



# The Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I)

## Responding to the crisis: The UN’s call for social protection floors

In the wake of the global financial crisis, the UN Chief Executives Board established the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I) to coordinate development efforts and improve its assistance to countries wishing to expand social protection. Work is underway in many countries and regions where experiences in development cooperation and policy making are providing valuable lessons for continued action.

**T**HE 2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS prompted the United Nations to develop a series of coordinated responses to foster recovery and better protect the world’s population against future adverse events. In April 2009, the UN Chief Executives Board launched the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I), which called for increased cooperation in development assistance activities and planning.

## A UN “fit for purpose”

Social protection floors have been taken up as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. To deliver on this commitment, the UN system will need to organize itself accordingly and offer practical solutions for implementation and monitoring. This will require integrating SPFs into national development plans, which are then carried out by governments with the support of one coherent UN system.

The SPF-I proposes an approach based on more than five years of concrete experience in combining coordinated efforts at the country, regional and global levels. By working “as one” on social protection, agencies organize their roles and responsibilities linked to their core competencies, thereby improving the effectiveness of their assistance and tapping into the synergies of intelligent cooperation.

## The SPF-I: a multi-layered approach

At the country level, agencies are asked to set up national SPF teams or working groups through UNCTs, and integrate SPF into UNDAFs, UNPAFs and One-UN programs. Agencies are also asked to carry out joint activities to provide technical support on social protection. This can include jointly-organized national social dialogues on social protection, analyses

of gaps in national social protection coverage and potential financing options for filling those gaps. It can also include strengthening the country’s administrative capacity to deliver SPFs and to collect and analyze statistical data in the area of social protection.

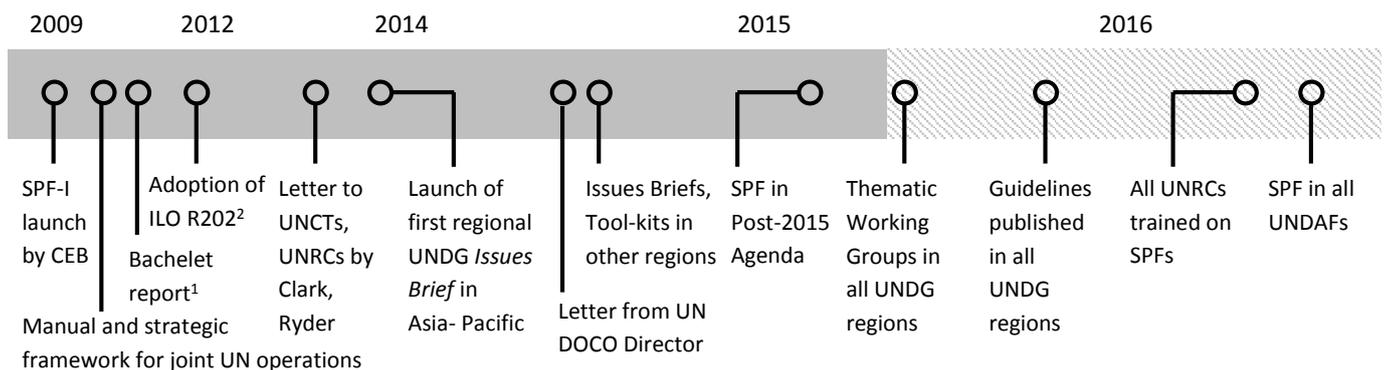
At the regional level, the

**“Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.”**

*Target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals*

UNDG Regional Chair can create a regional working group on social protection to facilitate knowledge sharing and develop practical tools. This team can also organize trainings for UNCTs to raise awareness of SPFs among UN agencies and the UNCTs. These SPF activities can then be included in the UNDG regional work plan.

## Advancing social protection floors: a timeline



<sup>1</sup> “Social Protection Floor for a Fair and Inclusive Globalization,” the report of the Social Protection Floor Advisory Group, chaired by Michelle Bachelet, is available here: [http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\\_165750/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_165750/lang-en/index.htm)

<sup>2</sup> The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) provides guidance to member States in building comprehensive social security systems and extending social security coverage by prioritizing the establishment of national floors of social protection accessible to all in need.

## Progress to date

- **Asia-Pacific** A UNDG thematic working group with over 30 participants has developed a tool-kit on coordination after successful completion of a [guide on national dialogue](#) in 2014. Meanwhile, UNDG A-P has also published an [Issues Brief on Social Protection](#). Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam and others have conducted UN-government national dialogues leading to concrete recommendations for the implementation of SPFs.
- **Africa** The region's first Issues Brief on social protection covers activities in over ten countries in Eastern and Southern Africa with the aim of developing a common monitoring framework for social protection in Africa. A similar Issues Brief is envisaged in Western and Central Africa by end 2016. UN-government national dialogues to expand coverage have taken place in Mozambique and other countries.
- **The Americas** The creation of a regional thematic working group and associated work plan for joint activities in the region is envisaged among UN agencies in the region active in the area of social protection.
- **Europe and Central Asia** Discussions among UN agencies have led to the creation of a working group on social protection in the region. Meanwhile, some countries, such as Kyrgyzstan, have embarked upon a collaborative UN-government national dialogue on social protection.
- **Arab States** A working group was inaugurated in 2016, and an Issues Brief on Social Protection will be published by end 2016.
- **Global** Recent endorsements of the SPF-I were made in letters sent to all UNCTs and UNRCs by [UNDG Chair Helen Clark](#) and [ILO Director-General Guy Ryder](#), and by [UN DOCO Director Kanni Wignaraja](#), who called for continued SPF-I efforts.



UNDG Social Protection Issues Brief, Asia-Pacific

Meanwhile, at the global level, the SPF will be advanced through the UN post-2015 development agenda, including a set of indicators and a monitoring system to track SPF implementation based on good practices developed at the regional and country levels. General guidelines and training packages will also be made available for further dissemination. Briefings for national delegations and key coordination bodies at the UN, as well as the creation of a global set of good practices in mainstreaming SPFs, are also envisaged.

Additional details on these activities and related resources are available at: [un.social-protection.org](http://un.social-protection.org)

### Mainstreaming SPFs in Thailand

In Thailand, social protection was chosen as one of the six key areas of partnership between the Royal Thai Government and the UN system within the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF).

This partnership, for the period 2012-2016, focuses on enhancing Thailand's capacity to provide universal basic social protection and higher level of benefits through contributory schemes, with the overall objective of ensuring the financial and institutional sustainability of the system.

## Delivering and learning as one: an overview

