

Terms of Reference

Background and Guiding Principles

The concept of Social Protection Floors is expressed in Recommendation 202¹ of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on national floors of social protection. The recommendation was adopted unanimously by ILO member states in 2012. Its core provisions are access to a nationally defined set of goods and services, constituting:

- (1) Essential health care, including maternity care, that meets the criteria of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality;
- (2) Basic income security for children, at least at a nationally defined minimum level, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services;
- (3) Basic income security, at least at a nationally defined minimum level, for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability; and
- (4) Basic income security, at least at a nationally defined minimum level, for older persons.

The recommendation goes on to provide that:

- (1) ILO Member States should formulate and implement national social security extension strategies, based on national consultations through effective social dialogue and social participation, (and that) national strategies should:
 - (a) prioritize the implementation of social protection floors as a starting point for countries that do not have a minimum level of social security guarantees, and as a fundamental element of their national social security systems; and
 - (b) seek to provide higher levels of protection to as many people as possible, reflecting economic and fiscal capacities of Members, and as soon as possible.
- (2) For this purpose, ILO Member states should progressively build and maintain comprehensive and adequate social security systems coherent with national policy objectives and seek to coordinate social security policies with other public policies.

Social protection floors are universal and human rights based. The Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors (GCSPF²) was constituted in June 2012 by NGOs, other CSOs and Trade Unions to promote the implementation of Recommendation 202, as it is a key tool to achieve universal provision of economic and social security through basic guarantees on income and essential social services throughout the life course. These strategies are underpinned by concerted financing commitments, most notably those enshrined in Addis Ababa Action Agenda (e.g., Paragraph 12), to provide coordinated modalities internationally for sustainable national systems. Such guarantees enhance rights, reduce vulnerabilities, risks and deprivation, and support capacities and resilience of all people, particularly those living in poverty / facing multiple deprivations.

The objective of universal, human rights-based, social protection is embedded in numerous international laws and agreements, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the ILO Convention 102 on Social Security, as well as the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation No. 202. The UN Sustainable Development Goals affirm States' commitment to social protection floors. Extending social protection is also a declared objective of the Global Partnership on Universal Social Protection, bringing together the World Bank, ILO, OECD, African Union, IADB and numerous other stakeholders.

¹ http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:3065524

² <http://www.socialprotectionfloorscoalition.org/>

In its work, the GCSPF embraces the principles of inclusivity, solidarity, non-discrimination, gender equality, openness and transparency, fostering a supportive team environment to achieve the shared objectives.

Vision

Promoting the implementation and financing of social protection floors and the extension of social protection to all.

Mission

Working strategically, collaboratively and in a spirit of global solidarity, to provide a space and virtual platform for coalition members united by the common purpose of promoting the establishment and extension of social protection floors and systems.

Goals

- Strategically influence and dialogue with the United Nations, its Specialized Agencies, Member States and civil society working within the remit of various intergovernmental organs to encourage debate and positive action on human rights-based social protection floors and social protection systems through collective actions;
- Coordinate initiatives and activities at all levels, national, regional and international, enhancing the effectiveness of collective political strategy aimed at universal human rights-based social protections floors and social protection;
- Foster the formation of and cooperation between inclusive national and regional coalitions aimed at promoting the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of human rights-based social protection floors and social protections systems;
- Raise the visibility of research by civil society organizations promoting inclusive, rights-based social protection floors and social protection systems to inform national and global policy discussions; and
- Strengthen collaboration between NGOs, civil society organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders to promote human rights-based social protection floors and social protection systems by creating a platform for learning experience and exchanges.

Members/Composition

The GCSPF is constituted by its institutional members, i.e., a range of different organisations - NGOs, other CSOs, networks, movements, think tanks and Trade Unions - which agree to the GCSPF's vision and goals. Individuals with established credentials and experience in the field of social protection may be identified to be invited by the Core Team (see next section) to become "Expert" members³.

All members are invited to contribute to the goals of the GCSPF by engaging in its tasks. These include information sharing, participation in its Working Groups, and the development of position statements, policy papers, publications, media communications and other relevant materials with consent that they be disseminated to all members via the website and e-newsletter.

Organisations interested in joining the GCSPF as institutional members may submit a letter of application to the GCSPF in care of the focal point, who is responsible for informing the Core Team of the application.

The applicant becomes member by the approval of the Core Team. The application is considered adopted in the absence of any explicit reservations or objections by Core Team members communicated to the focal point within ten working days. The focal point informs the applicant and the wider membership and keeps a record of all members.

³ An individual can only be either a Representative of an organization or an "Expert" member.

Membership in the GCSPF constitutes a de facto endorsement of coalition positions unless the member expresses explicit dissent that will be received on a case-by-case basis. Membership in the GCSPF does not, however, constitute an endorsement by the GCSPF of any position that may be taken by the institutional members or by the “Expert” members unless such position is endorsed by the Core Team and meets no objections from the GCSPF. Members who misuse GCSPF endorsement or sponsorship may lose their membership after being heard and a decision taken by consensus by the Core Team members.

Members wishing to withdraw from the GCSPF for any reason may do so at any time by sending a letter to the GCSPF in care of the focal point informing the GCSPF of such decision.

Global focal point and Core Team responsibilities

The GCSPF will operate within a worldwide network structure, without establishing formal headquarters, and supported by a global focal point.

The global focal point is charged by the GCSPF to provide all members with information and support pertinent to the activities of the GCSPF, supports and has oversight of its website, mailing lists and social media, produces the e-newsletter and is an ex officio member of the Core Team.

Coalition members who are qualified and willing to contribute effectively to the realization of the GCSPF’s goals may put themselves forward for membership of the Core Team for a term of three years. For purposes of effectiveness, the Core Team should not exceed thirty coalition members, of which no more than five “Expert” members. The existing Core Team will review new Core Team membership applications annually. Applicants for Core Team membership will need to demonstrate competencies, relevant work in the field of human rights and social protection, and, especially, commitment to engage in coalition activities through its Working Groups.

A diverse, regionally balanced representation in the Core Team is desirable. Core Team membership brings with it an obligation to take an active part in the coalition, to participate in one or more Working Groups according to the member’s particular interest and expertise in a specific social protection theme. Institutional Core Team members should be appointed by their organization and mandated to give sufficient time to the work of the coalition for its effective functioning.

Prospective institutional and Expert members of the Core Team must write to the GCSPF care of the global focal point requesting to become a member with such details included. The Core Team members decide by consensus as to new members joining the team. Core Team members can express their approval in writing to the global focal point or by simply not stating any disapproval within ten working days after having received the member’s proposal to join the Core Team.

In the annual Core Team meetings, two representatives per institutional member can be present, although the number can be increased by agreement of the Core Team members.

Core Team members’ main responsibilities include:

- Active involvement in the work plan and the GCSPF’ Working Groups
- Engagement in actions prepared for the consideration and endorsement by the GCSPF
- Review of all draft documentation that is produced by the GCSPF
- Planning and strategizing for upcoming policy, advocacy and research activities (e.g., in annual meetings or otherwise)

Each member of the Core Team retains the right to leave this team at any time, notably if circumstances prevent their effective involvement in planning and implementation of the GCSPF’s activities. Each Core Team annual meeting shall review the involvement of Core Team members in the key tasks listed above, progress of Working Groups and of any and all other GCSPF products.

All members of the GCSPF are welcome to offer their expertise to the Core Team. To achieve the desired diversity and to strengthen its membership, the Core Team may decide to invite contributions of those institutional and “Expert” members with particular expertise on a specific social protection theme whether or not they are members of the Core Team.

At any time, any organization or individual who is a GCSPF member may apply to become a member of the Core Team by application to the GCSPF in care of the global focal point.

Working Groups

In order to prepare the GCSPF activities and positions, Working Groups of GCSPF members will be established, each group to have at least three members. All members of the GCSPF are invited to take part in the Working Groups on an annual basis. Each Working Group may on a case-by-case decision invite non-GCSPF members to become a member of the Working Group. The Working Groups will make annual plans and report back to the annual Core Team meeting. Working Groups do not have decision-making capacities; outcomes of Working Group meetings should be regularly communicated back to the Core Team, and substantive proposals put forward by Working Groups are subject to endorsement by the Core Team and agreement by the entire coalition.

Decision

A consensus-based decision-making model is the preferred method of work of the GCSPF and of the Core Team. To this end, the GCSPF cannot take fundamental decisions when consensus cannot be reached. Fundamental decisions include, for example, to take on a new policy position, launch a campaign, draft a joint statement or join in as a signatory to a statement, or undertake other major activities intended to engage the Global Coalition.

Agreement on fundamental decisions. In order to take a fundamental decision, information about the issue under consideration will be disseminated electronically by the global focal point on behalf of the GCSPF to all members of the Core Team. The decision is considered adopted with the approval of ten percent (three members) of the members of the Core Team and in the absence of any explicit reservations or objections communicated to the GCSPF of the global focal point within ten working days from circulation of the proposal to the Core Team. In the case of time-sensitive decisions, the deadline may be shortened.

In the case that a member of the Core Team expresses a reservation or objection to an official position/action proposed for the GCSPF, efforts will be made to address the concerns raised. If they cannot be addressed, the dissenting opinion will be recorded. In this case, only those members who would like to support the position/action will be the signatories.

Representation of the coalition

Periodically, the GCSPF will be invited to take part in external conferences, Working Groups, and other fora, and thus a member of the GCSPF may be required to take on the role of representative for the GCSPF. Any request for representation of this kind should be sent to the Core Team for nomination, or approval, of a representative.

When representing the GCSPF, the representative is expected to communicate the views of the coalition and not present divergent positions.

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<http://www.socialprotectionfloorscoalition.org/>