## social protection floor initiative

DIALOGUE ESSENTIAL SOCIAL TRANSFERS

HEALTH EDUCATION WATER SOCIAL TRANSFERS

LEAD TO THE CHILDREN FAMILY

OLD AGE FOOD WORKER PROTECTION VULNER ABILITY SECURITY

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The **Social Protection Floor** (SPF) emerged in 2009 as a major United Nations response to the global financial crisis and is increasingly recognized as a key **developmental instrument**. The **SPF concept** promotes access to both essential services <u>and</u> social transfers for the poor and the vulnerable.

Availability of essential services: social services should be available everywhere: health care facilities with appropriate staffing, equipment and medicines, schools with teachers and functioning means, employment services, childcare services, decent housing, water and sanitation, etc.



Accessibility of these services by everybody through basic **transfers in cash or in kind**: such as subsidized health insurance, minimum income support to families (through family or child benefits), the working poor (cash transfers and public work programs) and the elderly (minimum pensions).

→ It is a universal basic set of social rights: The package makes social protection a reality. It provides a rights-based, systemic protection against poverty for all residents, especially vulnerable groups like women in the informal economy, ageing women. It is a universal entitlement to protection through a defined basic package for all in need rather than a temporary and residual safety-net.

→ It promotes policy coherence: the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty and vulnerability require integrated and coherent policy approaches around objectives and target groups.

→ It is a floor, not a ceiling! The SPF is based on solidarity principles since basic levels of benefits and services are to be provided by society as a whole to those who, most in need, will use them. It is self-selecting; thus designed in a way to use it if you have nothing else; or "leave" it if you already have access to higher levels of benefits. Therefore, it promotes individual responsibility and is not a "hand-out". By linking the SPF with active labour market policies targeting vulnerable groups, informal economy workers and the self-employed, it facilitates return to employment

→ It is a flexible and adaptable concept: While adopted as a universal concept, the SPF was designed to be shaped within a framework of nationally-specific institutional structures, economic constraints, political dynamics and social aspirations: there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution! Indeed, it is a set of guarantees which allows flexibility as to the



Access for all to a nationally defined set of essential health care services.



All children have income security, at least at the level of the nationally defined poverty line level, through family or/child benefits aimed at facilitating access to nutrition, education and care



All those in active age groups who are unable to earn sufficient income on the labour markets should enjoy a minimum income security.



All residents in old age and people with disabilities have income security at least at the level of the nationally defined poverty line through pensions and disability allowances.

delivery mode and combinations of different systems (universal or targeted benefits, conditional or non-conditional transfers, social insurance etc.) and provides focus on outcomes rather than a list of benefits. It is up to each country to design and implement its strategy to progressively move towards a concrete social protection system by taking rational and evidence-based decisions on priorities.

→ Gradualism and financial sustainability are key! Not all countries can afford to provide full protection for all life's contingencies for all immediately <u>but</u> "Starting from a basic system of social protection can make a huge difference". It can also contribute to social stability and be a major driver of economic development.