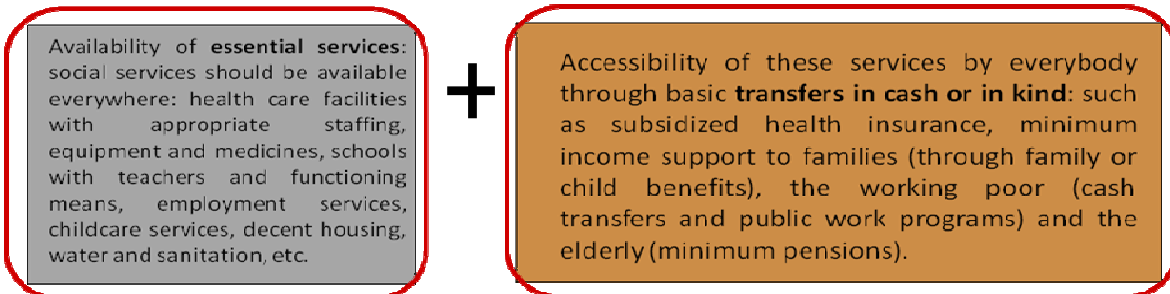




The **Social Protection Floor** (SPF) emerged in 2009 as a major United Nations response to the global financial crisis and is increasingly recognized as a key **developmental instrument**. The **SPF concept** promotes access to both essential services and social transfers for the poor and the vulnerable.



→ **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 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 but “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.

*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.*