

# **Civil Society Call** for a **Global Fund for Social Protection** to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and to build a better future

*We, civil society and faith-based organizations, trade unions and members of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors, in view of the global harm from the COVID-19 pandemic, call on governments worldwide to ensure – through national and global solidarity – that national social protection floors are made available to all people with the help of a **Global Fund for Social Protection**. National floors of social protection are vital to leave no one behind. They ensure universal access to essential health care as well as basic income security across the life course.*

## **We recall that**

- The member states of the United Nations have long agreed on the fundamental human rights of all people to social protection and to health;<sup>1</sup>
- Despite this, more than two thirds of the world's population are still denied the right to comprehensive social protection;
- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people without protection is increasing significantly, with the number of people that are food insecure alone projected to double to a quarter of a billion this year;
- Social protection systems are a proven direct and fast-acting mechanism that reduce and prevent poverty, help counter inequality, and can unleash the creativity and productive capacity of people by providing a basic level of security that ensures dignity and access to all essential goods and public services;
- Social protection is a vital investment in socio-economic development and in resilience in view of natural and climate disasters, economic and other humanitarian crises;
- Social protection systems offer highly effective safeguards against the social and economic fallout of the present and future health and socio-economic crises; and

- Many studies have shown that ensuring a basic level of social protection for all is affordable for most countries and entirely achievable through the solidarity of the international community.

## **We recognize, that**

- Many national governments develop, implement and monitor social protection floors, with the participation of civil society, trade unions and informal worker organizations;
- Generally and principally the financing of social protection systems must fall to national budgets;
- There are, nevertheless, a few countries where technical support for the setting-up of national social protection floors and co-financing from the international community are required due to multiple factors, including high socio-economic vulnerability and persistent low levels of national revenue;
- Based on conditions in the pre-COVID-19 era, some 10 to 15 countries have social protection financing gaps amounting to more than 10 per cent of their GDP, and require temporary international co-financing of minimum social protection floors, while they strengthen domestic resource mobilisation.

<sup>1</sup> As enshrined, for example, in articles 22 and 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), articles 9 and 12 of the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), ILO Recommendation 202 (2012) as well as other instruments and confirmed by the Sustainable Development Goals (2015).

## We call on all governments

- **To create a Global Fund for Social Protection**, based on the principle of global solidarity, to support countries to design, implement and, in specific cases, provide temporary co-financing for national social protection floors. The mandate of the Fund would be to:
  - Support the introduction or finalization of national social protection floors with the full participation of people of all ages, including women, people with disabilities, minorities, and those living in poverty in their design, implementation and monitoring;
  - Ensure that national social protection floors are prepared for sustainability and for expansion in the event of shocks that affect entire communities;
  - Co-finance – on a transitional basis – the costs of setting up social protection floors in low-income countries where such transfers would otherwise require a prohibitively high share of the country's total tax revenue;
  - Support the strengthening of domestic resource mobilisation, including international tax regulation, to underpin the future sustainability of national social protection systems;
  - Offer additional support for specific shock-responsive social protection interventions in countries where floors have not yet been established.

## We envisage, that

- The Global Fund for Social Protection would:
  - Be governed by a board, representative of both recipient and donor states, civil society organizations, trade unions and informal workers organisations in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and ILO Recommendation R204 (2015);
  - Be governed by the principles of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, notably the respect for country ownership, national financial co-responsibility and the necessary support for national systems;
  - Operate under the principles of accountability, transparency and participation;
  - Be financed through a combination of different sources such as:
    - Representing a greater focus of existing international development aid resources and development finance facilities;
    - Specifically earmarked sources, such as national, regional or global financial transaction taxes (FTT), an arms trade tax, carbon taxes, air ticket solidarity levies, and levies on profits;
    - Increased development aid, multilateral grants and funds for emergency response;
    - Voluntary contributions of individuals and other donors.
- UN organizations and development and humanitarian aid organizations, including civil society active in the countries of focus will deliver technical country support.

## We therefore call on all governments

***To establish a Global Fund for Social Protection that will help bring an end to avoidable human suffering, poverty, extreme inequality, ill-health and avoidable deaths associated with the current and future crises, and for them to invest in the development of national social protection floors in all countries through the principle of national and global solidarity.***



Global Coalition for  
**SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS**