

Agenda for the 5th meeting of the Social Protection, Freedom and Justice for Workers Network

5 July 2022 – 13:00 -16:30 (CET) Online

A. Background

The [Social Protection, Freedom and Justice for Workers Network](#) was initiated in 2017 by the ILO in cooperation with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). As one of the strategic partnerships of the [ILO's Global Flagship Programme on Building Social Protection Floors for All](#), the network was created to support workers' organizations in the promotion and defence of the right to social security. Through capacity-building, awareness raising and knowledge-sharing, the network intends to strengthen the capacities of workers to defend social protection and meaningfully participate in national dialogues on social protection. Workers' organizations have a decisive role to play in the various dimensions of social protection in the effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1.3 on social protection systems and floors in line with relevant ILO standards. Workers' organizations are also key to safeguard acquired rights that are threatened by inadequate short-term adjustment measures and social security reforms.

The last two years have been particularly challenging for workers around the world, as countries had to face the unprecedented and severe health and socio-economic effects due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to one of the deepest recessions the world has ever witnessed. This crisis has functioned as a wake-up call on the urgency of making progress on the SDGs on social protection for eradicating poverty, achieving universal health coverage (UHC) and making decent work a reality for all. Even prior to the pandemic, the situation of social protection worldwide was already concerning, with more than half of the world's population, or 53 per cent – as many as 4.1 billion people, not being able to enjoy their right to social security at all. The COVID-19 crisis has shed further light on the devastating consequences of these persisting gaps in coverage and adequacy.

The pandemic has also served to remind the international community of the importance of social protection. From its start until May 2022, more than 211 countries and territories around the world have devised over 1,888 measures to contain the challenges posed by the pandemic. On the one hand, governments and social partners have had to quickly respond to the effects of COVID-19 on human health and the increasing strains it has put on national health systems. On the other hand, they have had to address the devastating social and economic consequences of this crisis to rescue struggling businesses and workers who have lost their jobs and are in a situation of income insecurity and deprivation. At the international level, social partners have

been very active in advocating for innovative solutions to support the mobilization of resources to help countries to protect workers, including through the [Call for Action](#) and the establishment of a Global Fund for Social Protection.

In light of the urgency accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic to establish universal, comprehensive, sustainable and adequate social protection systems, the [Resolution and conclusions](#) concerning the second recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of social protection (social security), adopted by the International Labour Conference (ILC) in June 2021, called upon ILO member States to commit with strong political will and through strong social dialogue to progressively and as soon as possible build and maintain universal, comprehensive, sustainable and adequate social protection systems. To achieve a job-rich recovery and a just transition to a sustainable and inclusive economy, the ILO together with the UN has adopted in September 2021 a Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection that would create at least 400 million jobs and extend social protection to 4 billion women, men and children currently without coverage.

On the way to human-centred recovery from COVID-19, Governments, together with social partners, should seize this moment to strengthen their social protection systems, including floors, as a cornerstone of the national social and economic architecture. The creation of fiscal space to finance social protection is a critical aspect of the recovery strategy. Social dialogue and consultations with social partners and other stakeholders are particularly important for coordinated policy responses. As the prolonged COVID-19 crisis continues, and as countries start to emerge from it, and as pressures increase to reduce spending and put in place austerity measures, it will be crucial for workers' representatives to be actively engaged and consulted to ensure that they can effectively shape potential reform measures to safeguard social outcomes. Workers' organizations are not passive bystanders, but agents of change that can develop new pathways for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient and in line with the priorities set out in the [ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work](#), the [Global call to action](#) as well as in the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

This meeting will offer an opportunity to share information with the network, exchange experiences, and discuss regional and national perspectives, challenges and opportunities to progressively achieving universal social protection in the context of transformations in the world of work.

B. Objectives

- ▶ To share information with the network, exchange experiences, and discuss regional and national perspectives, challenges and opportunities to build resilience in light of the COVID-19 crisis and progressively achieve universal social protection in the context of transformations in the world of work, with particular emphasis on:
 - Extending social protection coverage to those in the informal economy;
 - Finding the fiscal space for social protection; and
 - Closing gender gaps in social protection.
- ▶ To discuss trade union advocacy strategies for social protection at the international, regional and national level.

- ▶ Discuss current ILO activities to support the extension and strengthening of social protection systems and to receive feedback from workers' organisations.

C. Logistics

As participants will be attending from various regions around the world, due to time zone differences, the proposed time of the meeting, from 13:00-16:30 (CET), will require some participants to attend the meeting outside of their regular working hours.

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.

D. Agenda

<p>13.00 – 13.20</p>	<p>Introduction and opening remarks</p> <p>Shahra Razavi, Director, Social Protection Department (SOCPRO), ILO Maria Helena Andre, Director, Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV), ILO Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, ITUC</p>
<p>13.20 – 15.50</p> <p>13.20 – 14.05 (Session 1)</p> <p>14.05 – 14.50 (Session 2)</p>	<p>Thematic sessions: Roundtables</p> <p>1. Social protection's role in closing gender gaps (SDGs 1, 3, 5, 8 and 10) Rose Mary Rodriguez Bustos, Gender Secretary, CTRN Costa Rica Damaris Muhika, Programme Officer for COTU Kenya Vicki Smallman, Director of Women's and Human Rights, CLC Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion with participation of the Social Protection Department (SOCPRO) <p>Chair: Beatrice di Padua, Project Officer Economic Justice, ITUC</p> <p>Background documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACTRAV Policy Brief "Filling gender gaps in social protection: What workers' organizations need to know" - ITUC Policy brief Gender gaps in social protection <hr/> <p>2. Extending social protection coverage to those in the informal economy (SDGs 1, 3, 5, 8 and 10) Boitumelo Molete, Development Coordinator, COSATU South Africa Reema Nanavaty, Executive Director, SEWA India Francisca Jiménez, CASC Dominican Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion with participation of the Social Protection Department SOCPRO <p>Chair: Ursula Kulke, Senior Social Protection Specialist, ACTRAV</p>

<p>14.50 – 15.05 (Break)</p> <p>15.05 – 15.50 (Session 3)</p>	<p>Background documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACTRAV Policy Brief “Extending social protection coverage to informal economy workers: What workers’ organizations need to know” - ILO Guide “Extending Social Security Coverage to Workers in the Informal Economy: Lessons from International Experience”– and related Policy Resource Package <hr/> <p>3. Financing social protection: domestic resource mobilisation, international cooperation</p> <p>Chris Serroyen, Head of the Study Department, AVC-CSC Belgium Nicole Anne Parreño, Policy and Advocacy Officer, TUCP Philippines Eric Manzi, Deputy General Secretary, ITUC Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion with participation of the Social Protection Department SOCPRO <p>Chair: Evelyn Astor, Economic and Social Policy Advisor, ITUC</p> <p>Background documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACTRAV Policy Brief “Creating fiscal space for financing social protection: What workers’ organizations need to know” - ITUC Reports: Investments in social protection and their impact on economic growth: tax financing options and Expanding social protection and closing financing gaps: A selection of country case studies - ILO Working papers: Investing better in universal social protection and Financing gaps in social protection
<p>15.50 – 16.20</p>	<p>Update from the ILO on ongoing social protection activities</p> <p>Update on ILO Plan of Action following 2021 ILC Conclusions, Ratification Campaign C102, Global Accelerator, ILO-IMF collaboration, and Global Flagship Programme: Building social protection floors for all</p> <p>Karuna Pal, Christina Behrendt: update on the ILO Plan of Action Kroum Markov, Maya Stern Plaza: Ratification Campaign C102 Shahra Razavi, Valerie Schmitt and James Canonge: Global Accelerator Helmut Schwarzer: ILO-IMF collaboration Valerie Schmitt: Global Flagship programme including project on social dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q&A
<p>16.20 – 16.30</p>	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>Alison Tate, Director, Economic and Social Policy Department, ITUC Shahra Razavi, Director, Social Protection Department (SOCPRO), ILO Maria Helena Andre, Director, Bureau for Workers’ Activities (ACTRAV), ILO</p>