

Overarching Strategies on Social Protection

- **Using a rights-based approach through the promotion of international labour standards**

International labour standards establish the “rules” – the regulatory framework of social protection. They act as a compass providing guidance on “what ought to be” and what “ought to be done”. They constitute the ethical framework in promoting national policies and workplace conditions. More than half of ILO international labour standards are on social protection.

- **Using social dialogue to deliver and strengthen social protection**

Social protection policies are likely to be effective if tripartite constituents jointly define problems, develop solutions and set realistic timetables. In cases when the economic climate reduces resources available for social protection, a national policy developed through tripartism and social dialogue becomes even more useful. Government action and dialogue and negotiations between the social partners play an important role in determining wage policies and the minimum wage, working hours, and the cost, financing modes, and level and type of social security benefits.

Whether social protection issues are regulated mainly by legislation, mainly by collective agreements, or a combination of the two, it is essential to strengthen the capacity of governments, employers' and worker' organizations to play their roles fully.

- **Mainstreaming gender equality**

Gender equality is a cornerstone of social protection. Protection from discrimination in access to and at work, as well as meeting specific needs of women, is combined with proactive ways to promote gender equality. Helping men and women balance their work and family life is a crucial step to meet the combined challenges of gender equality, low employment rates and demographic ageing.



Social protection - The importance of a comprehensive approach

Social protection as a goal in its own right

Social protection reflects the objectives and values enshrined in the ILO's Constitution and the Declaration of Philadelphia. It is key in promoting equity and social justice. For many workers and their families, social protection reflects the reality of decent work in their day-to-day lives.

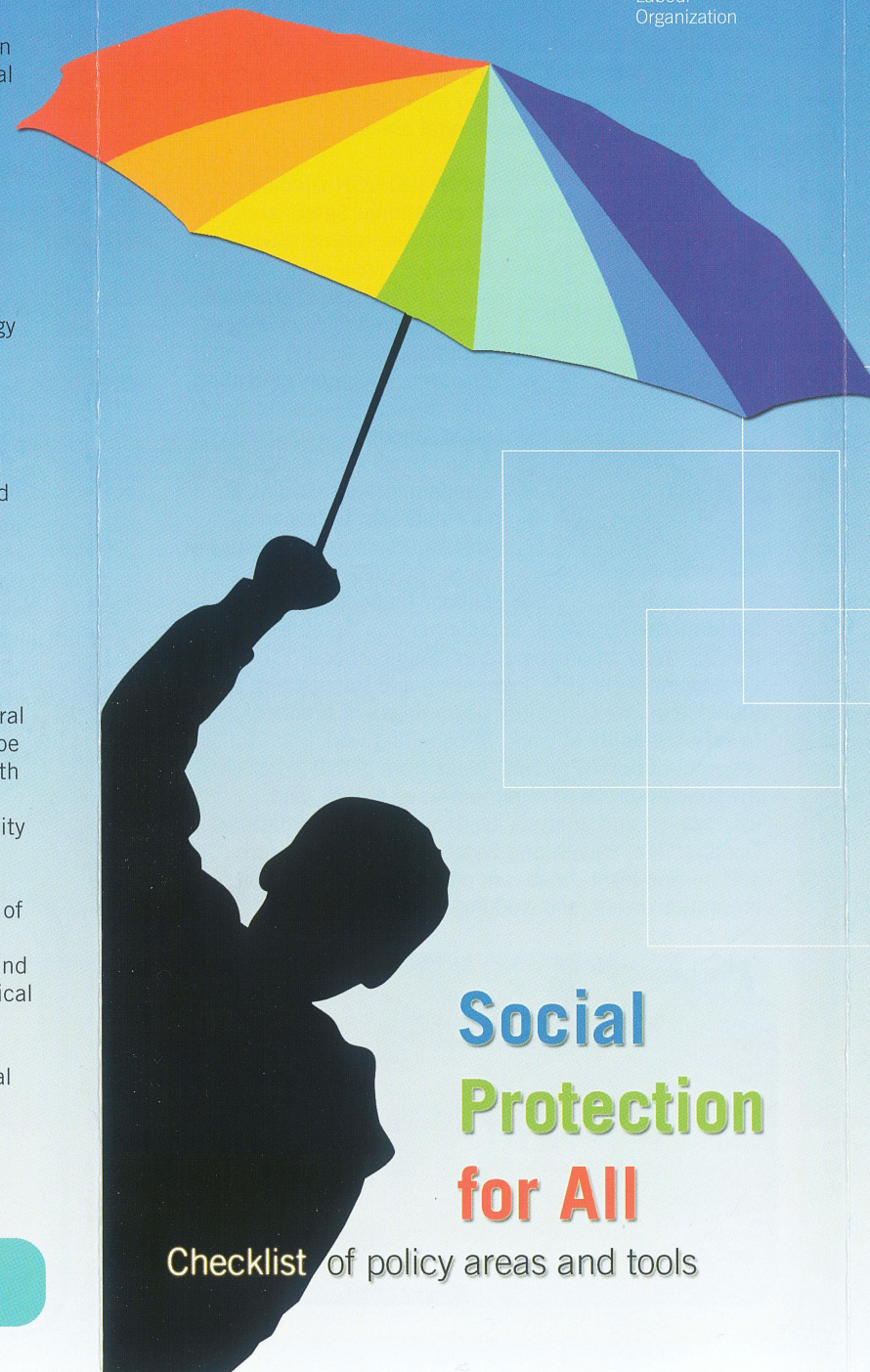
Social protection as an instrument to achieve other goals

- **Employment and productivity** – The ILO's Global Employment Agenda draws attention to the synergy between social protection and employment and productivity.
- **Poverty reduction** – Social protection contributes towards reducing the vulnerability of the poor and the excluded, extending opportunities to them and protecting them from discrimination. It helps people not only to escape from poverty but also provides safeguards against falling into poverty. Social protection is an integral component of Poverty Reduction Strategies in many countries.
- **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** – Social protection contributes to the achievement of several MDGs. Social security, by ensuring income to cope with illness, disability, old age and access to health care, contributes to MDG1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Initiatives concerning maternity protection and access to social security benefits contribute to MDG 5 – Improve maternal health. The ILO's Programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work contributes to MDG 6 – Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Occupational safety and health policies and instruments such as on chemical safety, major hazards control, and the working environment (air pollution, noise and vibration) contribute towards MDG 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability.

Social Protection website:
www.ilo.org/public/english/protection



International
Labour
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Social Protection for All

Checklist of policy areas and tools

“The goals and objectives of social development require continuous efforts to reduce and eliminate major sources of social distress and instability for the family and society. We pledge to place particular focus on and give priority attention to the fight against worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the health, safety, peace, security and well-being of people.”

World Summit for Social Development

Many countries have made tremendous strides in enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of social protection. Despite the progress, for millions of workers and their families social protection is still a dream. Today,

- **Only one in five people** in the world has adequate social security coverage
- **1.3 billion people**, according to WHO statistics, do not have access to effective and affordable health care if they need it
- Over **80 per cent** of the estimated 40 million people with HIV are of working age (15-49 years)
- About **2.2 million people** die every year from occupational accidents and diseases, **270 million** are injured, and **160 million** suffer from work-related diseases
- About **1.4 billion** workers, nearly half of the world's workers, are unable to earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US\$2 a day poverty line
- Of the approximately **95 million** migrant workers worldwide, many are relegated to the “three D” – dirty, dangerous and degrading – jobs that national workers shun. Men and women who enter or work in a host country illegally – some 15 per cent - are exposed to high levels of exploitation and abuse of human rights.
- The informal economy is growing, accounting for up to **80 per cent** of the working population in some countries. The lack of social protection is a “key defining characteristic” of the informal economy (2002 ILC Report entitled *Decent work and the informal economy*.)

Social protection is an essential element of the ILO's promotion of social justice and one of the pillars of its Decent Work Agenda.

The ILO's Social Protection Sector has a comprehensive programme to promote Decent Work, especially within the framework of Decent Work Country Programmes. A wide range of policy areas are addressed and an arsenal of tools has been developed covering policy advice, advocacy, training materials, examples of good practice, country profiles, databases and internet learning platforms. This Checklist is a quick reference guide to key policy areas and tools. It provides insights for mapping out and developing social protection components of DWCPs, and can be adapted to countries' specific needs and conditions.

The ILO's Social Protection Programme consists of the following major technical areas of work: social security, labour protection (occupational safety and health and conditions of work and employment), international labour migration, and HIV/AIDS and the world of work. Special attention is given to extending social protection to workers in the informal economy.

Strengthening and extending social security

Policy areas: Income support in case of poverty and income security in the event of sickness, unemployment, invalidity, work injury, maternity, old age or death of a main provider; insurance and other mechanisms to ensure access to health care; child and family benefit systems; and pension systems.

Tools: integrated policies on social security (financing and governance to improve quality, affordability and delivery); strategies and tools against social exclusion and to eradicate poverty (STEP), ILO standards and design and reform of income security systems, pensions and health care schemes; internet-based learning platforms on social security strategies (GESS), micro-insurance schemes (GIMI) and social exclusion (CIARIS); university (Masters programme) and project-based learning; social security databases and financial, fiscal and actuarial simulations and projections.



Improving safety and health and working conditions

Policy Areas: Workplace safety and health, prevention of and protection from hazardous work, working time, wages and incomes, work – family balance, maternity protection, violence and harassment at work, dignity at work, labour inspection, improving working conditions and occupational safety and health in small and micro-enterprises, including in the informal economy and rural areas.



Tools: ILO-OSH Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems; different codes of practice (e.g. safety in the use of chemicals, notification and recording of occupational accidents and diseases, radiation protection, ship breaking); Combating child labour - A handbook for inspectors; Fundamental principles of Occupational Safety and Health; Psychosocial Issues at Work (SOLVE); Integrated Labour Inspection Training

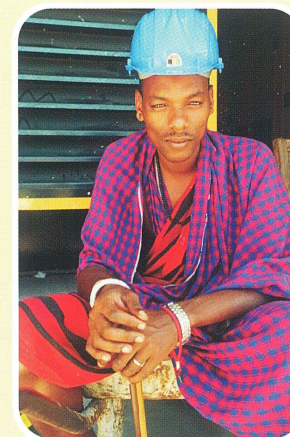
Systems (ILITS); Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE); Work Improvement in Neighborhood Development (WIND); Preventing and Responding to Violence at Work; Healthy beginnings – A practical guide to safe maternity at work; Reconciling work and family responsibilities - Practical ideas from global experience; the fundamentals of minimum wage fixing; and information and analysis available at the International Occupational Health and Safety Information Centre (CIS) and on-line legal databases on maternity protection, minimum wages, and working time.



Promoting protection and decent employment of migrant workers

Policy Areas: Action at the national, regional and international levels in areas of governance and management of labour migration; non-discrimination, protection and integration of migrant workers; research and linkages between employment policies and labour migration.

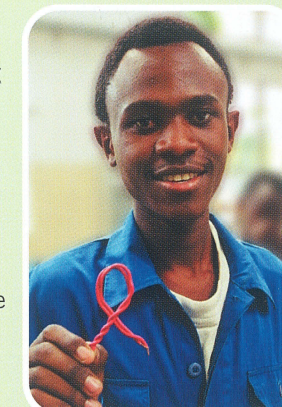
Tools: The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration is used in setting up and formulating effective labour migration policies and institutions in countries of origin and destination. The examples of best practice annexed to the Framework are drawn upon to realize the same objective. The Framework is part of the ILO Plan of Action for Migrant Workers adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2004. Other tools include the handbook on Establishing effective labour migration policies in countries of origin and destination, the handbook on Equality in diversity: Migration and integration; An information guide – Preventing discrimination, exploitation and abuse of women migrant workers; on-line International Labour Migration database covering 86 countries; series of International Migration Papers and Perspectives on International Migration; and a module in household surveys to collect information on international migration.



Strengthening the response to HIV/AIDS through the workplace

Policy Areas: promotion of workplace policies to protect the rights of HIV-affected workers and extension of access to prevention, treatment, care and support for workers and their families.

Tools: The ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work: Implementing the ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work: An education and training manual; Behaviour Change Communication Toolkit for the Workplace; A handbook on HIV/AIDS for labour and factory inspectors; Joint ILO-WHO Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Health Services; Workplace action on HIV/AIDS - Identifying and sharing best practice; Guidelines on addressing HIV/AIDS in the workplace through employment and labour law; Guidelines on HIV/AIDS for small and medium enterprises; Using the ILO Code of Practice – Guidelines for the Transport Sector; Using the ILO Code of Practice and training manual – Guidelines for labour judges and magistrates; workplace component in national AIDS plans; HIV/AIDS and work – Global estimates, impact and response; and on-line database of laws and country profiles.



Protecting workers in the informal economy

Policy areas: Integration of informal economy workers and enterprises into national and local governance systems; prevention and compensation of risks; linkages to poverty reduction strategies; and transition to the formal economy.

Tools: The tools are drawn and adapted from those cited in the major technical areas cited such as STEP, WISE, WIND, and minimum wages in the informal economy; and information on laws concerning domestic workers.

