Social protection floors (SPFs) guarantee access to health care for all residents and children, and income security along the life cycle. Expanding people’s access to social protection both advances human rights and is a sound economic policy. In Asia and the Pacific, the establishment of SPFs has increasingly been recognized as an efficient approach to reduce vulnerability, inequality, and social exclusion, and as a key element of national development strategies.

Supporting nationally defined SPFs is not the panacea of one single UN agency but requires a joint effort and coordination among UNCTs. It is also a new area of work for many UNCTs requiring the development of new methodologies and tools to aid in the assessment of social protection situations, provide convincing recommendations to governments and other stakeholders, ensure the sustainability of financing, and support the development of innovative implementation strategies and mechanisms.

In the letter addressed to all UN Resident Coordinators and UN country teams, signed 24th March 2014, UNDG Chair Helen Clark and ILO Director-General Guy Ryder encourage UN agencies to maintain momentum behind the establishment of national SPFs and propose five concrete steps to make social protection a reality for all.

The issues brief provides successful examples and tools to support the implementation of the first four steps mentioned in this letter:

- Step 1: Establish national SPF teams;
- Step 2: Conduct national dialogues on social protection;
- Step 3: Provide policy recommendations based on an analysis of needs and gaps;
- Step 4: Promote SPFs as part of the UNDAFs.

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This Issues Brief is based on consultations and inputs from the UNDG A-P Thematic Working Group on Social Protection.

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