



Social Protection for a Just Transition

June 2022

Climate change and climate policies can increase the risks people face – social protection ensures a just transition

Key messages

- ▶ In the face of climate change and the need to transition to an environmentally sustainable economy and society, the G7 Development Ministers' Communiqué is calling for social protection for all to support people throughout the transition, build resilience against climate shocks and help people adapt to climate change.
- ▶ The ILO is supporting countries in this endeavour by offering analyses, policy support to integrate social protection in transition and climate policies and to address climate change in social protection policies, plans and programming – along with financing options, capacity building and a solid knowledge basis.

The Issue: Increased Risks and Impacts

Climate change is increasing the challenges for people and societies worldwide. Already now, its negative impacts, such as rising temperatures and sea levels, are already affecting people beyond their ability to cope, despite efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. At the same time, climate policies may negatively impact individuals, for example those whose livelihoods depend, either directly or indirectly, on carbon-intensive sectors.

The Role of Social Protection

Social protection provides coverage against inevitable risks over the course of a person's life, including during shocks and stresses. Today, and even more so after the global COVID-19 crisis, social protection is widely recognized as a fundamental strategy to prevent poverty and protect people throughout their lives against risks to their livelihoods and well-being, building their resilience in the face of shocks and structural transformations.

A just transition, respective national strategies and policy packages in consultation with social partners, need to

▶▶ We need to accelerate progress towards universal, adequate, adaptive, shock-responsive and inclusive social protection for all by 2030, in order to address potential hardships caused by the transformation of ecologically unsustainable sectors, build resilience against climate shocks and help people adapt to climate change.”

▶ G7 Development Ministers' Communiqué, May 2022

systematically seize the potential of social protection to:

- protect people from the adverse impacts of climate change and climate policies;
- incentivize sustainable and green investments and decisions, risk taking, diversification and innovation;
- promote employability, providing the time and resources for skills development and labour market inclusion.

Without comprehensive and adequate social protection for all, climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts may leave some people behind, thereby undermining the sustained public support required to transition to a green economy. Universal social protection systems are thus a crucial element of a socially just transition to sustainable economies and societies.

► What the ILO offers:

- **Analysis of social protection in the context of climate change** and facilitating the development of collaborative approaches for assessing existing social protection system or instruments, including regarding their contribution to a just transition;
- Analytical and advisory support to **systematically integrate social protection** and poverty reduction considerations **in climate policies**, measures and strategies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Just Transition Plans (NJTPs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs);
- Support to integrate **climate change considerations into social protection policies, strategies and programmes** as well as action plans or roadmaps with broad-based consultations. This may include programme (re)design, for example to better link social assistance and re-skilling, for an adaptive and scalable system – bringing social assistance, social insurance and active labour market interventions together.
- Development of **social protection financing options** for a just transition;
- **Facilitation of partnerships** and broad-based coordination with social dialogue. At global level, the ILO also facilitates the [Social Protection and Climate Change Working Group](#) across different international organizations, bilateral development partners, international financial institutions, academia and civil society.
- **Capacity building on the linkages of social protection, just transition and climate change** (mitigation and adaptation) and a systematized knowledge base in this area, including country- and region-specific advocacy, technical tools and products and their wide dissemination.

For further information on ILO's approach and work on social protection for a just transition, visit:

[Climatechange.social-protection.org](https://climatechange.social-protection.org)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) on Social Protection & Climate Change (2021)

[ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All](#) (2015)

[Social Protection for a Just Transition: A Global Strategy for Increasing Ambition in Climate Action](#) (2019)

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