

Concept note and agenda

Launch of the ACTRAV Social Protection Resource Package

14 September 2022, 13:30 – 15:30 (CET) Online

1. COVID-19 Pandemic – significant social protection gaps

- Despite progress in recent years in extending social protection in many parts of the world, the COVID-19 crisis has exposed deep-seated inequalities and significant gaps in social protection coverage, comprehensiveness and adequacy across all countries revealing the significant challenges many countries are still facing in making the human right to social security a reality for all. As of 2020, only 46.9 per cent of the global population were effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit, while the remaining 53.1 per cent – as many as 4.1 billion people – were left wholly unprotected.
- With contributory schemes typically limited to those working in the formal sector and non-contributory schemes still mostly targeted on the poorest, informal economy workers, who represent more than 60 per cent of the global workforce, in addition to a growing number of workers in “new” forms of work (such as platform workers) are left without effective coverage.
- There is an enormous push for countries to move to fiscal consolidation after the massive public expenditure of their COVID-19 crisis response measures, but it would be seriously damaging to cut back on social protection. Investment in social protection is required here and now. Building universal, comprehensive, sustainable, and adequate social protection systems requires a mix of financing sources and greater international solidarity, particularly with support for poorer countries.

2. Resolution and conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection ILC 2021 and Global call to action

- Considering the urgency accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Resolution and conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection called upon ILO Member States, with the support of the Organization, to commit with strong political will and through strong social dialogue to build and maintain universal, comprehensive, sustainable, and adequate social protection systems. Complementary to the Resolution and conclusions, the Conference also adopted a Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient, in which Member States committed to achieving universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection pursuant to the vision and principles expressed in ILO up to-date social security standards, including the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), and the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), as well as other relevant standards.
- In particular, the Resolution and conclusions of the ILC 2021 formally call on the ILO to launch a Global Campaign to promote the ratification of ILO's most important social security Convention, Convention No. 102, which was officially launched by ILO's Director General in July 2022.

3. Workers as agents of change

- Workers' organizations have traditionally been agents of change in that domain and again they should participate effectively in national social protection policy making and reforms. They have a decisive role to play not only in ensuring adequate emergency responses, but also in developing a

longer-term strategy for strengthening their social protection systems and decent work, including by supporting transitions from the informal to the formal economy. Workers' organizations consider the COVID-19 crisis as a wake-up call for contributing to building forward better with a human-centred approach, in line with the priorities set out in the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work, 2019, the Global call to action, the Resolution and conclusions of the ILC 2021 as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The social protection achievements made during the COVID-19 crisis should serve as a stepping-stone for a recovery with adequate and sustainable social protection for all.

4. What do workers need to know?

- While the issues at stake are clear and trade unions have been organizing for policy changes for a long time, it is important to enhance the capacity of workers' representatives to develop comprehensive short, medium and long-term social protection strategies, aiming at finding the fiscal space for social protection and extending coverage to the unprotected population, ensuring sustainability and adequacy of pensions, which are at the heart of any social protection system, as well as ensuring that social protection policies are reinforcing gender equality. Workers' representatives need to know which policy choices exist, how much they cost, what are their implications and how countries in comparable situations overcame related challenges.
- To ensure that national social protection policies and reforms, and their implementation are based on ILO social security standards, and in particular Convention No. 102, workers' representatives need to understand the legal and practical requirements laid down in the Convention, as well as the worldwide social security principles anchored in the Convention.

5. ACTRAV's social protection resource package

- In the light of this, ACTRAV has developed a social protection resource package for workers' organizations, which provides guidance specifically to workers' representatives to contribute to informed and comprehensive policy making and implementation in the defense of workers' rights in the field of social protection. This requires a substantive strategic vision and the ability to negotiate and generate consensus for the transformative changes necessary to fashion a future that guarantees social protection for all.
- The ACTRAV resource package encompasses a Workers' Guide to ILO Conventions concerning minimum standards of social security and a series of policy briefs on "What workers' organizations need to know" addressing a number of key issues in current social protection debates and policy discussions, and providing in particular policy options for closing gender gaps in social protection, extending social protection to informal economy workers, finding fiscal space for social protection financing and implementing adequate pension schemes and reforms. They highlight the challenges countries are facing regarding social protection and how these challenges can be overcome.
 - The brief on Closing gender gaps in social protection provides an overview of the root causes of gender-related social protection gaps and the ILO's strategy for filling them. It offers a wide range of successful examples of gender responsive social protection programmes and reforms from around the world that workers' representatives may use as a reference for promoting gender-responsive social protection policies in respective country.
 - The brief on Extending social protection coverage to informal economy workers aims at helping workers' representatives to better understand the complexity of and the challenges for extending social protection coverage to workers in the informal economy, and the different policy choices which countries have implemented to overcome these challenges.
 - The brief on Creating fiscal space for financing social protection intends to provide workers' representatives with a better understanding of the challenges related to the creation of fiscal space for social protection financing and the different policy options to overcome

these challenges with a view to effectively contributing to policy discussions on mobilizing resources for adequate investments in universal social protection at country level.

- The brief on Pension models worldwide from an ILO perspective evidences that workers' organizations can make a vital contribution to informed discussions on pension reform policies and their implementation at the national level. To that end, they need to know which pension policy options are the best for their country, be aware of the various financing mechanisms and understand the implications of each option for social protection coverage and benefits.
- While the Guide represents the basis for any impactful discussion and reform process on social protection with the participation of social partners, the topics of the policy briefs have been selected for their relevance towards achieving universal, adequate and sustainable social protection, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and in the context of a recovery that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient.
- Ultimately, the ACTRAV resource package aims at supporting workers' organizations to negotiate and champion a job rich, human-centred recovery that is aligned with health, social, environmental and climate change goals, contributes to income security, job creation and social cohesion objectives, expands the tax base and helps to finance universal social protection.

6. Format of the event and logistics

- Participation in the meeting will be remote through Zoom (teleconferencing software), which provides the necessary functionalities for presentations and discussions, as well as simultaneous interpretation services.
- As participants will be attending from various regions around the world, due to time zone differences, the proposed time of the meeting, from 13:30-15:30 (CET), will require some participants to attend the meeting outside of their regular working hours.

7. Agenda

13:30 – 13:35	Welcome of participants and moderation of event ▪ Ursula Kulke, Senior Social Protection Specialist (ACTRAV), ILO
13:35 – 13:50	Introduction and launch of the resource package ▪ Maria Helena Andre, Director, Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), ILO ▪ Shahra Razavi, Director, Social Protection Department (SOCPRO), ILO
13:50 – 14:00	Presentation of the resource package ▪ Greta Cartoceti, Junior Professional Officer (ACTRAV), ILO
14:00-15:00	Importance of the ACTRAV resource package for workers' organizations for contributing to the implementation of the Resolution and conclusions concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection (ILC 2021) ▪ Video message: Magnus Norddahl, Chief Lawyer, Icelandic Confederation of Labour, Workers' Vice Chair of the Committee of the recurrent discussion on social protection (ILC 2021), ILO Governing Body Member, Iceland ILO Conventions concerning minimum standards of social security

	▪ Introduction: Luc Cortebeeck, Former Vice-president and President of the Governing Body of the ILO, Former Member Global Commission Future of Work, Honorary President ACV-CSC Belgium ▪ National experience: Eduardo Ramon Ruiz Fagundez, Workers' Representative, Board of Directors, Social Security Institution (BPS), Uruguay Extending social protection to informal economy workers ▪ Introduction: Zina Nimeh, Associate Professor of Public Policy at UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University, The Netherlands ▪ National experience: Damaris Muhika, Programme Officer, Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU), Kenya Closing gender gaps in social protection ▪ Introduction: Isobel Frye, Executive Director, Social Policy Initiative (SPI), South Africa ▪ National experience: Kohinoor Mahmood, Secretary for Women of the BJSD and President of the BJSD Women's Committee, Bangladesh Financing social protection and creating fiscal space for social protection ▪ Introduction: Helmut Schwarzer, Head, Public Finance, Actuarial and Statistical Services (Social Protection Department), ILO ▪ Regional experience: Eric Manzi, Deputy General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Africa Moderator of this session: Mohammed Mwamadzingo, Manager, Workers' Activities, International Training Centre (ITC), Turin
15:00 – 15:20	Questions and Answers ▪ Moderator: Ursula Kulke, Senior Social Protection Specialist (ACTRAV), ILO
15:20 – 15:30	Closing remarks ▪ Maria Helena Andre, Director, Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), ILO