1 billion people who do not have any access to social protection or are only inadequately protected.⁵ The lack of social protection for these workers, including their lack of access to health care and income security, renders them particularly vulnerable and at risk of falling (deeper) into poverty. In many cases, the lack of social protection also negatively affects their capacity to earn a living, for example when out-of-pocket payments for health costs force them to sell productive assets or engage in casual labour rather than acquire the necessary skills for more productive employment and income-generation opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated challenges for informal workers, who have often found themselves in a desperate situation, unable to access health care and often unable to work, earn a living and meet their basic needs. Many countries have implemented crisis-response measures to extend protection to previously excluded workers at least temporarily, including workers in the informal economy, yet these measures were often only temporary and insufficient to meet the huge demand.⁶ Fostering the transition of such emergency measures into viable elements of rights-based national social protection systems (see thematic area on this topic) is essential for an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery.

The urgent need to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy was reaffirmed by the International Labour Conference in June 2021, which established the ambitious objective of ensuring adequate and comprehensive social protection for workers in all types of employment, an indispensable step towards reaching universal social protection, promoting inclusive growth and decent work and leaving no one behind.

Approach

The ILO's approach to the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy aims to guarantee adequate social protection for workers in all types of employment through the adoption of mechanisms that are in line with international social security standards. In addition to non-contributory schemes that can provide a basic level of protection, this thematic area places a strong emphasis on the adoption of inclusive social insurance schemes that can guarantee adequate levels of social protection to workers while ensuring broad risk-sharing and supporting labour market mobility. Well-designed social insurance schemes provide an upper layer of protection that allows the prevention of impoverishment in the face of social risks (as opposed to focusing only on lifting people out of poverty) – an important element of a forward-looking and preventive approach. By combining social insurance and tax financing, social protection systems are able to prevent poverty, address inequalities and promote inclusive growth in a sustainable

⁴ ILO, [Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture](#), third edition, 2018.

⁵ ILO, [World Social Protection Report 2020-22: Social Protection at the Crossroads – In Pursuit of a Better Future, 2021](#).

⁶ ILO, ["Extending Social Protection to Informal Workers in the COVID-19 Crisis: Country Responses and Policy Considerations"](#), 2020.

and equitable way, while supporting just transitions to more environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

The extension of social security to workers in the informal economy is part of a broader approach that aims to facilitate the transition of enterprises and workers from the informal to the formal economy, contributing to decent work for all and sustainable enterprises. The ILO's approach is guided in particular by Recommendation No. 202 and the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204).

The ILO supports governments and social partners in developing integrated solutions to extend coverage through a combination of contributory and non-contributory mechanisms, including adaptations of existing tax-financed non-contributory programmes towards universalization and more adequate benefits and adaptations of existing social insurance schemes towards more adapted benefit packages, payment schedules and enhanced accessibility of benefits. In all cases, the ILO promotes a rights-based approach by promoting rights-based legal and institutional frameworks that are inspired by international social security standards.

As this thematic area cuts across all social security branches and is closely related to the different aspects of strengthening social protection systems, synergies with other thematic areas are essential, in particular with regard to expanding social health protection towards universal health coverage (including health, maternity, sickness and long-term care); unemployment protection; old-age pensions; social protection for migrants, refugees and host communities; a just transition to a more environmentally sustainable economy and society; financial governance and sustainability: actuarial valuations; and a culture of social protection.

Recognizing that the needs and priorities of workers and enterprises in the informal economy are diverse, particular emphasis will be given to developing tailored approaches that are adapted to their specific situation and address relevant barriers related to legal frameworks, financing and administrative mechanisms, awareness, compliance, governance, participation and trust. This includes intensified efforts to develop mechanisms that are tailored to specific sectors and types of employment, combined with broad risk-sharing and sustainable financing, thereby avoiding fragmented approaches.

Building on earlier work and the close collaboration between ILO headquarters and field offices, the second phase of the Flagship Programme places particular emphasis on the following strategic areas:

- facilitating social security coverage for workers in micro and small enterprises, in collaboration with the ILO's enterprise specialists, building on earlier work in this area⁷ and thereby contributing to the formalization of enterprises and employment, decent work and sustainable enterprises;
- enhancing social protection coverage for agricultural workers and rural populations in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as a key element of reaching universal social protection and promoting decent work in the rural economy;⁸

⁷ See ILO, "[Enterprise Formalization: Tailored Tax and Social Security Requirements for Micro and Small Enterprises](#)", March 2021; and ILO, "[Extending Social Security to Workers in Small Enterprises](#)", June 2020.

⁸ ILO and FAO, "[Extending Social Protection to Rural Populations: Perspectives for a Common FAO and ILO Approach](#)", 2021.

- improving social protection coverage for self-employed workers⁹ through tailored mechanisms that take account of their specific characteristics, allowing for adequate mechanisms to accommodate labour market mobility;
- expanding and deepening the knowledge base and guidance on workers in other sectors and types of employment, such as domestic workers,¹⁰ construction workers, artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors¹¹ and workers on digital labour platforms;¹²
- deepening the understanding of the impact of the extension of social security coverage on labour productivity and the structural transformation of the economy, in particular in the light of a just transition to a more environmentally sustainable economy and society; and
- harnessing synergies between the extension of social protection coverage to those in the informal economy, formalization policies and the sustainable and equitable financing of social protection systems.

In doing so, this thematic area will also emphasize the benefits of formulating policy responses through a participatory and inclusive social dialogue that includes organizations of workers in the informal economy in order to develop policy responses that are adapted to the situation and needs of workers across different types of employment, sectors of the economy and work arrangements, with particular emphasis on the situation and needs of persons in vulnerable situations (see figure 5).

⁹ ILO, [“Extending Social Security to Self-Employed Workers: Lessons from International Experience”, June 2021.](#)

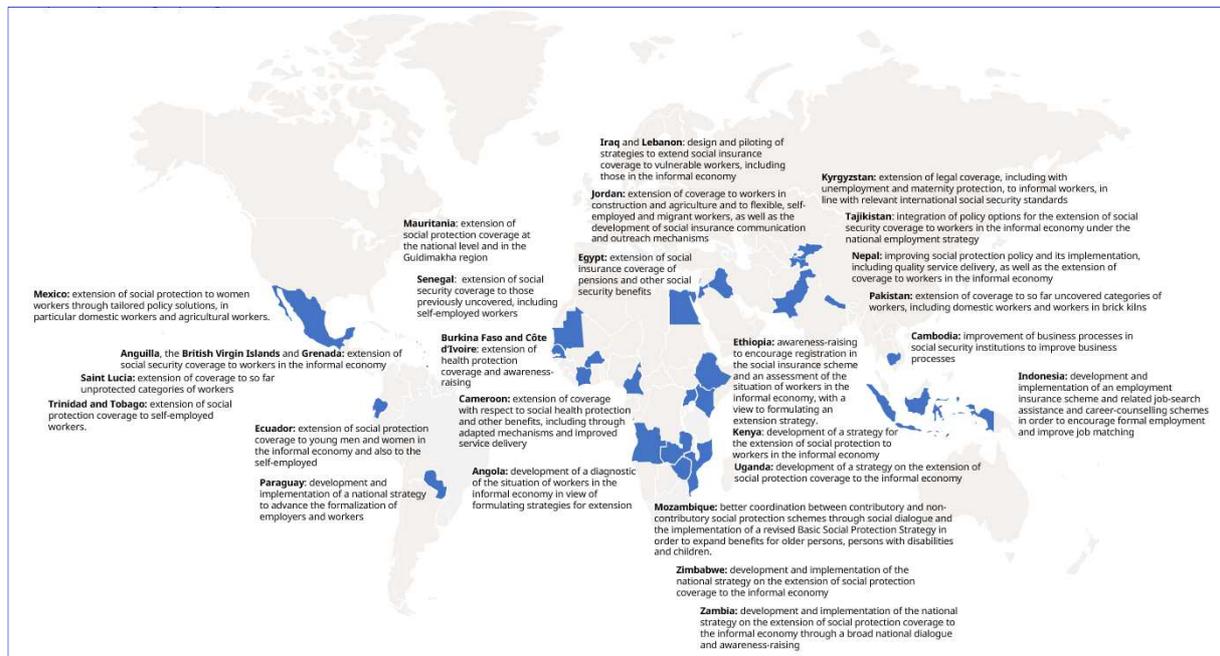
¹⁰ ILO, [“Extending Social Security to Domestic Workers: Lessons from International Experience, June 2021.](#)

¹¹ ILO, [“Extending Social Protection to the Cultural and Creative Sectors”, 2021.](#)

¹² ILO, [World Employment and Social Outlook 2021: The Role of Digital Labour Platforms in Transforming the World of Work, June 2021](#); Behrendt, Christina, Quynh Anh Nguyen and Uma Rani, [“Social Protection Systems and the Future of Work: Ensuring Social Security for Digital Platform Workers”](#), International Social Security Review 72, No. 3 (2019): 17–41.

Priority countries/territories

► **Figure 5. Priority countries/territories in which the ILO supports the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy and workers in all types of employment during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



The further development of this thematic area benefits from a multitude of technical cooperation projects that respond to constituents' requests for the extension of social security coverage to currently unprotected categories of the population. These include the following.

- In **Angola**, the ILO supports the development of a diagnostic of the situation of workers in the informal economy in view of formulating strategies for extension.
- In **Anguilla**, the **British Virgin Islands** and **Grenada**, the ILO support the extension of social security coverage to workers in the informal economy.
- In **Burkina Faso**, the ILO supports the extension of health protection coverage.
- In **Cambodia**, the ILO supports the improvement of business processes in social security institutions to improve business processes in order to increase the coverage and quality of service to workers in the formal and informal sectors.
- In **Cameroon**, the ILO supports the extension of coverage with respect to social health protection and other benefits, including through adapted mechanisms and improved service delivery.
- In **Ecuador**, the ILO supports the extension of social protection coverage to young men and women in the informal economy and also to the self-employed.
- In **Egypt**, the ILO supports the extension of social insurance coverage of pensions and other social security benefits.
- In **Ethiopia**, the ILO supports awareness-raising to encourage registration in the social insurance scheme and an assessment of the situation of workers in the informal economy, with a view to formulating an extension strategy.
- In **Indonesia**, the ILO supports the development and implementation of an employment insurance scheme and related job-search assistance and career-counselling schemes in order to encourage formal employment and improve job matching.

- In **Iraq** and **Lebanon**, the ILO supports the design and piloting of strategies to extend social insurance coverage to vulnerable workers, including those in the informal economy.
- In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the ILO support the extension of social health protection coverage and awareness-raising on social security.
- In **Jordan**, the ILO supports the extension of coverage to workers in construction and agriculture and to flexible, self-employed and migrant workers, as well as the development of social insurance communication and outreach mechanisms.
- In **Kenya**, the ILO supports the development of a strategy for the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy.
- In **Kyrgyzstan**, the ILO supports the extension of legal coverage, including with unemployment and maternity protection, to informal workers, in line with relevant international social security standards.
- In **Mauritania**, the ILO supports the extension of social protection coverage at the national level and in the Guidimakha region.
- In **Mexico**, the ILO supports the extension of social protection to women workers through tailored policy solutions, in particular domestic workers and agricultural workers.
- In **Mozambique**, the ILO supports better coordination between contributory and non-contributory social protection schemes through social dialogue and the implementation of a revised Basic Social Protection Strategy in order to expand benefits for older persons, persons with disabilities and children.
- In **Nepal**, the ILO supports the Government in improving social protection policy and its implementation, including quality service delivery, as well as the extension of coverage to workers in the informal economy.
- In **Pakistan**, the ILO supports the extension of coverage to so far uncovered categories of workers, including domestic workers and workers in brick kilns.
- In **Paraguay**, the ILO supports the Government, employers and workers in the development and implementation of a national strategy to advance the formalization of employers and workers.
- In **Saint Lucia**, the ILO supports the extension of coverage to so far unprotected categories of workers.
- In **Senegal**, the ILO supports the extension of social security coverage to those previously uncovered, including self-employed workers.
- In **Tajikistan**, the ILO supports the integration of policy options for the extension of social security coverage to workers in the informal economy under the national employment strategy.
- In **Trinidad and Tobago**, the ILO supports the extension of social protection coverage to self-employed workers.
- In **Uganda**, the ILO supports the development of a strategy on the extension of social protection coverage to the informal economy.
- In **Zambia**, the ILO supports the development and implementation of the national strategy on the extension of social protection coverage to the informal economy through a broad national dialogue and awareness-raising.
- In **Zimbabwe**, the ILO supports the development and implementation of the national strategy on the extension of social protection coverage to the informal economy.

Technical support

The ILO provides technical support to Member States throughout the process of formulating, developing, implementing and evaluating policies to extend coverage to those in the informal economy. Depending on the country situation, technical support can include the following elements (see figure 6):¹³

- **A diagnostic of the situation of workers in the informal economy** that identifies coverage gaps and barriers to coverage for different categories of workers, both women and men, as well as barriers to the situation of economic units in the informal sector. Such studies make use of detailed quantitative and qualitative information, complemented by a broader assessment of the labour market and macroeconomic situation at the national or local levels.
- **A review of regulatory and policy frameworks and practices** that focuses in particular on identifying and analysing barriers to coverage and identifying options for possible reform, taking into account priority needs and the diverse situations of those in the informal economy.
- **Priority-setting** to identify and select policy options and agree on a sequence of actions and time frames for the extension of coverage to workers in the informal economy through social dialogue that includes representatives of workers and economic units in the informal economy.
- **Development of an integrated policy framework** that ensures policy coherence and a well-functioning institutional set-up, complemented by a comprehensive legal framework that provides for the extension of coverage and encourages transitions from the informal to the formal economy.
- **Implementation and monitoring** of the policy, including adapted registration and delivery mechanisms that facilitate compliance, awareness-raising, the adaptation of labour and social security inspection mechanisms, a monitoring and evaluation system and impact assessment, while also providing the basis for a regular review (and if necessary adjustment) of the policy framework.

¹³ See ILO, [“Extending Social Security to Workers in the Informal Economy: Lessons from International Experience”](#), March 2021.

► **Figure 6. Policy cycle for the extension of social security to workers in the informal economy and supporting their transition to the formal economy**



Source: ILO. 2021. [Extending Social Security to Workers in the Informal Economy](#), p. 29.

In order to respond to the high number of constituent requests in this area, there is a need to develop regional hubs of the technical support facility, in particular in the Africa and the Europe and Central Asia regions.

Indicators of results and impact

The work of the ILO on the extension of social security coverage will be guided by international social security standards, in particular Recommendations Nos. 202 and 204, and will fully respect all the guiding principles included in Recommendation No. 202.

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through this thematic approach and will monitor the following indicators:

- number of countries that have revised their policy and legal framework to extend social protection coverage to categories of workers not previously covered;
- number of countries that have revised their policy and legal frameworks to improve the adequacy of social protection for categories of workers with inadequate coverage;
- number of countries that increased the number of persons legally covered by their social protection system, by branch; and
- number of countries that increased the number of persons effectively covered by their social protection system, by branch.

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection. The principles most relevant for this thematic approach – in addition to tripartite participation – are universality; adequacy of benefits; progressive realization; solidarity in financing; diversity of methods and approaches; transparent good governance and accountability; sustainability; social justice and equity; and monitoring and evaluation.

Knowledge development and sharing

In view of the complexity and size of the challenge of extending coverage to those in the informal economy, the ILO places particular emphasis on the development and sharing of knowledge. The ILO's online policy resource platform "[Extending Social Security to Workers in the Informal Economy](#)" constitutes the central knowledge hub for viable policy solutions and practical guidance on extending social protection to workers in the informal economy and facilitating transitions to formality, including the ILO's [good practice guide](#) and a number of briefs and other materials:

- The suite of tools and resources that form part of the ILO's policy resource package will be further developed and expanded in order to provide a practical knowledge hub that can serve as useful guidance for policymakers, social partners and other stakeholders and partners. This includes making the resources available in additional languages.
- It is envisaged to further intensify knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities at the global, regional and national level, including through the ITC-ILO and partnerships with other institutions.
- Particular emphasis will be placed on improving the evidence base on the impact of the extension of social protection on workers and enterprises, including with regard to the prevention of poverty, the reduction of inequalities, labour productivity and the structural transformation of the economy.

Partnerships

The ILO promotes the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy in close collaboration with partners within and outside the UN system, including the FAO, ISSA and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing at the global, regional and country levels, as well as the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection (USP2030).

The ILO's work under this thematic area also benefits from the support of the Governments of Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal, as well as the EU and the UN Joint SDG Fund programmes funded by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

► Disability-inclusive social protection systems

Baseline

The latest ILO estimates of effective coverage show that only 33.5 per cent of people with severe disabilities worldwide receive a disability benefit. However, it is difficult to produce reliable estimates since data on the prevalence and severity of disability and existing disability benefits and services are scarce. It is therefore crucially important to include questions related to disability in the collection of administrative data and household surveys and to disaggregate data by disability status, as well as by age, sex and so on. This will facilitate the effective monitoring of social protection systems and the development of evidence-based policies, thereby contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. Disability-inclusive social protection systems guarantee effective access to health care and income security, including coverage of disability-related costs, for all people with disabilities. They usually comprise a combination of general and disability-specific schemes, both cash and in-kind schemes, which are designed in ways that enable people with disabilities to participate actively in education, employment and society.

Approach

The ILO approach to building disability-inclusive social protection systems is grounded in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the joint statement entitled “Towards inclusive social protection systems supporting the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities”,¹⁴ which was adopted in 2018 by a coalition of UN agencies, bilateral development agencies, organizations of people with disabilities and NGOs. Among other things, this approach emphasizes the importance of moving away from an “incapacity to work” perspective, away from institutionalized care and beyond a one-size-fits-all eligibility threshold. Instead, the approach focuses on ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to programmes that adequately:

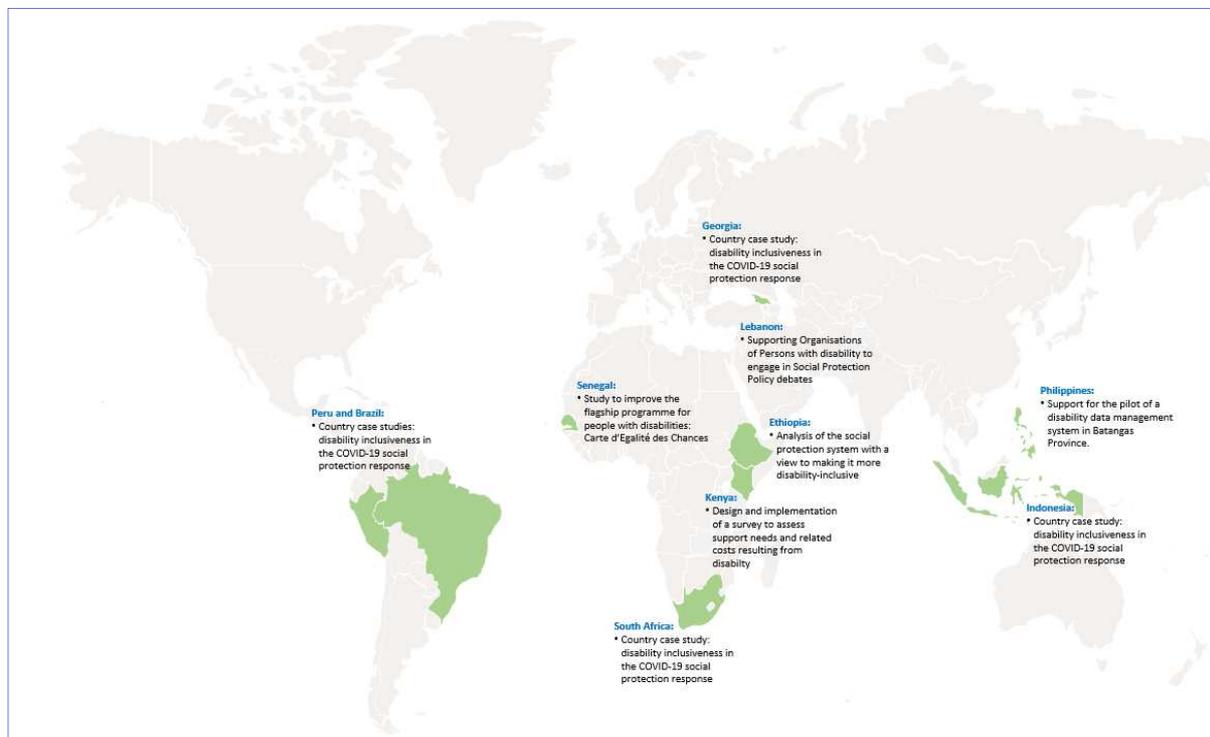
- guarantee income security that enables access to necessary goods and services;
- cover disability-related costs and facilitate access to the required support, including services and assistive devices;
- provide effective access to health care, including disability-related medical care and rehabilitation, as well as HIV prevention and care;
- ensure access to services across the life cycle, such as child care, education and vocational training;
- provide support with employment and livelihood generation, including return-to-work programmes and support for living in the community; and
- take into account the diversity of this population group, both in terms of type of disability and other factors such as age, gender and ethnicity.

To achieve this, a twin-track approach is needed so that: (a) all social protection programmes are designed, implemented and monitored in a way that ensures the inclusion of persons with disabilities, with particular emphasis on removing barriers and avoiding adverse effects; and (b) adequate disability-specific programmes provide the support and benefits required by persons with disabilities that are not provided by mainstream programmes.

¹⁴ ILO et al., "[Joint Statement: Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Supporting the Full and Effective Participation of Persons with Disabilities](#)", 2019.

Priority countries

► **Figure 7. Priority countries in which the ILO supports disability-inclusive social protection systems during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



Technical support

The ILO offers the following technical support to constituents on disability-inclusive social protection in a range of countries (see figure 7).

Effective participation of organizations of people with disabilities

Direct engagement with people with disabilities through their representative bodies (organizations of people with disabilities) along the full policy cycle of planning, implementing, monitoring and reforming social protection policies and programmes is a requirement under Article 4.3 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Paragraph 3(r) of Recommendation No. 202. Such engagement is also necessary to ensure that policies are designed to reflect beneficiaries' needs and are effective. The ILO facilitates and supports this participation.

Disability data and statistics to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities

Since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the "Washington Group Short Set" (WGSS) of questions has become the standard tool for determining the prevalence of disability (for example in household surveys). In addition to the WGSS, disability-specific modules (ILO Model Labour Force Resources) and surveys (WHO Model Disability Survey), as well as surveys conducted by the Foundation for Scientific and Industrial Research (SINTEF), are needed to provide more detailed information on the situations of people with disabilities and the barriers they face. The ILO supports countries in collecting disability data providing insights into the inequalities faced by people with disabilities and their level of access to different services.

Disability assessments that provide for support and inclusion

Disability assessments are carried out to determine eligibility for individual disability-related support. The ILO supports countries to develop assessment mechanisms that are easily available nationwide, are affordable and focus not only on functional impairment but also on the diverse barriers that people with disabilities face and their support requirements.

Design of inclusive delivery mechanisms

Many people face barriers to access social protection schemes, such as physical distance, lack of simple and appropriate information, lack of financial inclusion and cumbersome and complex administrative procedures. These barriers are even more difficult to overcome for persons with disabilities. The ILO supports countries to develop inclusive and accessible schemes and programmes along all the steps of the delivery process.

Addressing disability-related costs

The design of benefits and eligibility determination mechanisms should take into account the higher living costs of people with disabilities in comparison with people without disabilities: at the same level of income, people with disabilities will experience lower living standards than people without disabilities because they incur higher health or transport costs and additional expenses for necessary support services or assistive devices, personal assistance, sign language and interpretation. The additional costs of disability also include indirect opportunity costs, such as time spent on support activities by family members or lower earned income owing to barriers faced in education and labour market opportunities. The ILO supports countries to factor these costs into the design of schemes, both for the benefits and services provided as well as for the eligibility thresholds.

Work on the thematic area “Disability-inclusive social protection systems” will require close collaboration with other thematic areas, in particular with “Expanding social health protection towards universal health coverage (including health, maternity, sickness and long-term care)”, “Inclusive and effective social dialogue”, “Building national systems of social protection statistics and monitoring and evaluation frameworks” and “Digital transformation”.

Indicators of results and impact

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through this thematic approach and will monitor the following indicators:

- number of countries that have improved their data systems on disability prevalence and information on the situation of persons with disabilities and the barriers they face;
- number of countries that have improved their social protection schemes and programmes on disability-inclusive design and implementation, through measures such as improved disability assessment mechanisms, inclusive delivery mechanisms and consideration of the additional costs of disability;
- number of countries that have institutionalized effective participation structures for organizations of persons with disabilities; and
- number of countries that have increased coverage of persons with disability in mainstream and/or disability-specific schemes.

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.

Knowledge development

The ILO's work on disability-inclusive social protection during the first phase of the Flagship Programme focused on producing a comprehensive set of briefs and papers on the various aspects of disability-inclusive social protection, as outlined above, which led to the production of a guidance note on building disability-inclusive social protection systems. The second phase of the Flagship Programme will apply this guidance. Knowledge products will focus on the documentation of experiences and lessons learned from the provision of technical advisory services to countries with a view to revising the guidance note as needed.

Partnerships

The ILO's work on disability-inclusive social protection is carried out in collaboration with UNICEF and in partnership with the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Development Association, the Global Action on Disability Network and other development partners through the related working group of the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board (SPIAC-B).

► Social protection for migrants, refugees and their families

Baseline

Human mobility is increasing worldwide – there are 169 million international migrant workers,¹⁵ 26.4 million refugees and 4.1 million asylum seekers¹⁶ in search of decent work and/or safety. The mere fact of leaving their countries of origin has an impact on the ability of migrants and refugees to exercise their right to social security. Compared with workers who live and work in one country throughout their life, migrant workers, refugees and their families face a number of additional legal and practical obstacles to obtaining effective access to social protection benefits, including health care.

Migrant workers, refugees and their families face similar health threats from the COVID-19 pandemic to those faced by host populations. However, they usually have higher vulnerabilities due to the conditions of their journey, their poor living and working conditions and their lack of access to social protection, including health protection. In addition, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, many migrant workers suffer job losses, unpaid wages, worsening working and living conditions. This has a major impact on their income and remittances, particularly in countries in which they have no access to social protection.

Approach

The ILO promotes a holistic approach to the extension of social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families.

This approach takes into account the specificities and heterogeneity of the relevant country's labour migration and mobility landscape, as well as the specificities and needs of different groups of migrant workers and refugees. When developing and implementing policies or mechanisms for extending social protection, factors such as migration/refugee status, type of employment contract or work permit, living conditions, duration of stay, skill sets, income levels and demographic characteristics, as well as the industry or sector in which migrants and refugees work, should be taken into consideration as these factors influence if/how migrants and refugees can access comprehensive social protection.

In addition, the progressive integration of refugees into national social protection programmes may provide sustainable and cost-effective solutions to transition from humanitarian to longer-term assistance, particularly in protracted situations.

Based on its normative framework and mandate to protect all workers, the ILO supports its constituents in addressing the different obstacles faced by migrants and refugees in accessing health care and other social protection benefits.

For this purpose, countries may consider the following policy options, which are not mutually exclusive:

1. establishing or extending comprehensive, adequate, gender-responsive and sustainable social protection systems for all, including migrant workers, refugees and their families;

¹⁵ ILO, "ILO [Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers – Results and Methodology – Third edition](#)", 2021.

¹⁶ UNHCR, 2020.

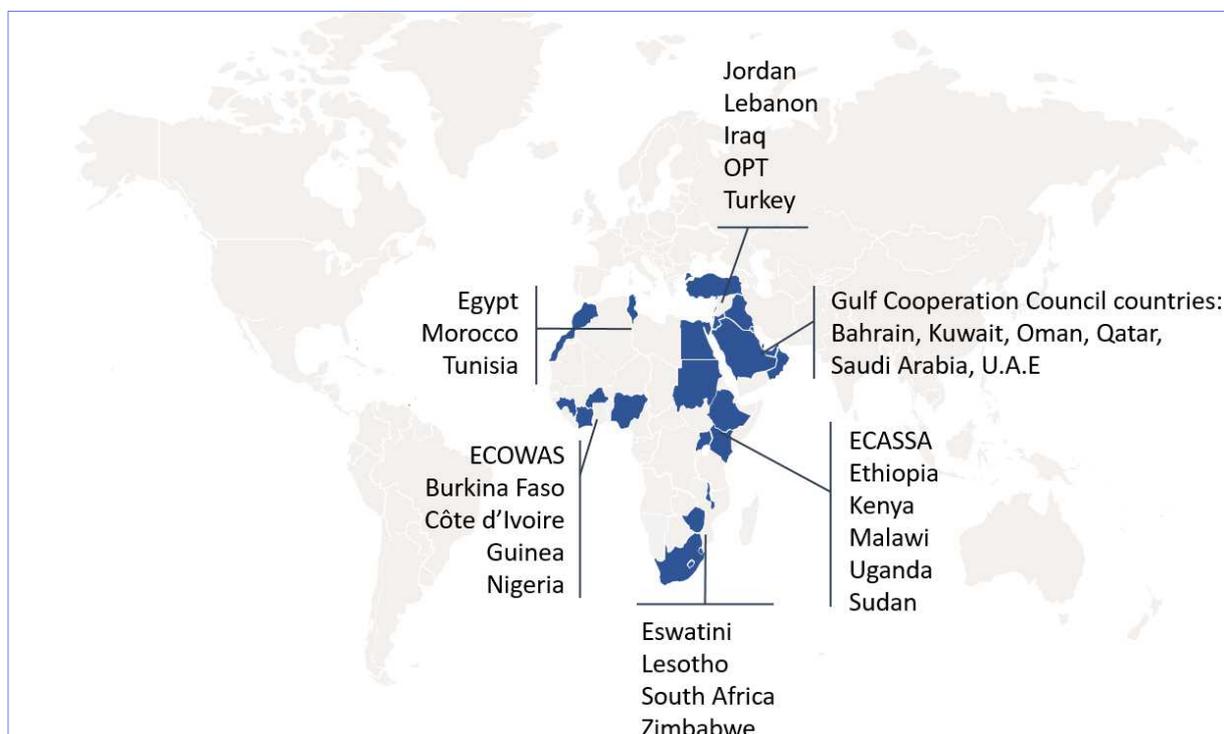
2. ratification and application of relevant UN and ILO Conventions and Recommendations as a first step towards the domestication of the principles and standards therein;
3. conclusion and enforcement of social security agreements (bilateral/multilateral) to ensure social security coordination;
4. inclusion of social security provisions in bilateral labour agreements (BLAs) or memoranda of understanding (MoUs);
5. adoption of unilateral measures, including ensuring equality of treatment or the establishment of national social protection floors to extend social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families; and
6. complementary measures to address the administrative, practical, and organizational obstacles faced by migrant workers and refugees (such as language barriers, lack of information and lack of representation).

Social dialogue plays a key role in the development of social protection extension strategies and social partners should be actively involved in the planning, design and monitoring of all the above policy options.

Priority countries/territories

In response to the conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 109th Session in 2021, the ILO will continue and strengthen its support to constituents on the extension of social protection to migrant workers and their families, including to close the coverage gap (see figure 8).

► **Figure 8. Priority countries and territories in which the ILO supports the extension of social security to migrants and refugees during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



- **Northern Africa:** The ILO supports Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt in exploring different policy options for extending social protection to migrant workers, including through social security agreements. In Egypt, the ILO is exploring options to progressively enrol refugees in the new universal health insurance scheme.

- **Western Africa:** The ILO will continue to support the Committee of Experts on Social Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) as a critical organ for supporting ECOWAS member States in the implementation of the General Convention on Social Security and monitoring its proper application. The ILO will also provide support to Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Nigeria on the extension of social protection to migrant workers.
- **Southern Africa:** The ILO will support Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe in piloting the Guidelines on Portability of Social Security Benefits in the Southern African Development Community.
- **Eastern Africa:** The ILO will provide capacity-building for data collection on social protection for migrant workers to the East and Central Africa Social Security Association and in selected East African countries and will strengthen knowledge and capacities to facilitate regional labour mobility and the portability of social security benefits. With the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the ILO will support a study on the prospects for a multilateral social security agreement. The ILO will also provide technical assistance to Kenya on the feasibility of a migrant welfare fund. In Kenya, Sudan, Uganda and Ethiopia, the ILO is working with governments and partners to extend social protection coverage to refugees and host communities, with a focus on social health protection, while strengthening national social protection systems.
- **In Turkey,** the ILO implements the Transition to Formality Programme, which was launched in 2018 in collaboration with the Social Security Institution under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The programme helps Syrian nationals under temporary protection and Turkish citizens to access formal employment and social security by providing financial support to companies that employ refugees. The programme covers the social security premiums of the programme participants for six months and the work permit costs of Syrian nationals under temporary protection. It currently stands as a flagship initiative of the ILO Office for Turkey to ensure the transition to formality and will be implemented until the end of 2022, with a target likely to exceed 10,000 participants.
- **In Jordan,** together with the Jordan Social Security Corporation (SSC) and other UN partners, the ILO has established a multi-donor fund to support short-term income and medium-term social security contribution subsidies for non-national workers in order to facilitate formalization and the extension of coverage. This includes providing support for refugee workers, in collaboration with UNHCR, with a particular focus on the self-employed and agricultural workers. The ILO is also working with the SSC to improve communication with migrant and refugee workers through interactive messaging and basic information in the languages spoken by migrants (other than Arabic and English) and to promote the establishment of bilateral social security agreements.
- **In Iraq and Lebanon,** the ILO will promote the reform of policy, legal and administrative social protection frameworks in order to remove barriers to accessing national social protection systems for non-nationals, including through better alignment of humanitarian response and the strengthening of national systems of social protection.
- **In the Occupied Palestinian Territory,** the ILO will support humanitarian and development actors in the social protection sector to enhance the rights-based and cross-nexus coherence of the system at the programmatic, financial and operational levels and will introduce decentralized horizontal coordination mechanisms.
- **In the Gulf Cooperation Council countries,** the ILO will support a regional assessment of migrants' access to social protection and will engage in policy dialogue in selected countries to support the inclusion of non-national workers in national social protection systems.
- **Through a regional facility in the Arab States region** (regional resource hub), the ILO will support governments and social partners across the region to design, monitor and

implement policies and programmes that enable and facilitate migrants and refugees' effective enjoyment of social protection rights.

Technical support

The ILO is mandated to support the extension of social protection to all, including migrants and refugees, and provides technical assistance to its constituents in their extension strategies. In most contexts, ensuring that migrants and refugees have access to social protection in line with the principles of adequacy set out in ILO standards implies acting simultaneously on:

- removing the legal and practical barriers for their inclusion in national social protection systems and ensuring the portability of benefits; and
- improving the adequacy of the benefits provided and the efficient functioning of the institutions responsible for the administration of such benefits.

Therefore, the technical support offered under this thematic priority draws on other thematic priorities (especially those concerning health care; old-age pensions; the extension of social protection to the informal economy; and legal, statistics, financing and actuarial work) and in some contexts is closely linked to climate change and a just transition.

The ILO may offer technical advice/expertise and capacity-building to ILO Member States on:

- the establishment of comprehensive social protection systems, including national social protection floors, based on social dialogue;
- the drafting or revision of national social protection policies and legal frameworks that extend coverage, including to migrant workers and refugees and those in the informal economy and their dependants, in line with international standards and good practices;
- the development, strengthening, implementation and monitoring of new or existing rights-based social protection schemes or mechanisms that enhance access or extend coverage to migrant workers and refugees (such as to provide access to health care, income security and so on);
- the ratification and application of ILO Conventions and Recommendations;
- the drafting and negotiation of social security agreements and other mechanisms to enhance coordination across social security systems;
- the drafting and negotiation of bilateral labour arrangements and MoUs with provisions on social security;
- the establishment of a knowledge base (including up-to-date statistics as part of the World Social Protection Database) on social security for migrant workers and refugees in order to support evidence-based policymaking and capacity-building; and
- the costing and financing of social protection schemes and reforms (such as fiscal space analyses), including those related to the extension of social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families, as well as those intended to improve the adequacy of social protection in host countries.

Indicators of results and impact

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through this thematic approach and will monitor the following indicators:

- number of countries with new or revised national social protection policies, laws and schemes (unilateral measures) that extend coverage, enhance comprehensiveness and/or increase adequacy of benefits for migrant workers and refugees and their families;¹⁷
- number of countries with new or revised bilateral/multilateral social security agreements or BLAs with provisions on social security;
- number of countries or regional economic communities with improved institutional capacity and delivery mechanisms to support the effective implementation of social security agreements or national schemes; and
- number of countries that collect data on migrant workers and refugees' social protection coverage.

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.

Knowledge development

During the second phase of the Flagship Programme, the following knowledge products are key:

- new learning modules on seafarers' social protection and on statistics to be added to the ILO guide on extending social protection to migrant workers, refugees and families;
- the ILO's practical intervention models on the extension of social protection to specific groups of migrant workers or with a focus on specific policy options (such as social security agreements and unilateral measures) to be developed and disseminated;
- country briefs to detail the approaches and lessons learned by the Partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS) in extending social protection coverage to refugees and host communities (with regional workshops to disseminate those lessons);
- building on the lessons learned from the first phase enriching the guide for the extension of social protection coverage to migrant workers, refugees and their families by including evidence on health, sickness and maternity benefits and will reinforce the knowledge base on the significance of such benefits in international social security agreements; and
- the ILO's mapping of the legal social protection coverage of migrant workers and refugees will be extended and updated.

Partnerships

The ILO will continue its work on the extension of social protection to migrant workers, refugees and their families as follows:

- The PROSPECTS partnership has been launched, with the support of the Government of the Netherlands, bringing together the International Finance Corporation, the ILO, UNHCR,

¹⁷ Extension of coverage occurs when persons previously not covered are provided coverage for a specific benefit; enhancement of the comprehensiveness of social protection occurs when persons previously covered for one or several social security branches are now covered for additional contingencies.

UNICEF and the World Bank. PROSPECTS also partners with the FAO and WHO in eight countries.

- In collaboration with ISSA and ITC-ILO, the ILO will build capacities, develop and disseminate practical policy guidance tools and provide evidence-based technical advice, including on developing inclusive legal frameworks and social protection systems and on concluding and implementing social security agreements, paying attention to specific groups of migrants and refugees.
- The ILO has an institutional partnership with UNHCR, including a joint action plan (2020–21) that covers access to social protection under one of its three main goals, namely “Strengthened ILO fundamental principles and rights at work, improved working conditions and social protection for refugees, and other persons of concern to UNHCR”.
- With the financial support of the EU, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Netherlands, the ILO will support Member States’ efforts to conclude and implement social security agreements, paying attention to specific groups of migrants and refugees.

► Social protection, climate change and just transition

Baseline

Global warming and its consequences for the climate and the environment now directly threaten people's well-being and the sustainable development prospects for many populations around the world – due to their location or already higher level of vulnerability – and they therefore require improved social protection mechanisms.

- Despite the goal to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, peak greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible and achieve a climate-neutral world by mid-century, emission trajectories are still heading in the wrong direction and must urgently be shifted toward low-emissions pathways.
- Most countries and people are not equipped to deal with climate change-related risks or the intensified life-cycle risks of a person normally covered by social protection (such as ill health and unemployment). Those in fragile settings often experience the greatest exposure to natural disasters, which further aggravates the vicious circle of increased vulnerability to climate risks and weakened systems to cope with them.
- Strategies are not currently in place to manage the transition to a low-emissions and climate-resilient society in an inclusive way. Large-scale green policies are triggering major energy, industrial and sectoral shifts. Yet in many countries, their current design does not seize the full potential to create new and decent jobs in the green/sustainable sectors of the future and also fails to address the dire consequences of this transition for those whose jobs, livelihoods and assets are affected or lost.

Over time, climate change will continue to alter the parameters and increase the stresses on social protection systems (including social assistance, social insurance and ALMPs), while reinforcing the essential role of social protection in supporting people throughout the life cycle and facilitating a just transition to a green economy.

Approach

The overall goal to provide adequate social protection for all throughout their lives – including throughout shocks and crises – can only be achieved by systematically considering and mitigating the causes of climate change and anticipating and adapting to its impacts, while ensuring robust social protection systems. The ILO therefore aims to support countries in implementing the [Guidelines for a just transition to environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#) (2015), following the adoption of the Resolution concerning sustainable development, decent work and green jobs by the International Labour Conference at its 102nd Session in 2013. The ILO's approach jointly considers and pursues three key avenues, as described below:

1. **Supporting climate change mitigation.** The structural transition needed to mitigate the scale of global warming can be promoted by reskilling workers, supporting and incentivizing the move to green and formalized jobs – systematically embedded in the social protection system (in line with economic, social and environmental goals). Beyond the *reduction/avoidance* of greenhouse gas emissions, the combination of social protection and climate policies or measures also can be transformative in increasing carbon *sequestration* (capturing and storing), such as by including the rehabilitation or restoration of landscapes/coasts, reforestation or conservation in social protection programmes.
2. **Supporting climate change adaptation.** In the transition to a more sustainable economy and society, it is crucial to help people adapt to a changing climate and protect them in the event of a sudden-onset shock or if they are negatively affected by slow-onset impacts or

the transition itself. They may lose working hours or their jobs, requiring **unemployment protection**, complemented by ALMPs. Other social protection instruments can also play a key role along the entire disaster risk management cycle from *prevention* (such as through **public works programmes**, cash or in-kind support and resilient infrastructure/ sustainably managed resources and skills promotion) and *risk transfer* (including social insurance such as **social health protection**) to *preparedness* and *response* through **flexible and rapidly scalable social assistance benefits** for those affected by climate-related shocks (shock-responsive social protection) to *recovery*. This constitutes a key element of a just transition approach, as social protection in disaster risk management can also prevent emissions or sequester greenhouse gases.

3. **Continuing to build robust social protection systems towards universality.** Without such comprehensive systems, climate change mitigation and adaptation will leave some behind and therefore not be sustainable. Universal social protection, in turn, will only be achieved if the intensified life-cycle risks (health, unemployment and so on) are covered; if more rapid and frequent changes in needs due to a wider range of (climate-related) risks are also anticipated; and if social protection systems can maintain their functionality throughout. When applying social protection (social assistance and social insurance linked to ALMPs) for climate change mitigation and adaptation, including in situations of shocks and crises, the continuous advancement of the right to social protection is key to make these efforts sustainable. The ILO has a particular role to play in reflecting this in countries' development strategies/policies, laws or national action plans, as well as in international cooperation frameworks.

Priority countries/territories

The approach will respond to ILO constituents' requests for support, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries that are particularly exposed and vulnerable to climate-related risks. The ILO is working or planning to work in the following regions and countries:

- **Africa:** Mozambique, South Africa, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria
- **Asia:** Nepal
- **Latin America and the Caribbean/Asia and the Pacific:** small island developing States (such as Samoa and Barbados) and other Flagship Programme priority countries, such as Suriname.

Technical support

On social protection, climate change and a just transition, the ILO's approach may offer the following technical support to ILO Member States in the application and promotion of international labour standards and relevant guidelines:

- **analysis of social protection in the context of climate change** and facilitating the development of collaborative approaches for the assessment of existing social protection system or instruments, including regarding their contribution to a just transition;
- analytical/advisory support to **systematically integrate social protection** and poverty reduction considerations **in green policies**, measures and strategies, including nationally determined contributions, national just transition plans and national adaptation plans;
- **development of social protection financing options** in the context of a just transition, including cost estimates and innovative financing for idiosyncratic and systemic risks, such as through the creation of contingency funds or reinsurance;
- support for the drafting of **action plans, road maps with broad-based consultations and programme (re)design** (such as to better link social assistance and reskilling) for an

adaptive and scalable system – bringing together social assistance, social insurance and ALMPs; and

- o across the above, facilitation of: (a) partnerships and **broad-based coordination** mechanisms (including across the humanitarian development nexus) with social dialogue; (b) **capacity-building** on the linkages between social protection, a just transition and climate change (mitigation and adaptation); and (c) a **systematized knowledge base on social protection, a just transition and climate change**, such as country- and region-specific advocacy and technical tools/products (see below) and their wide dissemination.

Indicators of results and impacts

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will keep track of the actions implemented and assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.¹⁸ The following indicators will be monitored:

- o number of countries with policy measures to facilitate a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies through decent work/social protection;
- o share of persons benefiting from social protection in line with the ILO's outlined approach on climate change/just transition; and
- o percentage increase in audience reach for ILO-supported documents and advocacy tools on social protection, climate change and a just transition.

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and the guiding principles included in Recommendation No. 202 and the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). The principles considered most relevant for this thematic area are universality, adequacy of benefits, solidarity in financing, sustainability and policy coherence, as well as tripartite participation.

Knowledge development

During the second phase of the Flagship Programme, the following knowledge products are considered key:

- o considerations around climate change to be included in Inter-Agency Social Protection Assessment (ISPA) tools and ILO costing tools;
- o learning modules to be developed on implementing social protection for a just transition in order to ensure sound, coherent technical advice in this thematic area;
- o a policy brief to provide practical guidance on social protection for a just transition and additional country briefs to be developed to highlight good existing approaches on social protection, climate change and a just transition;
- o lessons learned and country examples on innovative/collaborative financing for social protection in a changing climate to be consolidated and shared; and
- o research on the impact of social protection, including contributory and non-contributory mechanisms, in terms of environmental and climate-related policies and programmes.

¹⁸ See Recommendation No. 202, Part III.

Partnerships

The ambition during the second phase is to further develop strategic partnerships at global, regional and country levels in order to promote and raise awareness of the contribution of social protection to mitigating the effects of climate change and ensuring a just transition. In this context, the ILO plans:

- at global level: to systematically support global advocacy and coordination efforts on social protection, climate change and a just transition, including in the framework of the USP2030 and a dedicated SPIAC-B working group (whose advisory committee currently comprises the ILO; BMZ/GIZ; Agence française de développement; the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom (FCDO); the Red Cross Climate Centre; and the German Development Institute/research partners);
- at regional/country level: in close collaboration with the Green Jobs Network and interested likeminded development partners, including within the UN, to develop country and/or regional project/programme approaches, as needed and relevant; and
- to mainstream key aspects of the thematic approach through other country, regional and global activities of the Flagship Programme, including by providing targeted technical support, where requested, in order to strengthen social protection for a just transition, including climate change mitigation and adaptation.

► Leveraging social protection to promote gender equality

Baseline

Women still experience significantly lower social protection coverage than men, a discrepancy that largely reflects and reproduces their lower labour force participation rates, higher levels of part-time and temporary work and of informal employment (especially informal self-employment), gender pay gaps and a disproportionately high share of unpaid care work, which national social protection strategies often fail to recognize. For example, among the global working-age population, 38.7 per cent of men contribute to a pension scheme compared with only 26.3 of women. In Africa, these numbers drop to 12.3 for men and 4.3 per cent for women.¹⁹ These outcomes are associated with persistent patterns of inequality, discrimination and structural disadvantage for women. Furthermore, women with children are at an even greater disadvantage and face a triple motherhood penalty: compared with both men and women without children they are less likely to be employed, they earn lower wages (whereas fathers are likely to earn higher wages than men without children) and they are less likely to work in managerial or leadership positions.²⁰ In the COVID-19 crisis, women have been affected by employment loss more than men and more women than men are leaving the workforce, perhaps as a result of intensified unpaid workloads. Some of the gains made in gender equality over recent decades are therefore being reversed. At the same time, well-designed social protection systems contribute to improving gender equality by empowering both women and men to invest in their capabilities, seize economic opportunities and nurture their capacity to aspire to different kinds of lives.

Approach

The ILO approach is focused on breaking the cycle of gender inequalities that trap women in informal, low-paid jobs without any social protection, both during their working lives and in old age. This requires removing barriers to both accessing the labour market and social protection schemes. Depending on their design, social protection systems can increase, perpetuate or reduce gender inequalities. It is therefore important to ensure that gender-responsiveness is mainstreamed into all social protection technical advisory services.

Data plays a key role in this work of ensuring gender-responsive design and removing barriers and this thematic approach is strongly aligned with the thematic area on data and statistics. Gender implications should be well understood through intersectional analysis of vulnerabilities and marginalization. For all data, it is important that it be disaggregated by gender and that gender-relevant information be collected, including on gender-specific needs, risks and vulnerabilities, such as on questions related to care obligations; access to services (in particular health/family planning); mobility; pregnancy; time use; autonomy; decision-making; control over resources; gender-based violence; and access to information. Taking these factors into account will enable the gender-responsive design and implementation of social protection schemes and programmes.

¹⁹ ILO, 2021.

²⁰ ILO, "A Quantum Leap for Gender Equality for a Better Future of Work For All", 2019.



Woman enrolled in the Ghana Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme, collecting her cash benefit

Examples include the following.

- Gender-responsive contributory pensions that are based on collective financing and solidarity play a key role in providing adequate pension coverage for women, particularly if they include care credits to recognize and reward periods spent caring for children or other family members and if they guarantee minimum pensions in line with international social security standards. A gender-responsive design accommodates women's work biographies.
- The gender-responsive design and delivery of non-contributory social protection schemes directed at families with children avoid reinforcing traditional gender roles and responsibilities. Instead, gender-responsive design enhances both children's development and women's economic security. This may include special outreach and payment mechanisms to prevent exclusion. For example, women are more likely than men to be illiterate, lack a national ID, not own a cell phone and so on. Delivery structures that offer alternatives to digital registration or payments and offer benefits such as community support for registration will be better able to close gender gaps and reach the most vulnerable.
- Maternity cash benefits and maternity health care play a key role in ensuring the health and well-being of women and their babies. Innovative approaches are needed to extend coverage to women in self-employment and in vulnerable forms of employment. These social protection benefits must be complemented with labour protection measures, such as employment protection and non-discrimination policies, health and safety measures and breastfeeding facilities at the workplace.
- Good-quality childcare services that are adapted to the needs of working parents can be a real game-changer: they can enhance child development; reduce the childcare workload of families, which are disproportionately assumed by women; facilitate women's employment; and create decent jobs in the care sector.
- Paternity leave and gender-equitable parental leave contribute to the greater involvement of fathers in child-rearing and a fairer sharing of family responsibilities, especially if men's uptake of leave is encouraged by reserving a non-transferable portion of parental leave for the father.

Priority countries/territories

The ILO works on mainstreaming gender-responsiveness into all its operations, that is all technical cooperation projects, research, training and work in the area of social protection. On-demand technical advisory services are available to support analysis and actions to improve gender equality and close gender gaps in the social protection system.

Technical support

The ILO articulates its support for constituents in leveraging social protection systems to improve gender equality throughout the process of formulating, developing, implementing and evaluating social protection policies, schemes or programmes and delivery mechanisms. A special feature of the ILO's technical support on gender and social protection is that it takes an integrated approach to gender equality. Rather than promoting improvements in gender equality regarding access to social protection in isolation, ILO considers social protection policies in the context of labour, care, migration and macroeconomic policies. Also, through its technical advisory services, the ILO supports countries to ensure gender-responsiveness at every step in the delivery process, in particular through:

- **outreach and notification** – to ensure that information is available and accessible for women;
- **registration and payments** – to ensure that registration procedures are in line with women's realities regarding time and resource requirements, accessibility (whether virtual or physical) and requirements regarding needed identification or certificates;
- **contribution collection** – removing barriers that prevent women from entering the formal labour market and obtaining access to social insurance; and
- **benefit design** – ensuring that the benefits and services provided meet women's needs, including for maternal care, family planning, childcare and long-term care.

On care work specifically, the ILO provides support for countries in developing strategies to better recognize unpaid care work and strategies to reduce and redistribute unpaid care work, including through the promotion of more and decent paid care work, which in turn requires the representation of care workers in policymaking processes. The ILO has developed tools and standardized mechanisms for both analytical work and national dialogue processes to plan for and implement such policy changes. This requires close coordination with related policy areas, in particular labour protection, employment policies, lifelong learning policies and so on. The ILO is in a unique position to work across these related sectors in light of its broad expertise on social protection and on employment and labour protection issues.

Indicators of results and impact

The thematic approach on gender equality aims to close the gender social protection gap and leverage the social protection system to reduce gender inequalities in other domains as well.

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through this thematic approach and will monitor the following indicators:

- decrease in the social protection gender gap;²¹
- number of countries that improve their social protection data and statistical information on gender;
- number of countries that reduce and redistribute unpaid care work;
- number of countries that ensure the gender-responsiveness of the design and delivery mechanisms of their social protection schemes and programmes;
- number of countries that increase the coverage of maternity benefits and parental leave policies.

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.

Knowledge development

In addition to maintaining the World Social Protection Database with detailed and, where available, gender-disaggregated social protection data, the ILO systematically documents the lessons learned from technical and policy advisory services in its knowledge products, including by:

- identifying good practices concerning how to address gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities in the design and delivery of social protection;
- providing evidence and tools on the expansion of social protection to women and in line with women's work biographies;
- providing analytical frameworks for social protection system reviews, with a focus on their performance regarding the promotion of gender equality; and
- strengthening capacities, in collaboration with the ITC-ILO, on leveraging social protection systems for promoting gender equality.

Partnerships

The ILO works in close partnership with other development partners on gender-responsive social protection, in particular in the context of the SPIAC-B gender working group on social protection, which is led by FCDO, and through close collaboration with UN-Women.

Internally, the ILO's Social Protection Department works closely with the Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch, in particular on issues related to care and gender-based inequalities in employment.

²¹ The gender gap in social protection is the difference between the coverage rate of men and women for a given social protection scheme or type of benefit. For instance, worldwide the proportion of women above retirement age who receive a pension is on average 11 percentage points lower than that of men. Gender gaps in social protection are strongly interrelated to gender inequality in the labour market.

► Building national systems of social protection statistics and monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Baseline

In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs framework, countries need to intensify their efforts to improve their national social protection monitoring and evaluation systems, including by strengthening their statistical systems. Strong national statistical systems on social protection are a necessary condition to ensure the adequate monitoring of progress at both the national and international levels.

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the great urgency of improving the monitoring of progress in the development of social protection systems. The lack of robust statistical systems, including the scarcity of data on coverage gaps to determine which groups are being left behind, as well as the scarcity of data on the financing needs associated with such coverage gaps, puts at risk the realization of the policy objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

SDG target 1.3 aims to "Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable". SDG indicator 1.3.1 seeks to measure the "Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable". According to this definition, effective monitoring must address the multiple dimensions of social protection systems.

As the custodian United Nations agency responsible for SDG indicator 1.3.1, the ILO has increased its efforts to operationalize the set of sub-indicators (including the adaptation of the instruments, mechanisms and processes of data collection and consolidation at national level) since 2016. The current data set has estimates for overall coverage by social protection (at least one contingency) for 161 countries and for coverage of older persons for 174 countries; of persons with severe disabilities for 133 countries; of mothers with newborns for 149 countries; of children for 118 countries; of unemployed persons for 165 countries; of vulnerable populations for 141 countries; and of employment injury for 149 countries. This shows the significant progress and efforts made by many countries in strengthening their capacity for data compilation and analysis.

However, when it comes to disaggregation of data by sex, national/non-national status and other classifications, the information available is very limited. For example, for the sub-indicator with the highest data coverage rate – protection by old-age benefits – data disaggregated by sex is available for only 104 countries. The situation is even more drastic when it comes to other indicators and classifications.

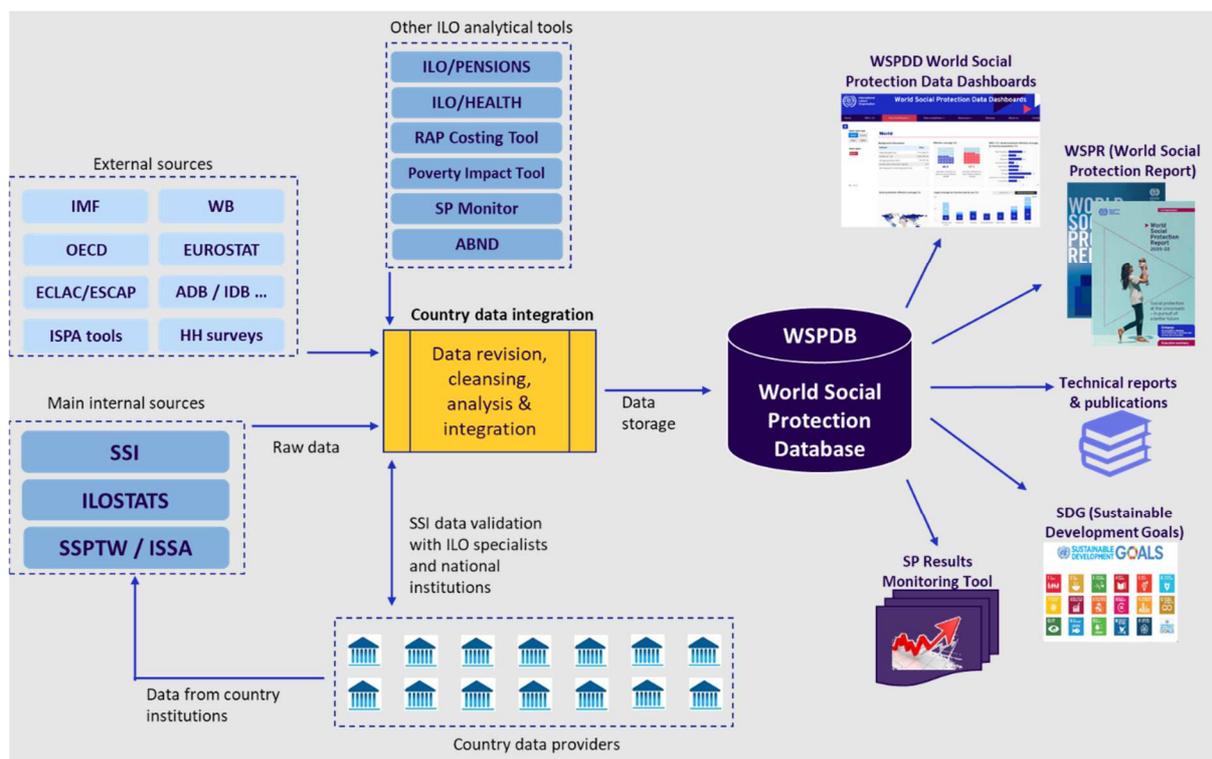
Approach

The ILO is a specialized agency mandated to work on social protection with many decades of experience in this field, in particular in data collection, compilation and dissemination.

The **World Social Protection Database** is the primary source of global data on social protection and provides a wealth of unique information that offers critical support to decision-makers and development stakeholders. The database provides in-depth country-level statistics on various dimensions of social protection systems, including key indicators on coverage, adequacy and

expenditure on social protection for policymakers, officials of international organizations and researchers and the United Nations monitoring of the SDGs. Most of the data in the ILO World Social Protection Database are collected through the **Social Security Inquiry (SSI)**, which is an online tool for the periodic collection of administrative data from national ministries of labour, finance, social security, welfare and/or social development, as well as other ministries, and is complemented by existing international and national data sources. The process of data compilation, processing, analysis, validation and dissemination of the results is shown in figure 9.

► **Figure 9. World Social Protection Database: Process of data compilation, processing, analysis, validation and dissemination of the results**



In 2019, the ILO Social Protection Department launched a set of **interactive dashboards for data visualization on social protection**, comprising detailed information at the global, regional and national levels that is updated continuously. The new data visualization tools provide access to information on the legal configuration of social protection systems at the national level; the design of existing contributory and non-contributory social protection programmes; demographics; the legal and effective coverage of the systems; the number of beneficiaries; benefit levels; and the revenue and expenditure of schemes.

The ILO’s forthcoming **Guide on Developing National Systems of Social Protection Statistics** aims to provide its constituents (governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations), policymakers, practitioners and other stakeholders in developing countries with a practical tool to assist them in developing national systems of social protection statistics and in the further production and use of consolidated, comprehensive, reliable and quality social protection statistics for the effective monitoring and evaluation of social protection systems.

Despite ongoing advances in the development of databases, instruments and processes of data collection, which have led to significant improvements in the availability of data on social protection in terms of the number of countries covered, nonetheless significant challenges remain in terms of data content and the quality and timeliness of the information collected. The ILO articulates its support to Member States throughout continuous assistance in the field of national data compilation; definitions; monitoring of progress towards achieving the SDGs;

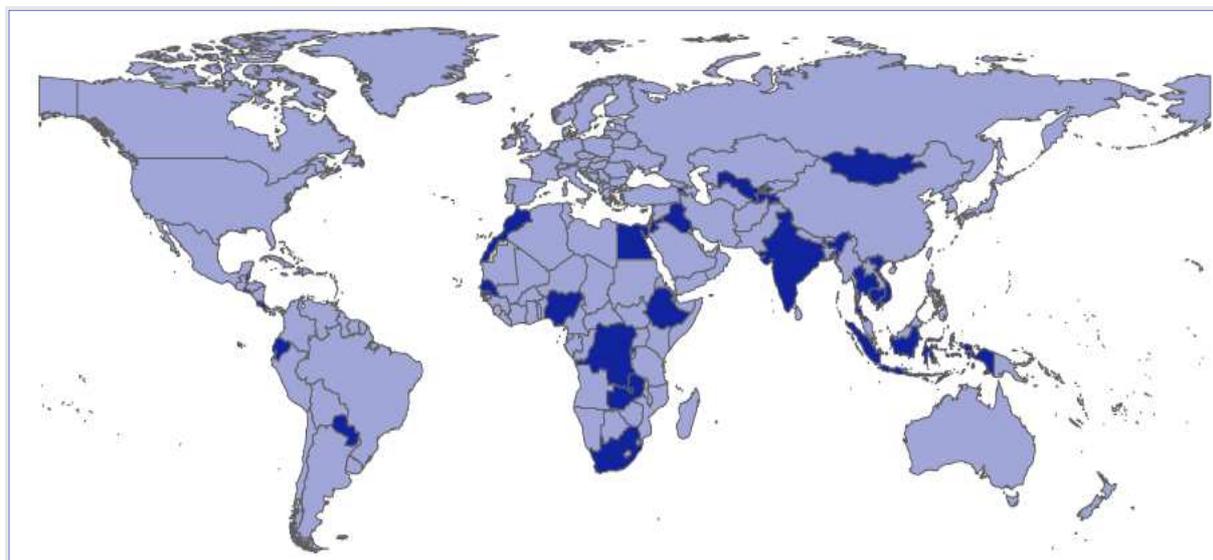
developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks; effective dissemination of data and interpretation of the results; and building national systems of social protection statistics.

Priority countries/territories

As figure 10 shows, ILO support to countries and territories includes three levels of interventions (for a more detailed technical description, see the following section entitled “Technical support”).

- **Level 1.** Basic SSI data compilation/update (all countries).
- **Level 2.** SSI data compilation and coaching of national counterparts on:
 - (a) the use of the questionnaire and filling in the data (about 50 countries); and
 - (b) data compilation through SSI questionnaires and estimation against SDG indicator 1.3.1 and other indicators, including in-depth analysis of the current situation and definition of existing social protection schemes and benefits (about 25 of the 50 countries in level 2(a)).
- **Level 3.** Assistance in data production; building monitoring and evaluation frameworks and statistical systems; analysis and interpretation of the results; and effective data dissemination, such as through national bulletins, dashboards, databases and so on (package for 1 to 1.5 years; about 10 countries).

► **Figure 10. Priority countries currently selected for level 1 (all countries) and level 2 (27 countries to date) interventions** (list is not exhaustive and may change over time) **during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



● Level 1 interventions ● Level 2 interventions

► Priority countries for level 2 interventions (discussed with field specialists)

Africa	Arab States	Americas	Asia and the Pacific	Europe and Central Asia
Cameroon	Jordan	Belize	India	Armenia
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Iraq	Costa Rica	Cambodia	Tajikistan
Egypt		Ecuador	Indonesia	Uzbekistan
Ethiopia		El Salvador	Mongolia	
Morocco		Paraguay	Thailand	

Africa	Arab States	Americas	Asia and the Pacific	Europe and Central Asia
Nigeria			Timor-Leste	
Rwanda			Viet Nam	
Senegal				
South Africa				
Zambia				

Technical support

The ILO supports Member States in the field of social protection data and statistics using different levels of national interventions.

Level 1 interventions: Basic SSI data compilation/update conducted in all countries

The ILO has been appointed the custodian agency responsible for data compilation on SDG indicator 1.3.1 (see box 1) at a global level and reports every year to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). The exercise of data compilation is a continuous process that covers about 60 countries per year, so that over a three-year period all Member States will have been provided with an updated set of indicators.

► Box 1. SDG indicator 1.3.1 and its components

Indicator 1.3.1: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

Components of SDG indicator 1.3.1:

- Total population covered by social protection systems/floors
- Share of children/households receiving social protection benefits
- Share of women giving birth receiving maternity benefits
- Share of older persons receiving old-age pensions
- Share of persons with disabilities receiving benefits
- Share of the unemployed receiving unemployment benefits
- Share of people covered by employment injury schemes
- Share of the poor covered by social protection systems
- Share of the vulnerable covered by social protection systems

The ILO's Social Protection Department disseminates comparable statistics on global social protection programmes periodically through thematic studies and the *World Social Protection Report*, a flagship ILO publication issued every three years²² that includes information on the legal and effective coverage of social protection systems, contributory and non-contributory

²² For the most recent report, see ILO, [World Social Protection Report 2020–22: Social Protection at the Crossroads – In Pursuit of a Better Future](#), 2021.

programmes, indicators of adequacy of benefits, social protection expenditure and other topics for more than 200 countries and territories.

The data in all countries are compiled through the government directly or through national or international consultants using the online [SSI](#) tool. The SSI questionnaire has become the primary tool for compiling data on social protection coverage for children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, women with newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable. In addition, indicators on the adequacy of social protection benefits and the revenue and expenditure of social protection schemes are produced based on the data collected in SSI questionnaires.

Relevant supporting materials, including *Social Security Enquiry (SSI): Getting Started* and the *Social Security Enquiry Manual*, are available at ILO, "[World Social Protection Data Dashboards: Social Security Inquiry](#)".

Level 2 interventions: SSI data compilation and coaching of national counterparts on (a) the use of the questionnaire and filling in the data or (b) data compilation through SSI questionnaires and estimation against SDG indicator 1.3.1 and other indicators, including in-depth analysis of the current situation and definition of existing social protection schemes and benefits

In order to enhance the national capacity to generate comprehensive and reliable social protection data, the ILO's Social Protection Department provides technical assistance and training to ILO constituents, in collaboration with ILO field offices and other departments and UN agencies.

During training (web-based or face-to-face), countries acquire knowledge on the common methodology, processes and rules: which data to collect; how to organize the data collection/consolidation process at the national level; how to classify data and information; and how to categorize programmes and benefits in order to ensure comparability of data and the ability to use them for multiple purposes. The participants are coached on the use of the SSI online tool and given the option to nationalize the data compilation processes for internal monitoring purposes. Establishing a good monitoring mechanism requires a shared methodology and agreed principles regarding data to be collected (how to classify and select data and so on). Without access to a minimum set of social protection data over a sustained time period, countries are not able to take stock and identify gaps to define adequate policy options for social protection.

Training activities may cover (the list is not exhaustive):

- data compilation from all social protection agencies involved at country level and analysis and validation (intervention levels 2 (a) and 2 (b));
- country-specific guidelines on strengthening the technical capacity of the staff of national statistical offices and ministries in processing this data (intervention level 2 (b));
- assistance in monitoring and reporting on SDG indicator 1.3.1: identifying the methodology, definitions and concepts used to calculate the indicators derived from administrative records data (intervention level 2 (b));
- providing training to build the capacities of national staff for monitoring and reporting on the SDGs: identifying the methodology, definitions and concepts used to calculate indicators derived from administrative records data (intervention level 2 (b));
- incorporating data into the World Social Protection Dashboards (intervention level 2 (a) and 2 (b); and

- o organization of South–South and triangular knowledge-sharing events with development partners and regional and international organizations (intervention level 2 (b)).

As a result of receiving assistance and training at this level, selected countries are provided with specific guides and tools that enable them to advance in the development of a comprehensive, harmonized and coherent set of information on social protection at the national level; these countries will provide a pathway for others to follow.

Level 3 interventions: Assistance in data production; building monitoring and evaluation frameworks and statistical systems; analysis and interpretation of the results; and effective data dissemination, such as national bulletins, dashboards, databases and so on (package for 1 to 1.5 years)

The ILO supports countries by providing technical assistance in building national systems of statistics and indicators on social protection, as well as national monitoring and evaluation frameworks. These tasks require long-term assistance and full engagement of the line ministries and social security institutions. This approach will be designated to intensify development assistance at the country level in the fields of social protection statistics and indicators, including knowledge and capacity-building activities, training and direct support in establishing working groups and the development of statistical databases, data visualization dashboards, statistical yearbooks and bulletins and so on. The working methods also promote institutional coordination for the development of national statistical systems on social protection at the national level.

To achieve results at this level, the following activities are suggested (the list is not exhaustive):

- o assessment of the current social protection monitoring system, identification of gaps and establishment of priorities for development;
- o building a national working group consisting of all the social protection data producers;
- o training staff in the national agencies involved in data collection, processing, validation, harmonization and consolidation;
- o design and implementation of a single database of the national social protection system, integrating data from different line ministries and social security institutions;
- o assistance in standardizing the administrative records of all the agencies involved, establishing administration mechanisms that will further maintain and update the records according to the prescribed standards;
- o inclusion of social protection in the national labour force survey (where it exists) or other household surveys (preparation of the social protection module for a survey questionnaire, including guidelines for the interviewers, questionnaire, training materials and so on);
- o establishing a set of social protection indicators derived from administrative records, surveys, estimates and other data and developing dissemination principles (visualization, public database and so on);
- o assistance in the design and establishment of a monitoring and evaluation system; and
- o organization of South–South and triangular events with development partners and regional and international organizations.

As a result of receiving assistance at this level, countries are expected to develop their national monitoring frameworks for SDG indicator 1.3.1 and for social protection systems in general. There should be significant improvements in the quantity and quality of data and information, including the management of national social protection statistics systems, through enhanced inter-agency coordination and technical capacity and improved processes and tools. The set of data and

indicators on social protection and classifications are expected to be extended to reflect the situation of certain vulnerable populations that are normally excluded from social protection data.

Indicators of results and impact

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through the thematic approach and will monitor the following indicators:

- number of countries that increased the availability of social protection indicators for monitoring the components of SDG indicator 1.3.1 and other indicators; and
- number of countries that developed or improved their monitoring and evaluation frameworks or built national statistical systems on social protection.

The work of the ILO on social protection statistics is guided by international social security norms and standards, in particular the Resolution concerning the development of social security statistics adopted by the Ninth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1957; Convention No. 102; and Recommendation No. 202. Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.

Knowledge development

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the great urgency of improving the monitoring of progress in the development of social protection systems. The second phase of the ILO Flagship Programme will focus on developing a solid knowledge base in the following areas.

- The ILO's [World Social Protection Data Dashboards](#) support enhancement and training. This interactive tool gives access to detailed information at the global, regional and national levels that is updated continuously. The development of new dashboard on specific thematic areas (unemployment protection, health, maternity protection) and specific regional groupings (East and Central Africa Social Security Association (ECASSA); Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (BRICS); G20; and so on) will mainstream the use of the tool at knowledge-sharing events and serve as basis for assessments, national monitoring and evaluation frameworks and reports. Countries and institutions will benefit from accessing these comprehensive and harmonized datasets and indicators at the global, regional, national and thematic levels.
- The GTT leads capacity-building and training on the [SSI](#) online tool. The second phase of the Flagship Programme will focus on strengthening the capacity of ministries and social security institutions to use the tool to serve national purposes for the monitoring and evaluation of social protection.
- The ILO's Social Protection Department is finalizing the **Guide on Developing National Systems** of Social Protection Statistics and plans to pilot its use in 2022–23 by several countries. Training modules and video tutorials will also be developed by the GTT for more efficient implementation at the country level. The guide will be the main source of information for level 3 interventions.
- The ILO's [Social Protection Monitor platform](#) will be revised and improved. The Monitor is a living tool based on media/news published online and it tracks announcements of social protection measures, which are defined as any policy decision that affects the functioning of a social protection system, from minor parametric adjustments to major developments and reforms, as well as social subsidies. The Monitor is a useful source for addressing information gaps and detecting global and regional trends in a timely manner. Training and user guides will support the easier access, understanding and improvement of the information provided.

- Specific tools and guides will be developed to support **improved knowledge and availability of social protection indicators on specific topics**, such as monitoring global coverage of health, sickness and long-term care benefits (see thematic area "Expanding social health protection towards universal health coverage (including health, maternity, sickness and long-term care)"), paternity benefits; financing of social protection and so on.
- The **gender dimension** will be mainstreamed in the processes of production and dissemination of social protection information at the national, regional and global levels, while technical assistance to data producers will be provided on the further disaggregation of information.
- **South-South and triangular events** will be organized with development partners and regional and international organizations to identify and share knowledge of best practices in different spheres of social protection statistics.

Partnerships

In the field of social protection statistics, the ILO has worked in collaboration with numerous organizations on methodological issues, national capacity development and the application of the SSI and other quantitative tools (costing, financing, actuarial models and so on) in countries. In particular, close partnership on SDG indicator 1.3.1 has been established with UN DESA, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, ISSA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN-Women, UNICEF, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, WHO and many other bodies.

► Financing social protection

Baseline

The COVID-19 pandemic has acted as a stress test for social protection systems worldwide, exposing often dramatic gaps in their [coverage](#),²³ comprehensiveness and adequacy and thereby jeopardizing the health, incomes and jobs of billions of people. These protection gaps, which predated the crisis and were further exacerbated by it, are associated with insufficient public investment in social protection and insufficient state capacity to quickly expand its provision. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, countries spent on average 18.8 per cent of their GDP on social protection (including health),²⁴ with staggering variations across regions and income groups. Already taking into account the impact of COVID-19, the ILO estimates that low-income and middle-income countries would need to invest an additional US\$1.2 trillion – equivalent to 3.8 per cent of their GDP – to close the annual financing gap in 2020.²⁵ Low-income countries represent US\$77.9 billion of this total financing gap, equivalent to 15.9 per cent of their GDP.

Approach

During its 109th session in 2021, the International Labour Conference concluded that the ILO should provide technical support and assist Member States' efforts to close financing gaps for social protection through domestic resources and development cooperation. The Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All supports countries to invest more in social protection, notably through domestic resources mobilization, as well as to invest better in social protection (see figure 11), applying the international social security standards, in particular [Recommendation No. 202](#) and [Convention No. 102](#).

Activities on financing social protection within the Flagship Programme are centred on the following **strategic approaches**:

- **Enhancing domestic resource mobilization** as the cornerstone of national social protection systems, including floors. Options to increase fiscal space for social protection²⁶ exist even in low-income countries and include, in accordance with national circumstances and based on national priorities, broadening the social security contribution and tax base; building fair and progressive tax systems and ensuring an effective allocation of resources; tackling non-compliance of taxes and social security contributions; reprioritizing and reallocating expenditure; and eliminating corruption and illicit financial flows.
- Extending social protection to **informal economy workers**, broadening the tax and contributory base. Costs and inadequate financing arrangements are one of the main barriers to extending social protection to informal economy workers. In particular, contributory capacities may be limited due to low or volatile incomes or the lack of employers, leading to a “double contribution challenge”. Nonetheless, there are different approaches that will facilitate the expansion of coverage to those uncovered and thereby create increased fiscal space through a larger tax and contributory base, such as increasing compliance by adapting the way contributions are determined; simplifying the payment of

²³ See ILO, [“World Social Protection Dashboards: Global Overview”](#).

²⁴ See ILO, [“World Social Protection Dashboards: Global Overview”](#).

²⁵ See ILO, [“Financing Gaps in Social Protection: Global Estimates and Strategies for Developing Countries in Light of the Covid-19 Crisis and Beyond”](#), Sept. 2020.

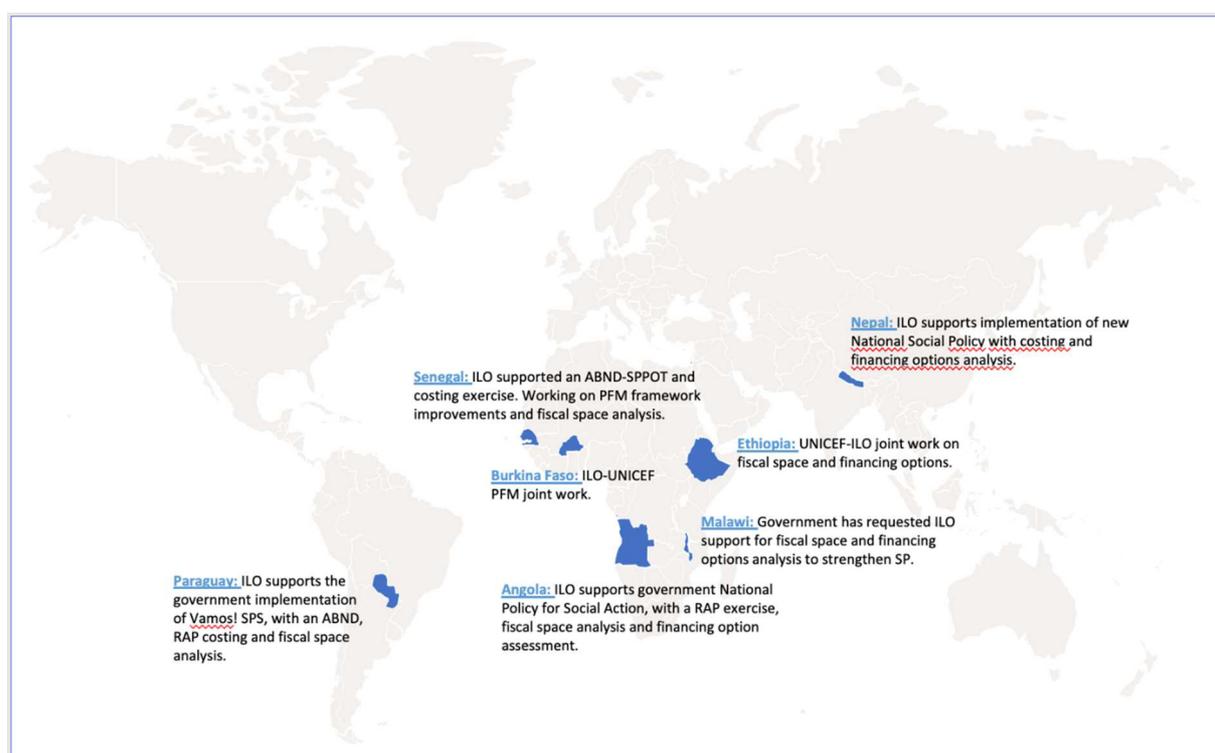
²⁶ See ILO, [Fiscal Space for Social Protection: A Handbook for Assessing Financing Options](#), 2019.

contributions; or subsidizing contributions for workers with limited contributory capacities. In such approaches, complementarity between contributory and non-contributory schemes is crucial.

- Improving synergies between **social protection and public finance management**, in particular by increasing compliance and good governance of social protection systems and the government budget. The social pressure to increase the transparency and accountability of social protection institutions and programmes contributes to the better provision of social protection, which then increases trust in the system, which is essential for increasing compliance and broadening the tax and contribution base. Periodic actuarial valuations are a common instrument of good governance.
- For countries that have limited domestic fiscal capacities or face exceptional circumstances due to crises, natural disasters or climate change, options should be explored for **mobilizing international financing**, in combination with technical assistance, to support the development of longer-term, sustainable and rights-based social protection systems. For instance, during the COVID-19 crisis, the ILO supported governments' decisions to create additional fiscal space for social protection, building on responses to the COVID-19 crisis that were funded by development partners.
- Facilitating the **engagement of ILO constituents with ministries of finance and international financial institutions** in order to increase investments in social protection by building the case for social protection and in order to enhance policy coherence through the evidence-based assessment of national social protection priorities and the formulation of options for the sustainable financing of universal social protection, guided by the systematic application of international social security standards.

Priority countries

► **Figure 11. Priority countries for the thematic approach on financing during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



The following list of countries are currently receiving support from the EU-funded programme entitled “Improving linkages between social protection and public finance management”, which is being implemented by the ILO in partnership with UNICEF and the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors.

Angola: In December 2020, the Government adopted a new National Policy for Social Action, which focuses on the non-contributory aspects of social protection. The Government has requested the ILO and its partners to conduct a Rapid Assessment Protocol exercise (to calculate and project the costs of several policy scenarios), a fiscal space analysis and an assessment of different financing options. In addition, ILO and its partners may be able to gear the discussion towards a more comprehensive social protection policy within the next coming two years, through an ABND exercise to prepare the action plan of the national policy.

Senegal: An ABND exercise using the “ABND/SPPOT” methodology was conducted in 2019–2020 and recommendations for strengthening the system were costed. Based on a request from the Government, ILO and its partners supported improvements in the public finance management framework related to social protection (classification of revenues and expenditures, better determination of budgets for social protection and so on). In 2021–22, ILO will continue the work related to fiscal space analysis and financing options.

Paraguay: The Government launched a large programme aimed at improving the social protection system entitled “¡Vamos!”. An ABND exercise is ongoing and the SSI is also being used to collect detailed information on the social protection situation in the country. To facilitate policy decision-making, the ILO will calculate and project the cost of various policy scenarios; carry out a fiscal space analysis; and explore and discuss feasible financing options analysis.

Nepal: As is the case in Angola, a new National Integrated Social Protection Framework is about to be adopted, which aims to streamline the operations of contributory and non-contributory schemes and ensure the extension of coverage and the allocation of domestic resources to the sector. The Government has requested support to conduct a costing and fiscal space analysis and identify financing options, as well as to conduct actuarial valuations on the recently implemented mandatory social security schemes and their planned extension to the informal economy.

Malawi: The Government requested support to strengthen the financing of social protection, through a fiscal space analysis and an assessment of financing options, including an assessment of the fiscal feasibility of introducing contributory schemes. This also includes the development and piloting of the TRANSFORM in-depth course on the financing and financial management of social protection.

Ethiopia and Burkina Faso: The ILO and UNICEF are supporting a social protection strategy that includes an analysis of the fiscal space and identifying feasible financing options.

Technical support

The approach may offer the following technical support to ILO Member States:

- assessing current social protection situation and needs (baseline) through national dialogues and conducting estimations of costs of policy reforms options using the [ILO/RAP tool](#);
- supporting fiscal space analysis and the assessment of different financing options as listed in the ILO’s [Fiscal Space for Social Protection: A Handbook for Assessing Financing Options](#);
- supporting the formulation of strategies for extending social protection to informal economy workers, which will contribute to broadening the tax and contributory base through an assessment of different solutions as listed in the ILO’s policy resource package

entitled [“Extending Social Security to Workers in the Informal Economy: Lessons from International Experience”](#);

- o building capacity for improved synergies between social protection and public finance management, including by strengthening the classification of social protection revenues and expenditures and results-based budgets; improving governance, including financial governance and the quality of expenditure of social protection institutions and programmes; increasing the financial sustainability of the social security schemes through periodical actuarial valuations; improving the compliance of social security laws through awareness campaigns, reinforced labour and social security inspection and digitalization of the services; and improving structures and mechanisms for greater transparency on social protection public finances during the planning, execution and monitoring of government budgets;
- o strengthening monitoring and evaluation frameworks for the efficient use of public finance and achieving universal social protection using the [SSI](#) online tool and the ILO’s forthcoming “Guide on Developing National Systems of Social Protection Statistics”; and
- o supporting evidence-based advocacy and facilitating partnerships for improved social protection financing, in particular with international financing institutions, such as by providing support to ILO constituents and technical contributions to engage in discussions to build integrated national financing frameworks.

Indicators of results and impact

The work of the ILO on financing social protection will be guided by ILO social security standards and will fully respect all the guiding principles of Recommendation No. 202.

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through the thematic approach on financing and will monitor the following indicators:

- o number of countries that increased the financing of social protection systems, guided by ILO principles; and
- o number of countries that improved the governance and public financial management of social protection systems, including compliance with social security law and regulations.

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.²⁷ In addition to tripartite participation, the principles most relevant to the thematic approach are universality, adequacy of benefits, progressive realization, solidarity in financing, diversity of methods and approaches, transparent, good governance and accountability, sustainability, social justice and equity, monitoring and evaluation.

Knowledge development

The thematic area of social protection financing will work on the following knowledge products:

- o enhancing economic arguments for investing in social protection, in particular through an action-research study on the multipliers of social protection expenditures on economic output, based on nine country cases;
- o evaluating the impact of the results in this thematic area on the extension of coverage and adequacy of social protection, poverty and the reduction of inequalities, among others;

²⁷ See Recommendation No. 202, Part III.

- developing country briefs on good practices and experiences to improve the financing of social protection;
- developing learning modules on public financial management and financing social protection; and
- developing new or updating internationally recognized tools to guide discussions of social protection financing, such as the ISPA tool on financing and the ILO's [*Fiscal Space for Social Protection: A Handbook for Assessing Financing Options*](#).

Partnerships

- The ILO leads the partnership between the European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships, UNICEF and the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors through the global programme entitled “Improving synergies between social protection and public finance management”.
- The ILO pursues partnerships with other development partners to implement integrated national financing frameworks at global level, in particular with UNDP, while country-level partnerships are being considered in Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Malawi, Senegal and Togo, including through the UN Joint SDG Fund programmes on financing (such as in Cabo Verde, Egypt and Timor-Leste).
- The Emergency Unemployment and Stabilization Employment Fund in Jordan links emergency funding with the building of sustainable social insurance systems.
- The ILO maintains regular discussions with the International Monetary Fund on the adequate level and progressive increase of the “social spending floor” to cover the costs and progressive realization of the “social protection floor” and related staff guidance notes.
- The ILO seeks to strengthen its partnership with the World Bank on issues related to financing, including around the sustainable financing of the social safety net programmes (Ethiopia) or formalization (Côte d’Ivoire).
- The ILO is leading the USP2030 working group on social protection financing and the preparation of an ISPA tool on social protection financing, bringing together a wide range of UN agencies, development partners and civil society organizations.

► Building rights-based social protection systems

Baseline

- Strengthening the capacities of constituents to design, sustainably finance and implement national social protection policies and legal frameworks that are gender-responsive and aligned with the vision and objectives established by ILO social security standards, and in coherence with national social, economic and environmental development objectives.
- Launching a campaign to systematically promote the ratification and effective implementation of up-to-date ILO social security standards, including Convention No. 102.

Approach

The ILO actively supports governments and social partners to effectively formulate and implement national social protection policies and legal frameworks that contribute to the progressive achievement of universal social protection in line with SDG targets 1.3 and 3.8. This work is firmly grounded in the international standards adopted by ILO’s tripartite constituents, in particular the landmark Convention No. 102, Recommendation No. 202 and other up-to-date ILO social security standards (see figure 12).

► **Figure 12. Up-to-date ILO social security standards**



Given that pursuing a rights-based approach is a major element conducive to the achievement of universal social protection, ILO’s support seeks to equip its Member States with tailor-made solutions for the development of social protection systems that are firmly anchored in law and at the same time are responsive to each country's social and economic circumstances and to the priorities determined at the national level, while remaining aligned with the core principles of international human rights instruments and ILO social security standards.

In particular, the ILO assists national counterparts in progressively designing and maintaining universal social protection systems, including by building the awareness of those involved in policy and legal development processes. In addition, given that international social security standards define the principles and minimum benchmarks that are the basis for building comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems, the ILO relies on these world standards, which represent its key comparative advantage to guide the establishment,

maintenance and reform of these systems, including as regards the definition of coverage parameters, affiliation modalities and good governance.

Supporting the development of rights-based social protection systems also implies that the ILO should provide hands-on legal assistance for the revision and development of draft social protection legislation with the objective of promoting effective, adequate and sustainable systems that are based on clearly defined rights and obligations in line with the principles enshrined in international standards.

Finally, the ILO contributes to the development and enhancement of national capacities through technical workshops on international social security standards and legal drafting strategies, with a view to ensuring national ownership of social protection systems and legal frameworks.

Priority countries

The ILO stands ready to support national governments and social partners according to national priorities, circumstances and requests, decent work country programmes and the priorities established by the respective United Nations Country Team with due regard to the policy and programming guidance set by the International Labour Conference and the ILO's Governing Body.

Demand-driven activities are tailored to the needs and context of each request, as well the available financial resources, with a particular focus on low-income and middle-income countries. Special attention is given to providing technical assistance to help countries address challenges faced in policy and legal development processes, as well as their practical implementation, taking into account the relevant international normative frameworks, thereby also allowing interested countries the option to ratify ILO social security standards in the future (see figure 13).

► Figure 13. Priority countries for the thematic approach on building rights-based social protection systems during the second phase of the Flagship Programme



Colombia: The ILO is conducting a comparative assessment of Colombia's legislation and practice against the parameters and principles of Convention No. 102 to guide future reforms and improve social dialogue, governance and tripartism.

Peru: The ILO is supporting the Ministry of Labour in the design of an unemployment protection scheme that is aligned with the parameters and principles set out in Convention No. 102 (Part IV) and Convention No. 168 and is providing technical support in relation to the possible ratification of one of these.

China: The ILO has been supporting the Government in examining the possibility of ratifying Convention No. 102, including through participation in tripartite workshops. Currently, a comparative study is being updated to be discussed by national constituents, with support from the ILO with a view to determining the existence of ratification prospects.

Ecuador: The ILO is conducting a comparative analysis to review the prospects of extending the ratification of Convention No. 102 to other areas (unemployment benefits, family benefits and maternity benefits). The report also examines the current status of the temporary exceptions to which Ecuador has availed itself in relation to Conventions Nos. 128 and 130.

Republic of Korea: Planning is under way with members of Academia to undertake a comparative review of relevant ILO up-to-date social security standards and national law and practice.

Thailand: Consultations are ongoing to commission a comparative study to assess how the national law and practice lines up with the provisions of Convention No. 102.

Burkina Faso: The ILO is supporting Burkina Faso in defining a strong legal and institutional framework for the extension of health-care coverage to workers in the informal economy.

Senegal: The ILO is supporting the development of a unified social security legal framework which seeks, inter alia, to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy through a simplified scheme for micro and small enterprises and self-employed persons.

Lithuania: The ILO has been supporting the Government in the context of the possible ratification of Convention No. 102, including through backstopping the national comparative report on the requirements of the Convention and the provisions of national legislation, as well as through participation in a tripartite workshop to discuss the scope and prospects of ratification.

Nigeria: The ILO is supporting the drafting of the National Social Protection Bill regulating the coordination of national social protection programmes and schemes.

Sao Tome and Principe: The ILO has been supporting the Government in assessing the possibility of ratifying Convention No. 102 and building awareness of up-to-date ILO standards among national constituents and is currently providing technical assistance for the drafting and development of the legal framework for a registration mechanism.

Mali: The ILO is currently undertaking a comprehensive comparative study of the national law and practice vis-à-vis the provisions of Convention No. 102 to determine the prospects for ratification.

Sudan: Technical support is being provided for building a right-based social protection system with due regard to international social security standards.

Cameroon: Consultations and advocacy activities are being re-engaged with national constituents for the possible ratification of Convention No. 102, based on a completed comparative analysis between national law and practice and the provisions of Convention No. 102 and the conclusions and recommendations stemming from a tripartite validation workshop.

Uzbekistan: Support is being provided for the design and development of a comprehensive social insurance code as a means to reduce fragmentation and strengthen coherence and coordination.

Tunisia: Support is being provided for the design and development of an unemployment protection scheme in line with up-to-date ILO social security standards.

Eswatini: The ILO is supporting the development of an unemployment insurance scheme that is in line with international standards and anchored in a strong and effective legal framework.

Technical support

As the guiding framework for all ILO activities and necessary to guarantee the realization of the human right to social security, international social security standards are intrinsically linked to the entire social protection portfolio implemented by the ILO at both headquarters and field levels. The ILO therefore promotes a systemic and integrated rights-based approach to building universal social protection systems, from the formulation and design to the implementation and evaluation of social protection policies. In 2021, the Conclusions of the second recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) of the International Labour Conference stated that universal social protection entails actions and measures to realize the human right to social security by progressively building and maintaining nationally appropriate social protection systems, so that everyone has access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable protection over the life cycle, in line with ILO standards. The vision of these standards and their core principles and minimum benchmarks are actively and effectively streamlined by the GTT, which provides legal and policy development support. Therefore, as a core part of ILO's added value in the area of social protection, the technical support offered under this thematic priority should be integrated in the technical assistance provided under each of all the remaining thematic priorities such as those related to the extension of social protection to the informal economy, migrants and refugees, unemployment, social health protection, statistics, financing and actuarial work.

More concretely, ILO's Social Protection Department organizes work to support the building of rights-based social protection systems in four main areas, as described below.

Standards advice on the design of social protection policies and strategies:

- Supporting Governments and social partners in the formulation and implementation of comprehensive and rights-based policies and strategies that are in line with the vision and principles enshrined in international social security standards and human rights instruments.
- Providing an overview of the applicable international legal framework (including ratified and non-ratified instruments) and comparative practices in selected countries to guide iterative policy processes.
- Formulating policy and parametric recommendations to guide social security reforms that are in line with ILO social security standards (including ratified and non-ratified instruments), in particular in the context of policy-related and technical reports (such as institutional reviews, actuarial evaluations and so on).
- Building capacities of ILO constituents and other stakeholders in their efforts to ensure the effective realization of the human right to social security, including through tripartite workshops and consultations, guidelines and other capacity-building activities.

Supporting legal reforms and development to ensure alignment with up-to-date social security standards:

- Analysis of the proposed social protection measures or developments or of their compatibility with ILO social security standards and principles and other possible legal implications, while recommendations are formulated to align the measures contemplated with ILO social security standards and good country practice.
- Article-by-article commentaries on the compatibility of draft legal provisions with international and regional social security law and principles (such as ILO standards,

international human rights instruments, regional instruments and their interpretation by the competent supervisory bodies, ISSA guidelines and so on) and comparative practice from other countries, as well as proposals for modifications to align draft provisions with international standards, principles and good country practice.

- Hands-on support for the development or reform of social protection legal frameworks (framework laws, codification, legal harmonization, laws and regulations to implement new schemes or new governance structures and so on).
- Developing and enhancing national capacities through technical workshops on legal drafting strategies.

Technical assistance for the ratification and effective application of up-to-date ILO social security standards:

- Contributing to the development and enhancement of national capacities through technical workshops on ILO social security standards: requirements, ratification process, reporting obligations and follow-up and so on.
- Conducting assessments of existing national social protection law and practice against the parameters and principles established by up-to-date international social security standards with a view to promoting the ratification and application of Conventions and Recommendations.
- Providing technical advice on the conclusions and recommendations of such assessments with a view to possible ratification, including to address obstacles such as regarding parametric adjustments or other legislative amendments or modifications.
- Supporting the organization of and participation in tripartite workshops to validate the conclusions of such assessments, present ILO recommendations and define a road map for further action with constituents.
- Supporting governments in completing ratification formalities, including in finalizing instruments of ratification and accompanying declarations, liaising with the ILO's International Labour Standards Department or Office of the Legal Adviser/Office of Legal Services and so on.
- Developing capacity-building material on the principles and parameters set out in international social security standards, including technical reports, comparative analysis and policy briefs, as well as country briefs documenting good practices to guarantee the human right to social security.

Indicators of results and impact

The work of the ILO on building rights-based social protection systems will be guided by up-to-date ILO social security standards and will fully reflect all the guiding principles established in these, in particular Convention No. 102 and Recommendation No. 202.

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through the thematic approach on building rights-based social protection systems and will monitor the following indicators:

- number of countries supported whose policies and parametric reforms are in line with up-to-date ILO social security standards;
- number of countries supported that enact a new legal instrument or implement a reform in line with up-to date ILO social security standards;
- number of countries whose national legislation and practice is assessed vis-à-vis the principles and parameters set out in up-to date ILO social security standards;
- number of countries that have ratified an up-to-date ILO social security Convention;

Through its Results Monitoring Tool, the Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.²⁸

Knowledge development

During the second phase of the Flagship Programme, the following knowledge products will be key:

- country briefs to illustrate how countries have developed and implemented rights-based approaches to give effect to the human right to social security through comprehensive and sound legal frameworks;
- thematic and spotlight briefs on specific aspects of rights-based approaches to social protection, including on complaint and appeal and inspection mechanisms, unemployment protection schemes and so on;
- comparative assessments of ILO social security standards and national law and practice for the purpose of policy or legal development or reform, as well as with a view to raising awareness on these standards and their approaches and promoting their ratification prospects;
- an online guide on strategies for the development of national social security legal frameworks, based on international social security standards and national best practices;
- a second volume of a publication on the right to social security in the constitutions of the world covering Latin America;
- online tools in this thematic area (including improvement, update and promotion of existing tools), in particular the Toolkit on ILO Social Security Standards: Learn, Ratify and Apply, as well as the joint UN Social Protection and Human Rights platform.

Partnerships

The ILO works jointly with the UN system to ensure that social protection systems are built through a rights-based approach, including through existing structures such as the SPIAC-B and USP2030. Ongoing lines of collaboration include strengthening qualitative and quantitative knowledge on social health protection legal frameworks with WHO; monitoring national policies and strategies, including against the normative framework set out in ILO international social security standards in collaboration with UN-Women. The ILO also collaborates closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen and promote the interlinkages between the human rights and international labour rights frameworks, including through publications, joint events and a web-based platform.

²⁸ See Recommendation No. 202, Part III.

► Financial governance and sustainability: Actuarial valuations

Baseline

Income protection in old age is the most widespread form of social protection, with 77.5 per cent of people above retirement age receiving a pension. More than half of these pensions are provided through contributory social insurance scheme. Pensions are long-term promises and the sustainability of pension systems can be challenged by population ageing, stagnating real wages, the growing informality of labour markets and the emergence of new forms of employment. Today, the reform of social security pension systems represents the biggest share of ongoing and planned social protection reform processes.

Social health protection is the second most widespread form of social protection, with approximately two thirds of the world's population covered. This proportion falls to only one third and one fifth in lower-middle-income and low-income countries, respectively. As reiterated by Member States during the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2021, the extension of social health protection is therefore a priority in order to improve access to care, avoid impoverishment and improve productivity.

Good financial governance is of the utmost importance to ensure the sustainability and adequacy of benefits of these social protection schemes. The ILO is receiving an ever-increasing number of requests from its constituents and social security institutions for technical assistance on actuarial valuations of pension and social health protection schemes, including capacity-building on actuarial valuations.

Approach

Rooted in Recommendation No. 202 and relevant Conventions (Nos. 102 and 128) and Recommendations (No. 131), the sustainability of social protection systems is one of the core ILO principles, together with the universality of coverage and the adequacy and predictability of benefits. To achieve sustainability, Convention No. 102 requires that Member States shall ensure that the necessary actuarial valuations concerning financial equilibrium are made periodically and, in any event, prior to any change in benefits or contributions rates. All social insurance laws provide for statutory periodical actuarial valuations every three to five years. Obviously, actuarial valuations should also be conducted prior to the establishment of a new social protection scheme. The ILO approach to good financial governance through actuarial valuations is to find the right balance between financial sustainability and the other ILO core principles.

The ILO's approach in providing technical assistance on actuarial valuation is not limited to delivering a report on the actuarial valuation. When the capacity and the interest are there, the approach is also to build social security institutions' staff capacity to conduct actuarial valuations themselves, completely or partially under the supervision of ILO experts. In particular:

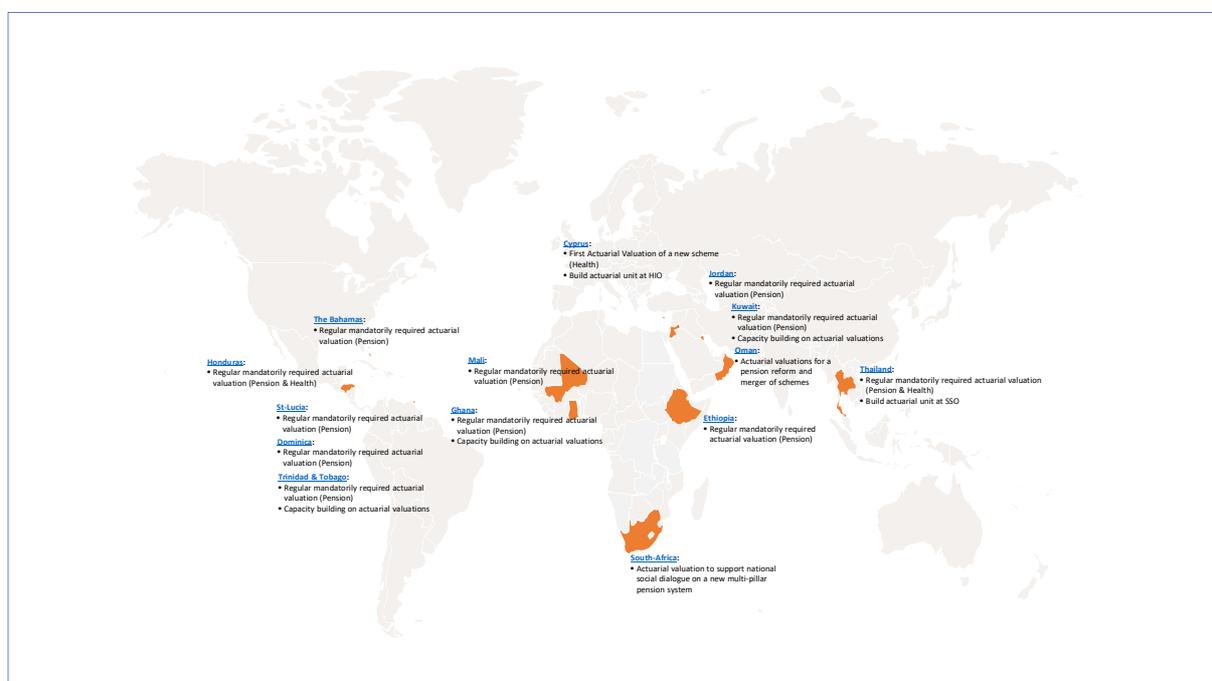
- For more than 15 years, the **ILO-ITC** has been conducting a training course on actuarial modelling for social security.
- In **Thailand**, in partnership with the Social Security Organization (SSO), the ILO is building the SSO actuarial unit and developing courses on social security for the actuarial programme at the Mahidol University.
- In 2021, in partnership with ISSA, the ILO launched two new online computer-based actuarial valuation tools, **ILO-PENSIONS** and **ILO-HEALTH**, to provide better access to actuarial valuation tools that are specifically designed for social security. The first introductory online

training courses were conducted in August and September 2021 and each attracted more than 800 participants.

Priority countries/territories

Annually, the ILO delivers about 10 to 12 regular actuarial valuations that are mandatorily required. It also conducts actuarial valuations for the reform of existing schemes or the costing of new schemes. Regular actuarial valuations are usually financed by the social security system. For reforms or new schemes, ILO technical assistance is usually financed jointly by ILO and development partners (see figures 14 and 15).

► **Figure 14. Countries/territories in which the ILO currently provides technical assistance on actuarial valuations (pension or health) with domestic funding, as well as countries that have requested ILO financial and technical assistance on actuarial valuations**



Bahamas: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)

Cyprus:

- First actuarial valuation of a new scheme (health)
- Build actuarial unit at health insurance organization

Dominica: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)

Ethiopia: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)

Ghana:

- Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)
- Capacity-building on actuarial valuations

Honduras: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension and health)

Jordan: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)

Kuwait:

- Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)
- Capacity-building on actuarial valuations

Mali: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)

Oman: Actuarial valuations for a pension reform and merger of schemes

Saint Lucia: Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)

South Africa: Actuarial valuation to support national social dialogue on a new multi-pillar pension system

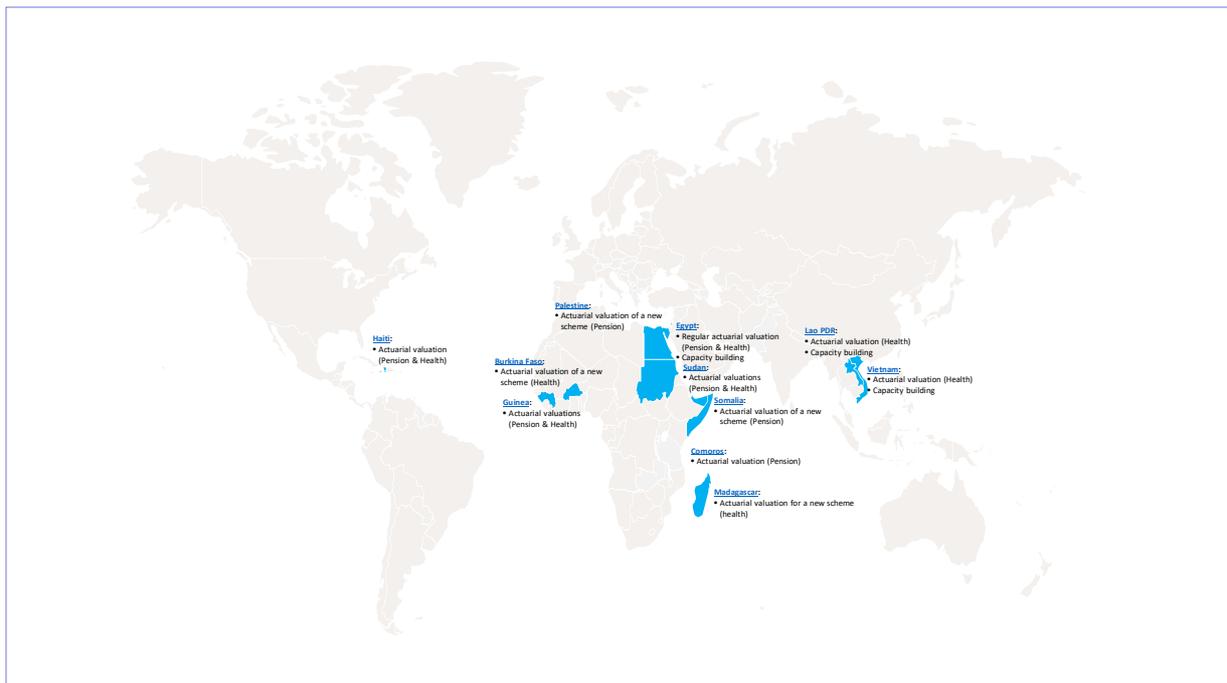
Thailand:

- Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension and health)
- Build actuarial unit at SSO
- Actuarial valuation to support national social dialogue on a new multi-pillar pension system

Trinidad and Tobago:

- Regular mandatorily required actuarial valuation (pension)
- Capacity-building on actuarial valuations

► **Figure 15. Countries/territories have requested ILO financial and technical assistance on actuarial valuations**



Burkina Faso: Actuarial valuation of a new scheme (health)

Comoros: Actuarial valuation (pension)

Egypt:

- Regular actuarial valuation (pension and health)
- Capacity-building

Haiti: Actuarial valuation (pension and health)

Guinea: Actuarial valuations (pension and health)

Lao People's Democratic Republic:

- Actuarial valuation (health)
- Capacity-building

Madagascar: Actuarial valuation for a new scheme (health)

Occupied Palestinian Territory: Actuarial valuation of a new scheme (pension)

Somalia: Actuarial valuation of a new scheme (pension)

Sudan: Actuarial valuations (pension and health)

Viet Nam:

- Actuarial valuation (health)
- Capacity-building

Technical support

The ILO articulates its support on actuarial valuations through the Actuarial Services Unit (ASU), which has qualified actuaries in both the Geneva and Bangkok offices, as well as the Public Finance, Actuarial and Statistical Services Unit (PFACTS), which is responsible for development and maintenance of the actuarial valuation tools, as well as training in their use, and employs economists and statisticians to support actuarial valuations.

The ILO offers a wide range of technical support for actuarial valuations, from conducting a peer review of an actuarial valuation conducted by a social security institution to supporting an institution to develop its own actuarial unit to conduct actuarial valuations. Technical support on financial governance may also include support for the development of funding and investment policies and the development of investment structures and management.

The ILO has been providing actuarial services to social security institutions and governments in its Member States since the 1940s. It has the unique capacity to deliver technically sound and neutral advice that is recognized by all social partners based on an internationally accepted framework of ILO standards on social security. The ILO value-added on actuarial valuations is based on the following assets:

- **ILO standards.** Reports on actuarial valuations produced by the ILO usually include an analysis of the compliance of the provisions of the social security law with Convention No. 102. In performing an analysis to generate their conclusions and policy recommendations, actuaries consider the principles of social security contained in the ILO standards on social security.
- **Proven methodology.** Actuarial valuations and investment policy and management structure analyses are highly technical products and should include all the necessary activities and disclosures in order to comply with national actuarial standards (where they exist) or International Actuarial Association's actuarial standards of practice, the International Standard of Actuarial Practice 2 (ISAP-2), the ILO-ISSA guidelines on actuarial work for social security, CFA Institute standards and ISSA guidelines on investments. With its experience of more than 75 years on actuarial valuation, the ILO has been a leader in the development of the actuarial practice for social security.
- **Vast pool of seasoned international experts.** The ASU and the PFACTS unit have developed a vast pool of qualified social security actuaries and other actuarial professionals, as well as economists and CFA-approved experts, in order to be able to respond in a timely manner to the increasing number of requests made for technical assistance. Most of these experts have collaborated with the ILO for many years and are very knowledgeable about the ILO social security principles.

- **Online actuarial valuation tools.** Building on decades of work on actuarial methodologies specific to social security schemes, the ILO developed two state-of-the-art actuarial valuation models that are available online.

ILO/PENSIONS, the ILO Actuarial Pension Model, is a customizable and flexible analytical tool created to simulate and assess the adequacy and sustainability of a variety of social security pension schemes and systems.



ILO/HEALTH, the ILO Actuarial Health Model, is a powerful and flexible tool to facilitate quantitative work on health-care systems analysis and reforms, both for contributory and non-contributory health schemes and systems.



Indicators of results and impact

The work of the ILO on actuarial valuations aims to support social security institutions and its Member States to ensure the financial sustainability of existing social protection schemes, while maintaining at least the minimum benchmarks embedded in the ILO standards. This is also true when actuarial work supports the establishment of new schemes or the reform of existing ones. Other underlying objectives are to build national capacity to conduct actuarial valuations and raise social partners' awareness of good financial governance.

In particular, the following indicators will be monitored:

- Good financial governance
 - number of countries in which actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted for legislative approval (as required by social security legislation);
- Financial sustainability in accordance with ILO principles
 - number of countries in which, based on the recommendations of actuarial valuation reports, modifications to social security law were made to ensure financial sustainability in accordance with ILO principles;
- New pension scheme or social health protection scheme
 - number of countries in which, based on actuarial assessment of costs, a new pension scheme or social health protection scheme has been adopted in accordance with ILO principles;
- Social partners' awareness-raising on actuarial valuations and social dialogue on reform
 - number of countries in which, based on actuarial valuation, a social dialogue is organized to discuss and understand the findings of the report and its recommendations to ensure the sustainability of the pension or health scheme in accordance with ILO principles;
- Capacity-building on actuarial valuation
 - number of countries in which the actuarial valuation is conducted partly or entirely by the social security institution;
 - number of social security institutions that use the ILO/PENSIONS model or the ILO/HEALTH model; and
 - number of social security institutions and governments that have been trained on actuarial modelling.

Knowledge development

With the increasing demand for support on actuarial valuations of pension and social health protection schemes, knowledge development is crucial to increase the capacity to meet all these

requests. Actuarial valuations are complex exercises that require the input and supervision of qualified actuaries with experience in social security, although many elements of actuarial valuations can be performed by other professionals with a quantitative background, such as economists, mathematicians, statisticians or data scientists. The combination of robust models and training is key to meet the increasing demand.

- **The ILO will support the adoption of the ILO/PENSIONS and ILO/HEALTH online actuarial models by social security institutions.** The first phase of the Flagship Programme focused on the development of the new online actuarial models. The introductory training course offered for their launch attracted for each more than 800 participants from more than 85 countries. Based on this success, the second phase of the Flagship Programme will further support the development of tailored features of the tool, its accessibility to social security institutions and the actuarial literacy of senior staff of those institutions. A fully fledged capacity-building package for both actuaries and decision-makers will be an important focus of the next phase of the Flagship Programme. The dissemination of the material and its accessibility in several languages are key components of this work.
- The ILO will provide financial support for staff of social security institutions to obtain ILO-ITC training on actuarial modelling for social security. Over the past 15 years, many staff of social security institutions have received this training, but there are still many who need to be trained. Such training, combined with the new online models, will increase the national capacity to conduct actuarial valuations.
- **The ILO will develop a learning document on building actuarial units in social security institutions.** The ILO currently supports two countries in the development of actuarial units. Based on these experiences, the ILO will develop a learning document on the business models of such units, their staffing structure and their functioning.

Partnerships

Regular actuarial valuations mandatorily required by law are usually financed directly by social security institutions. However, for new schemes or reform of existing schemes, these projects require financial support from development partners. The ILO is currently involved in such projects with financial support from GIZ and the EU.

In order to increase the capacity to respond to the increasing demands for support on actuarial valuations, other partnerships will also be explored. For the development of the actuarial profession in countries, partnerships will be explored with actuarial associations, such as the International Actuarial Association, the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries and the Society of Actuaries, as well as actuarial programmes in universities.

► Digital transformation of social protections systems

Baseline

Global trends such as digitalization, automation and globalization, as well as socio-demographic changes, are shaping the way the world is evolving and social protection systems need to adapt to changing contexts and demands. In order to accompany these changes, the digitalization of operations and services has become crucial. Overall, the pandemic has accelerated the ongoing digitalization process by overcoming or intentionally ignoring some of the traditional barriers (digital literacy, connectivity, infrastructure and so on); however, most of the work on digitizing social protection in an integrated manner remains to be completed.

Although a large number of social protection interventions (1,698 in 202 countries) were implemented in response to the socio-economic impacts of COVID 19, the pandemic has acted as a stress test for social protection delivery systems worldwide, which often exposed serious weaknesses that delayed the response in some countries and required the creation from scratch of parallel delivery systems in other countries. Countries that had already started their digital transformation journey and had some component of a national data infrastructure in place reacted faster and achieved better results.

The *World Social Protection Report* has revealed that more than half of the world's population are not even covered by one social protection benefit. This persistent gap in coverage has many causes, including a lack of adequate funding and policies; a lack of trust in social protection systems and their underlying institutions; and a lack of accessible, efficient and effective delivery systems.

While there has been a gradual shift from fragmented social protection schemes towards universal social protection systems and institutional consolidation, both delivery systems and information remain fragmented in many countries, with a clear need for integration, redesigning and reforming schemes and improved operational capacity.

Greater ICT-enabled accountability and transparency has the potential to improve the legitimacy of and trust in social protection systems. Improving governance and management procedures and redesigning processes has the potential to increase the efficiency and efficacy of delivery systems. Data-driven management and improved data usage and quality have the potential to make the case for adequate funding and policies clearer and more compelling.

All this can be described as digital transformation and goes well beyond the mere application of information and communication technologies (ICT). It involves implementing governance and management procedures, as well as redesigning processes with intense use of ICT. It should involve a profound restructuring of social protection operations in search of more efficiency and effectiveness, while preparing institutions for this data-rich, information-centred environment in which we must now operate.

Approach

Good governance of social protection systems requires technical capacity, including for appropriate planning, administrative and management processes.

Wherever possible, these functions should be carried out in an integrated way and in a digital age, social protection systems increasingly rely on a robust information management systems (MIS) to support coordination and interoperability. ICT-based integration permeates every facet of social protection governance – including policymaking, oversight, scheme management and delivery of benefits and services. An absence of functioning back-office information system or of any of its

components is a major impediment to the establishment of social protection floors. However, this does not mean that only countries that have already applied technology to their process can succeed in transforming their delivery systems. Starting a digital transformation process can help institutions to leapfrog technologies and increase their capacity to foster social inclusion for vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities.

Activities on improving operations through administrative governance within the Flagship Programme are centred on the following **strategic areas**:

- **strengthening governance and management capacities** at the national, regional and local levels through hands-on training and support for planning and delivery process restructuring;
- **supporting the implementation of social protection delivery mechanisms**, including beneficiary registration, benefits distribution and the development of management information systems and systems that should be structured according to the guiding principles of Recommendation No. 202, in particular: those relating to the efficiency and accessibility of complaint and appeal procedures; high-quality public services; regular monitoring and periodic evaluation; coherence across institutions; transparent, accountable and sound financial management and administration; social inclusion; and responsiveness to the needs of the people;
- **supporting digital transformation processes** that will help institutions to implement integrated systems horizontally across organizations and vertically across levels of government, taking into account policy, programme and administrative processes.

Priority countries

The ILO is planning a range of technical support (see below) activities in the following regions and countries:

- **Africa:** Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya, Sudan,
- **Latin America and Caribbean:** Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Haiti
- **Asia and Oceania:** Bangladesh, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Pakistan, Timor-Leste
- **Middle East:** Lebanon, Jordan

Technical support

Technical support provided by the ILO in this thematic area will include:

- support in structuring and implementing effective governance and management processes, including corporate governance, planning processes, ICT governance and ICT management;
- support in institutional digital transformation gap analysis and planning, as well as support in implementing delivery systems, including identification, registration, standard operating procedures (SOPs), claims management, payments, accountability, appeals, redress and other procedures usually bundled in an MIS;
- support in implementing humanitarian/early recovery cash transfers and their linkages with building and strengthening sustainable social protection systems;
- support in implementing the data governance and management process to enhance data quality, allow for interoperability and integration of information and data, and encourage data-driven management and decision-making.

Indicators of results and impact

The work of the ILO on improving operations of social protection will be guided by ILO social security standards and will fully respect all the guiding principles of Recommendation No. 202.

The Results Monitoring Tool will keep track of the actions implemented through the thematic approach on administrative governance and MIS and will monitor the following indicators:

- number of countries that developed new or strengthened existing administrative governance of their social protection systems;
- number of countries that have embarked on the digitalization of their social protection delivery system; and
- number of countries that have built preparedness (SOPs, stand-by agreements, MOUs with partners and so on) into social security administrative and delivery systems ahead of covariate shocks.

The Flagship Programme will also assess to what extent the results have been achieved while applying international social security standards and principles for social protection.²⁹ In addition to tripartite participation, the principles most relevant for the thematic approach are non-discrimination, adequacy and predictability of benefits; gender equality and responsiveness to special needs; and transparent, accountable and sound financial management and administration.

Knowledge development

- Country- and region-specific learning documents and operational tools will be developed and their wide dissemination supported.
- Global, regional and subregional good practices will be captured in terms of strengthening service delivery and fostering knowledge exchange.
- A toolkit will be compiled of useful knowledge materials, including practical tools, guidance, terms of reference, implementation agreements, outreach materials and so on from operational engagements that have the potential to be adapted and replicated.
- A digital transformation implementation course will be developed with the ITC-ILO.
- A digital transformation planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation tool for the social protection context will be developed.

Partnerships

The ambition during the second phase of the Flagship Programme is to further develop strategic partnerships at country, regional and global levels in order to establish the capacity to operationalize delivery systems and mechanisms in a cost-effective and timely manner. In this context, the ILO plans to:

- deepen its relationship within the openIMIS community, led by GIZ and with the active participation of BMZ and SDC, in order to encourage the adoption of this MIS tool and assistance in its improvement;
- develop an MOU with UNICEF to implement openIMIS in countries that have implemented emergency cash transfer programmes; and

²⁹ See Recommendation No. 202, Part III.

- o provide technical support to mainstream social security standards through digital transformation in other country, regional and global projects of the Flagship Programme that involve strengthening delivery systems.

► Culture of social protection

Baseline

The development of an effective culture of social protection supports the realization of the human right to social security in line with the values and principles promoted by ILO standards.

Currently, only 47 per cent of the global population are effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit, while 4.1 billion people (53 per cent) obtain no income security at all from their national social protection system. Countries need to take urgent measures to extend social protection to all.

Social protection relies on national dialogue and consensus. It is not the result of a top-down approach as it involves many different actors, such as policymakers, social partners, development partners and the wide population. To be universal and sustainable, social protection should be considered as a common good that is independent of political or philosophical ideologies. Promoting an effective culture of social protection among all the groups concerned by social protection paves the way to establish universal and sustainable systems of social protection.

Policymakers with a culture of social protection based on evidence and knowledge are more prepared to take the right decisions and invest in social protection. In the same way, populations with a culture of social protection are informed on its principles and values and are better prepared to participate in the construction of social protection systems.

States need to create an enabling context in which individuals are aware of their rights and obligations and have trust in the system. Creating a culture of social protection through communication, awareness-raising and education are key in this process. Awareness and trust are particularly important in the context of contributory systems, in which individuals who contribute today need to have the confidence that they will be adequately protected when needs arise tomorrow. Having trust in the social protection system and seeing its tangible benefits, including the quality of its services, will also enhance individuals' willingness to pay taxes to sustain it.

Approach

The ILO Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All supports the creation of an effective culture of social protection at global and national levels through evidence-based communication, awareness-raising and education (see figure 16).

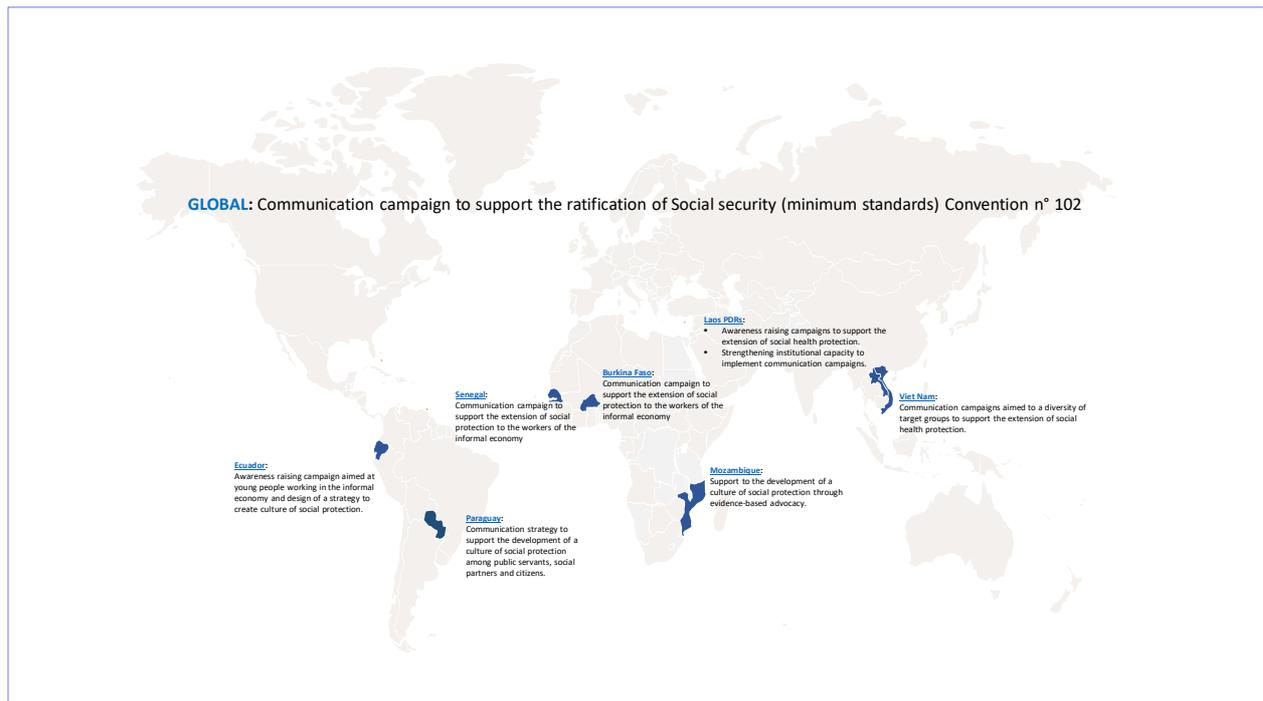
Activities for developing a culture of social protection will be focused on the following strategic areas.

1. Supporting the ratification of [Convention No. 102](#) to engage governments, employers' and workers' organizations, donors and development partners in the design and implementation of universal social protection systems that deliver transparent, accountable and sustainable services. This involves the promotion of other ILO social security standards, such as Recommendation No. 202, which gives clear guidance for designing and implementing social protection floors.
2. **Raising awareness to enhance willingness and support for social protection.** This requires intense advocacy with key target groups (ministries of finance, parliamentarians, social partners, journalists, development banks, academia, private sector and employers and so on), based on knowledge and evidence such as statistics, microsimulations of policy reforms, impact studies, budget analysis and so on.

3. **Raising people's awareness of their rights and obligations to social protection and building knowledge of social protection principles and values.** This includes communication on processes to register for and claim benefits. Communication and education with the wider public contributes to creating a national consensus around policy reforms and building ownership and trust in the system.

Priority countries

- **Figure 16. Priority countries in which the ILO will support the development of a culture of social protection during the second phase of the Flagship Programme**



Ecuador: Awareness-raising campaign aimed at young people working in the informal economy and design of a strategy to create a culture of social protection

Senegal: Communication campaign to support the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy

Paraguay: Communication strategy to support the development of a culture of social protection among public servants, social partners and citizens

Burkina Faso: Communication campaign to support the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy

Lao People's Democratic Republic: Awareness-raising campaigns to support the extension of social health protection and the strengthening of institutional capacity to implement communication campaigns

Viet Nam: Communication campaigns aimed at a diversity of target groups to support the extension of social health protection

Mozambique: Support for the development of a culture of social protection through evidence-based advocacy

Technical support

Technical support provided by the ILO in this thematic area will include:

- establishment of an International Social Protection Day, in line with the Conclusions of the second recurrent discussion on social protection (social security) adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 109th Session in 2021;
- a communication campaign to support the ratification of Convention No. 102 at the global level;
- assistance in the preparation of national communication strategies to enhance willingness and support for social protection based on knowledge and evidence aimed at key target groups (ministries of finance, parliamentarians, social partners, journalists, development banks, academia, private sector and employers and so on); and
- the design and implementation of at least two national communication strategies aimed at beneficiaries.

Indicators of results and impact

The creation of an effective culture of social protection is both a thematic approach of the Flagship Programme and an enabler of its strategy. The following direct results are limited to measuring the impact of the thematic area:

- number of countries that have designed and implemented or are implementing communication, awareness-raising and education strategies on social protection;
- number of countries that have integrated communication, awareness-raising and education on social protection in their institutional framework; and
- number of users that have completed the social protection massive open online course (MOOC).

Knowledge development

- A good practices guide will be published and disseminated on the development of a culture of social protection in partnership with the National School for Social Security of France (EN3S).
- A social protection MOOC will be developed in English, French and Spanish, in partnership with the SDG Academy and the EN3S.
- A global repository of materials will be compiled, aimed at creating a culture of social protection, including communication, awareness-raising and education strategies and materials.
- At least three briefs will be issued to document national experiences in designing and implementing communication, awareness-raising and educational programmes aimed at the extension of social protection.

Partnerships

The ILO's work on the development of a culture of social protection will benefit from the support of the EN3S, the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and governments involved in the extension of social protection.