

Second Webinar of the Social Protection, Freedom and Justice for Workers Network

Geneva, 23 October 2018

Participants

List of participants			
ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DESIGNATION
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CLC (Cambodia)	Ath	Thorn	President
CGT-RA (Argentina)	Guillermo	Zuccotti	Social Protection Specialist
FES	Sarah	Ganter	Social Protection
FES-Egypt	Shahir	Ishak	Program Manager
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ILO	Isabel	Ortiz	Department Director (SOCPRO)
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ILO	Karuna	Pal	Head, PPKS Unit (SOCPRO)
ILO	Christina	Behrendt	Head, Social Policy Unit (SOCPRO)
ILO	Kroum	Markov	Social Protection Policy Specialist
ILO	Victoria	Giroud-Castiella	Social Protection Officer (SOCPRO)
ILO	Clara	van Panhuys	Social Protection Officer (SOCPRO)
ILO	Luis	Cotinguiba	Social Protection Officer (SOCPRO)
ILO	Cassandre	Guibord Cyr	Consultant

Objectives

- To strategize how to advance social protection in times of austerity;
- To discuss progress made towards the achievement of universal social protection and the promotion of the [Social Security \(Minimum Standards\) Convention, 1952 \(No. 102\)](#) and the [Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 \(No. 202\)](#), with a special focus on gender issues and on the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy;
- To take stock of recent ITUC, trade unions', and ILO activities in the field of social protection;
- To share information on developments of the Workers Network and discuss how the network can best serve the needs of workers organizations.

Introductory remarks

Evelyn Astor, ITUC

- This webinar is an opportunity to:
 - Showcase the significant work that unions are doing in the field of social protection, including several successful campaigns and negotiations;
 - Identify and discuss key policy challenges related to social protection in countries, with a particular focus on gender gaps in social protection, and social protection and the informal economy;
 - Reflect on the developments in the field of social protection at the international level, including the General Survey of the Commission of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations of the ILO concerning the implementation of the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), and key advocacy activities (e.g. the G20 process, the L20, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, etc.).

Rafael Peels, ILO/ACTRAV

- As part of the ILO Global Flagship Program on Social Protection Floors for All, the Workers Network is a vehicle for pushing forward the sustainable development agenda.
- Key concerns for trade unions: inclusiveness, informality, gender equality, financing, recent activities of trade unions, and social protection in the broader framework of sustainable development.

The extension of social protection: Thematic issues

The transition from the informal to the formal economy and ILO work

Christina Behrendt, ILO/SOCPRO

- The extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy is one of the main priorities for the ILO. It realizes the right to social security and supports the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
- Strong normative basis: the transition from the informal to the formal economy is reflected in two recommendations, the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) and the [Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 \(No. 204\)](#). These two recommendations put forward a double strategy: on the one hand, they support the building of a strong social protection floor (SPF), ensuring that there is universal coverage; on the other hand, they call for the provision of higher levels of protection (social insurance).
- The ILO supports these standards in very practical ways at country level (Indonesia, Zambia, Cambodia, etc.) and at the global level (web platform, online guide, policy briefs and a training package).
- Three key points regarding ILO work in the field of social protection and the informal economy:

1. There are huge levels of diversity. We have to recognize the specific challenges for specific groups of workers, and the solutions to respond to specific needs and barriers (administrative, financial and geographical barriers, lack of trust, etc.)
 2. The ILO prioritizes solutions that rely on collective financing, encouraging public social protection systems financed by a combination of contributions and taxes.
 3. We should not only look at traditional forms of informality, but also at the new forms, including the informalization of formal employment, the work on digital platforms and the GIG economy.
- The time is right to think about how to upgrade social protection to include those in the informal economy. There are strong commitments at the level of the G20 and a number of national governments. But the key question is to translate these commitments into concrete actions, and workers organizations can do a lot to ensure that concrete steps are taken.

Hilma Mote, ALREI/ITUC-Africa

- Quote from a member of a workers' organization in Namibia: "We do not want things for free, rather we want to be included in social protection systems and policies. We are willing and ready to contribute."
- The quote above deflates the notion that most informal workers are poor and unwilling to contribute to systems, are unable and unwilling to protect themselves against economic shocks, and that they have low understanding of the importance of social protection.
- Most of the content of my presentation comes from a paper that I contributed to, published by the World Bank. It provides practical ways in which social insurance can be extended to informal workers.
- Key messages:
 - Informal workers are willing and able to contribute.
 - Policy and institutional provisions should be made to meet informal workers halfway through governmental policies.
 - Universal social protection may sound idealistic to some, but in fact it is a feasible and attainable goal.
 - We have to de-link the idea that the access to social insurance can only be achieved through employment contracts. That should not be an exclusive requirement for people to be covered by social insurance.
- Main challenges:
 - Identifying eligible participants, enrolling them and maintaining them in the system.
 - Getting the right balance in terms of incentives to attract informal workers to contribute and save.
 - Simplifying the mechanisms for collecting contributions.
 - Mobilizing resources to sustain the system.
 - Providing subsidies to those who are not able to afford the full premium of the contributions.
- These challenges are nothing compared to the opportunities and the positive impact of inclusion. It is actually more costly to everyone (governments, employers and workers) to keep informal workers excluded.
- Main lessons and good practices:
 - Communication and awareness-raising campaigns;
 - The introduction of digital ID systems facilitates registration for informal workers in many countries (India, Bangladesh, Kenya, and Guinea), helping to reduce leakages, duplicated claims, and corruption. It has also improved coordination amongst social protection institutions. Digitalization facilitates a quick expansion of the inclusion of informal workers in formal systems.

Discussion

Bart Verstraeten, WSM

- There are relevant initiatives of trade unions supporting workers in the informal economy to access social protection, such as the example of [AMUSSOL in the Dominican Republic](#).

Isabel Ortiz, ILO/SOCPRO

- The ILO has a [series of country cases](#) documenting experiences regarding the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy. We invite all unions that have successful experiences in organizing the informal sector and good ways to unionize workers to share their experiences with the ILO.

Damaris Muhika, COTU (Kenya)

- In Kenya, our trade unions is contributing to two key actions to ensure the inclusion of informal workers in social protection systems.
 1. We have lobbied the government to review the current legislation on social protection, especially the National Social Security Fund and the National Health Insurance Fund, so as to make them inclusive to informal workers as beneficiaries and contributors.
 2. We are also interested in organizing workers in the informal economy into trade unions so that they can also benefit of social protection systems. We have been able to organize a significant number of domestic and transport workers into cooperatives, and they have been affiliated to trade unions and are now contributing to social protection systems.

Rafael Peels, ILO/ACTRAV

- Question for Hilma Mote: What are the challenges to incentivize people to contribute to social protection?
- Question for Christina Behrendt: Could you please elaborate further on the issue of new forms of informality?

Christina Behrendt, ILO/SOCPRO

- New forms of informality: How to prevent the informalization of formal employment?
- One of the big challenges is to make sure that employers take on responsibility for those who are in the informal sector, and to ensure that those who are truly self-employed are covered in an adequate way.
- Examples:
 - Uruguay put in place a simplified mechanism for coverage of the self-employed, the *Monotributo* (monotax).
 - Harnessing digital technologies to facilitate coverage of informal economy workers (e.g. there are electronic applications for registering drivers).
 - Close the social protection gap between those who are in the classical employer-employee relationship and those who are self-employed, which is the case for majority of those in the informal economy.

Hilma Mote, ALREI/ITUC-Africa

- When informal workers have to spend time to go to registration offices, especially when offices are far away from their households and workplaces, this inflicts a loss of earnings for them. Instead of expecting informal workers to go to central registration offices, these services should go to them, as it is the case for mobile services.

Social protection and gender gaps

Evelyn Astor, ITUC

- Gender gaps in social protection is a key issue for unions (for more details, see [ITUC Policy Brief: Gender Gaps in Social Protection](#)).
- Main findings: Women have lower coverage and lower benefits levels due to two main drivers Gender inequalities in the labour market:

- Women tend to be lower paid, earning on average 23% less than men, with big variations between countries.
- In comparison to men, women tend to have greater gaps within one's career, which is related to taking a time off or dropping their jobs after having children
- Many women are not able to participate in the labour market at all either because of legal barriers or barriers due to care.
- Significant concentration of women in the informal economy, where workers often do not have the possibility of making social security contributions. Women are also concentrated in precarious work that is out of the scope of social protection coverage or are unable to fulfil contribution requirements.

The design of social protection systems:

- Social protection systems tend to be gender-blind. Cisgender women tend to live longer than men, but social protection systems do not have adequate indexation mechanisms in place, their benefits overtime lose value (especially pension, which can lead to poverty in old age).
- There are differentiated retirement ages and contribution requirements, which tend to disadvantage women.
- When women take a parental leave, this period is not adequately credited.
- Key policy recommendations to reduce these gaps:
 - Measures to reduce gaps in the labour market, including measures to tackle the pay gap; adequate equal pay legislation; anti-discrimination measures; and adequate wage-setting mechanisms (including minimum wage and collective bargaining)
 - Specific measures within the social protection system are necessary to mitigate gender gaps, including complementing contributory systems with non-contributory systems, which women tend to rely on more; having in place SPFs in addition to social insurance; making sure that women have comparable conditions to men in making contributions, including during periods of care; making sure that benefits are indexed; and strengthening survivors and maternity benefits, which have been under attack under many fiscal consolidation and austerity measures.
- How do we use this brief? The UN Commission on the Status of Women has dedicated the 2019 meeting to gender gaps in social protection and we prepared two statements, and we hope we can influence the Commission on this matter.
 - We worked with other global unions to prepare a statement ([click here](#)) setting out what unions are calling for to reduce gender gaps in social protection, around quality, public services (e.g. child care), measures to improve women's situation in the labour market, and adequate SPFs.
 - The Global Coalition on SPFs also prepared a statement ([click here](#)).

Damaris Muhika, COTU (Kenya)

- Social protection in Kenya follows a life-cycle approach:
 - Children: safety nets, maternity services in public facilities, free education, school feeding programs in arid and semi-arid areas, and cash transfer for vulnerable children (2 dollars per children).
 - Working age: the National Social Security Provident Fund (contributory scheme, 4 million people covered). Cash transfer for severely disabled persons.
 - Old age: old age pension scheme (pilot).
 - Healthcare (7 million coverage), and a universal health coverage recently introduced (in pilot phase)
- Proposals: universal child grant, universal old age pension, universal severe disability grant, affordable housing.
- Gender gaps in social protection in Kenya: low coverage rate of informal sector workers when it comes to health and old age benefits, and lack of maternity benefits. These problems are related to issues of affordability and sustainability of the National Social Security Fund (high administrative costs of the system). Social protection is currently not well coordinated. There is lobbying for the development of a single registry.

Discussion

Melder Ogutu, UKCS (Kenya)

- The government of Kenya is trying to impose the housing scheme on workers instead of conducting adequate social dialogue.
- On health: contribution rates are too high for workers in the informal sector to participate in the scheme. In addition to that, the services provided are not yet up to a good standard.
- On social assistance: as the current scheme is a pilot, not everybody is benefitting from it. There are people who should benefit, but are not because of the selection criteria.

Olsen Kahiriri, NAFPU (Namibia)

- Women's participation in competitions is increasing in the sports sector.
- However, when it comes to discrimination against women, there are still many challenges, especially when women play for national teams or leagues. Women are not treated equally, they find multiple obstacles and are often victims of abuse. Another serious challenge for women in sports concerns social protection, especially considering that workers in this sector have usually around a 10-year engagement at a professional level.
- As a federation, our union has done research on social protection, and we are doing advocacy work for the government to adopt measures to address gender gaps in social protection for women working in the sports sector.

Austerity and social security reforms and outcomes of the ITUC global conference on financing social protection

Isabel Ortiz, ILO/SOCPRO

- With regards to social protection, we live in a contradictory world, with different trends:
 - Many countries making enormous progress in the extension of social protection.
 - Austerity, contraction and cuts in a significant number of countries: 124 countries (81 of them in the developing world) are cutting public expenditures (including health, education, and social protection).
 - 107 countries are targeting social protection schemes
 - 105 countries are doing pension reforms
 - 89 countries are making labour reforms (regulation reforms)
 - 56 countries are doing healthcare reforms
- The importance of being alert and protest against austerity, as there are other sources of fiscal space to finance social protection. Austerity should be the last avenue.
- Without popular reaction, these reforms, which are usually done by the Ministry of Finance under the advice of the IMF, will be carried out. These measures prioritize the containment of the fiscal deficit and lower inflation over the investment on people, which is unacceptable. These reforms constitute large adjustments, going against ILO standards. They are taking place in a context where wages are not increasing, in a time of huge deterioration of the labour share (wages and social protection).
- Cuts in employers' contributions to social security have also been proposed by the IMF, going completely against international labour standards. Countries should commit to solidarity financing and contributions should be made both by employers and workers.
- The best avenue to fight austerity is through national dialogue, which allows that these issues are made public and also offer a space to explore other financial avenues to safeguard social protection. Fiscal space exist even in the poorest countries.
- Relevant resources:
 - [Fiscal Space for Social Protection and the SDGs: Options to Expand Social Investments in 187 Countries](#)
 - [The Decade of Adjustment: A Review of Austerity Trends 2010-2020 in 187 Countries](#)

Evelyn Astor, ITUC

- There is a serious problem with global coherence when it comes to social protection. On the one hand, we have the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), issued 6 year ago unanimously. We have a SDG target (1.3) to extend social protection coverage. And yet governments are retrenching due to the pressure of international financial institutions (IFIs) under the rationale that there is no fiscal space for social protection.
- This is the reason why we organized a conference on financing social protection last month to discuss on what is needed to ensure fiscal space for social protection.
Objectives of the conference:
 - To identify problems around financing, and work towards identifying solutions.
 - For unions to define priorities for campaigning and advocacy around the financing question.
- Conclusions:
 - There are tools that unions and civil society organizations can use to estimate how much it costs to implement a SPF, such as the [ILO SPF cost calculator](#) and [FES SPFs Index](#).
 - FES index shows that 71 countries could achieve SPFs by investing 2% of their GDPs or less.
 - In terms of global aggregates: 0.23% of the global GDP would be enough to provide social protection for the whole world.
 - According to the IFM, 10% of global GDP is held in tax heavens.
 - Governments have to put their priorities in order. The question should not be whether or not they should finance social protection, but how they will come up with the revenue.
 - Unions called for progressive taxation, tackling tax evasion/avoidance. In Africa, more money is being lost in terms of tax avoidance-evasion than money coming in. In Georgia, despite huge deficiencies in the current social protection system, the constitution has been amended in order to refuse further increases in tax revenue.
 - Employers also have to give their fair share in terms of contributions. Romania is setting a worrying example: employers' contributions were almost completely eradicated, and workers' contributions have increased dramatically.
 - It is important for unions to push back against these trends and call for widespread extensions using the tools available.
- Follow up of the conference: we will put together a report highlighting unions' priorities on social protection financing, main messages, what kind of work unions might want to do (seminars, research, advocacy work within international fora, etc.).

Discussion

Bart Verstraeten, WSM

- One important aspect of the conference on social protection financing: the need for strategic alliances. FES, WSM and ITUC did the conference together, showing a strong signal that if we want to move this agenda further we should build on our strategic strengths.
- We should also work at the national level to bring constituents together and build capacity of the ministries affected by austerity measures. Social protection is often fragmented across several ministries. We should build capacities of each ministry and help governments to formulate a comprehensive social protection policy.

Isabel Ortiz, ILO/SOCPRO

- Sectors that are less vocal are the most susceptible to be cut. IFIs see social spending simply as a fiscal cost, rather than an investment.
- There are more pressures to keep education or health, so we have to be vocal to defend social protection.

Evelyn Astor, ITUC

- How to finance social protection extensions including those in the informal economy? Policy makers often claim that extensions are costly, but there are very positive examples showing how informal

economy workers can actually strengthen the contribution base of social protection systems, supporting financing. Unions and CSOs can help facilitate these extensions.

Stocktaking of recent union activities

Workers' organizations activities: negotiations, campaigns, research

Ath Thorn, CLC (Cambodia)

- Cambodia doesn't have yet universal social protection, and we have many challenges in the field of social protection.
- The country has elaborated a Law on social protection in 2002. But the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) has not yet been ratified.
- In 2018, the government implemented a health care system covering 1.5 mi workers (only private sector).
- A plan is being developed for a pension scheme in 2019.
- As a union, we've done research on health-related risks, access and quality of healthcare.
- We are calling for a national social protection policy to change the existing social protection law and extend the coverage to all, and not only private sector workers.

Guillermo Zuccotti, CGT-RA (Argentina)

- The main challenge in the Latin American region concerns social protection financing. Adjustment policies are widespread.
- Although we have an international consensus enshrined in the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), the economic order forces governments to follow contradictory economic policies that lead to recession, adjustment measures and poverty for people.
- There are two main drivers for financing social security schemes: the contributory component, and the fiscal space.
- The economic order obliges governments to reduce cost of labour cost and benefits, affecting the contributory scheme. But this can be compensated with the fiscal space for social protection.
- Argentina signed a memorandum with the IMF obliging the government to reduce the fiscal gap and the public deficit.
- The government is reducing the financing for social protection, but that is a schizophrenic decision. If we want to improve our countries' development, we need to build the diversification of the production methods, we have to fight precarious work, promote decent work and support those working in non-standards forms of employment, we have to face the tax reform with progressive taxation, and we have to fight fiscal evasion and fraud.

Presentation of the forthcoming FES "Civil Society and Trade Union Guide to Social Protection Floors"

Sarah Ganter, FES

- The upcoming publication "Civil Society and Trade Union Guide to Social Protection Floors" is an update of the [existing guide](#).
- The objective of the guide is to translate global commitments in the field of social protection into concrete actions.
- The guide was developed towards strengthening the role of CSOs and trade unions in the design and implementation of effective social protection systems, the coordination between these two actors, and also to provide these actors with instruments to hold governments accountable to provide social protection for all.

- This update highlights the key role of trade unions and how they can join forces with CSOs for advocating for SPFs.
 - Trade unions are not only important actors for advocating for SPFs because of their experience in dealing with social security, but they also have strategic advantages compared to CSOs.
 - Trade unions have privileged status in negotiating national labour and social security reforms.
 - Trade unions are part of the tripartite governing model of the ILO, and they can be present in settings where CSOs cannot be fully part.
 - Trade unions can use their access to certain spaces to introduce the joint agenda between CSOs and trade unions, using their membership to invite CSOs to national fora.
 - Trade unions have a lot of experience in training and developing training materials, focusing on people on vulnerable conditions.
- CSOs on the other hand are more effective in other settings:
 - Generating visibility and pressure from the public.
 - CSOs are present at other organizations, such as the Human Rights Council.
- The link between CSOs and trade unions becomes more important when it comes to informality, as CSOs make a robust work in this field.
- The guide also gives a general overview on the concept of SPFs, it discusses how to set up a national dialogue, gives concrete examples of advocacy work, explains decision-making processes in social protection, and orients how to identify target audiences and how to develop policy messages in SPFs.

ILO activities and next steps for the Workers Network

[The General Survey on Social Protection Floors: Unions' responses to the general survey and the process going forward](#)

Evelyn Astor, ITUC

- In 2017, the ILO submitted a questionnaire (the General Survey, GS) to governments concerning the implementation of the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202). Employers and workers were also invited to send their comments.
- There were many contributions from unions on how this instrument has been implemented or not, financing challenges, and coverage gaps.
- The ITUC sent a consolidated union response from regional confederations for a more global perspective on the implementation of the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).
- Summary of the response:
 - Despite important achievements in recent years following the adoption of the instrument, social protection coverage remains low internationally, with less than 30% with access to comprehensive systems.
 - Substantial gaps for women, informal workers, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities.
 - Concerns on the retrenchment of social protection in some countries: reductions in benefit levels and coverage as part of austerity reforms.
 - A call for more global coherence: some IFIs are pushing for a retrenchment of social protection. Nevertheless, governments and the international community have agreed on international commitments for extending social protection systems and floors. The end result of these retrenchments is greater poverty and inequality, substantial threats when it comes to sustainable and inclusive economic growth, questions about the effectiveness of automatic stabilizers, and challenges for sustained aggregate demand during crisis when benefit levels have been cut so substantially.
- Regarding the evaluation of existing international labour standards in social protection

- The Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) and other existing ILO standards in the area of social security set out a very good framework for adequate social protection systems.
- These instruments are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and we would be against any cut backs of existing instruments.
- We think that it is important to work more closely with governments and the ILO towards the ratification of existing social security standards, and the implementation of Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202).
- More ILO technical assistance is necessary to help ratify existing instruments, more awareness raising activities in social protection, and more organized dialogues between governments and social partners.
- It would be interesting to get feedback now from the ILO on the way forward, and when the committee of experts should be evaluating all the replies to the General Survey. We hope our concerns are taken into account and are reflected in the report.
- There will be a debate at the ILC on this topic next year. Unions should prepare for these discussions and the ITUC will be of assistance.

Kroum Markov, ILO/SOCPRO

- What are the General Surveys on the application of instruments of the ILO, and why are they an important element for the ILO?
- The GS sets the stage on how the standards that are adopted by the ILC are implemented worldwide.
- The GS is based on constitutional provisions within the ILO constitution, which allows the GB to select instruments and ask countries on the level of implementation of these instruments.
- The selection of Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) is a very important statement, because it was adopted just six years ago. Normally, an instrument this recent is not considered ripe enough to be subject of a GS, but in this particular case the entire GB considered that this topic was of utmost importance, selecting it to carry out the GS.
- The questionnaire was sent 1 year ago to countries, workers' and employers' organizations. The response rate has been good, with more than 110 governments replying. With regards to unions, more than 30 have replied, in addition to ITUC.
- The GS addresses the substance in terms of implementation: barriers, lack of coordination, fragmentation of social protection systems, lack of resources, informality, and lack of data.
- The data submitted by constituents is to be examined by the Commission of Experts in November and December. A report will be adopted in the end of the session, and it will be made public in February for discussion of the Committee of application of standards in 2019.
- The second recurrent global discussion on social protection will be held in 2020, and this report will be serving as food for thought for the next steps regarding SPFs.
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Discussion

Melder Ogutu, UKCS (Kenya)

- Our union works with the formal sector in Kenya (civil servants). We are working with the government with regards to ILO social security standards. The main problem we have at the national level concerns a legal implementation deficit. Although legal instruments exist, they are not always implemented.

Rafael Peels, ILO/ACTRAV

- What will be done with the data of the GS? Is there any concrete activity stemming from the GS that could benefit workers?
- What about employers' responses?

Kroum Markov, ILO/SOCPRO

- The most efficient use that can be made of this information is to explore the data that will be available once the report is published.
- The response rate for employers was lower (15 contributions), and the reply from IOE was received not so long ago.
- The ILO is actively engaged in promoting the ratification of ILO Social Security Standards. We have a campaign in the Social Protection Department for the ratification of the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) and other social security conventions. We are developing a tool on "ratify and apply," which is a pedagogical tool for union members that allows a better understanding of the social security standards in terms of qualitative and quantitative benchmarks. We hope that people will take ownership of the standards as concrete entitlements from a rights-based perspective.

Engaging workers' organizations in promoting and building social protection systems and floors (DWCPs, ILO centenary and the Global Commission on the Future of Work)

Karuna Pal, ILO/SOCPRO

- The involvement of unions is very important for the achievement of the extension of social protection. ILO's mandate in social protection highlights national dialogue as necessary in the development and maintenance of social security systems including floors.
- We have several social security standards that call for the participation of workers' and employers' organizations in the management of social security, including the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), which highlights the participation of social partners as key in every stage of development of SPFs, as well as in the extension strategies. This instrument also calls for wide consultation of relevant social partners.
- The importance of social dialogue is clearly reflected in our strategy and on Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP). DWCPs are the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to countries, and social dialogue is a central part of the planning and implementation. Whenever social protection is present in DWCPs, we ensure that effective social dialogue is present in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of social protection systems and floors through national consultations.
- We built a tool to mainstream social dialogue in our advisory work: the [Assessment Based National Dialogue \(ABND\)](#). It translates into many actions: involving all stakeholders to ensure that there is a preliminary diagnosis, identification of gaps, definition of national priorities, and estimation of costs.
- The future of work: the world of work is changing and social protection has to adapt to changing employment relations, digitalization, and the GIG economy. This was highlighted in the latest edition of the [World Social Protection Report 2017-2019](#). One of the initiatives of [the ILO Centenary](#) is on the future of work. A high level global commission has been convened to work on analysing this issue and a report will be published in January 2019.
- Workers' organizations have to be present in global, regional and national debates to define their priorities in social protection.
- Centenary celebrations: workers are also invited to participate. Different means of taking action in the framework of the [100 years of social protection with the ILO](#):
 - Social media campaign.
 - Exhibition on "100 years of social protection."
 - Testimonies ("100 voices for social protection").
 - The "ratify and apply" tool.
 - A compendium of 100 country cases.
 - National, regional and global events that will culminate in the Global Social Protection Week between 25 and 29 November 2019.

Discussion

Bart Verstraeten, WSM

- Would the network be able to bring stakeholders together physically for exchanges between civil society and unions?
- ABND: sometimes a few unions are not always aware of these processes, so it is important to make sure that all unions of a given country are informed of the existence of an ABND exercise whenever it is carried out.

Kroum Markov, ILO/SOCPRO

- As a member of the ILO, each country has the obligation to submit to the national authority the instruments that the ILC adopts. This has to be done within 24 months of the adoption of the instrument. Currently, 81 countries have not yet submitted the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) to their national authorities. The list of submissions is public, and unions are encouraged to check this information and advocate so that their governments submit this instrument to the national parliament.

Evelyn Astor, ITUC

- I agree on the idea of trying to take the Workers Network offline into a physical space at some point, because this would be beneficial in maximizing the amount of exchange between unions. Perhaps the Centenary is an occasion to put something together. There are practical and financial implications, but if there is a discussion going on this would be a great opportunity to bring trade unions' social protection experts to the table.
- Suggestion: regular newsletters in the framework of the Workers Network.
- Support from ITUC and ILO to unions that are fighting against retrenchments and violations of international labour standards. For instance, in Croatia unions organized a protest against pension reforms, and ITUC wrote a letter to the prime minister pointing out that such a decision goes against tripartite regulations.
- There are many ways in which ITUC and ILO can support unions and give international visibility to many issues unions face in countries. Please let us know if you need any practical support.

Conclusions

- Unions engaging in social protection have an opportunity to exchange within this platform. These exchanges will continue to take place through further meetings and through a more regular newsletter. In addition to further discussions online, the ILO and ITUC will also explore together the possibility for holding a workers' network meeting in person.
- The ILO and ITUC are at your service and are interested to learn what is happening on the ground and how they can assist you in their respective capacities.
- The fight is long and difficult but unions have made important achievements in some spaces. At international level, there is increasing international commitment to universality, as social protection is a key commitment in the UN SDGs. The UN Secretary General called for a multi-stakeholder engagement on SDG target 1.3 to work towards the achievement of social protection for all.