



▶ **Social Protection
Training of
Trainers Toolkit for
the Lao People's
Democratic Republic**

Comprising Training Manual
and Learning Pack

► Foreword

The UN Joint Programme “Leaving no one behind: Establishing the basis for social protection floors in Lao PDR”, financed by the Joint SDG Fund and the Government of Australia, supports the Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic to implement the National Social Protection Strategy 2025 through a two-pronged approach:

- ▶ Developing the building blocks of the national social protection system.
- ▶ Piloting a social assistance programme for pregnant women and new-born children (Mother and Early Childhood Grant, or MECG).

As part of this Programme, the ILO organized a series of training workshops on social protection policy design and implementation for national and provincial authorities across the country. This helped to ensure that national partners responsible for implementing the National Social Protection Strategy understand concepts related to social protection, its importance, impact, the necessity to invest budgetary resources in social protection, and the main areas of work in implementing social protection programmes.

In taking these commitments forward, the ILO also developed the Social Protection Training Toolkit to equip future trainers to facilitate trainings for provincial and local stakeholders on social protection design and implementation. The Toolkit was tested at a workshop in Vang Vieng during 13–17 June 2022, and a group of 26 people – from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, including the Lao Social Security Organization; National Health Insurance Bureau; UNICEF; Oxfam; and civil society organizations – were trained on using it.

► Acknowledgements

The Social Protection Training of Trainers Toolkit for the Lao People's Democratic Republic was developed by Aura Sevilla, Consultant and Lead Training Facilitator at the Vang Vieng workshop.

Overall guidance and technical inputs were provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO) particularly Loveleen De, Social Protection Programme Manager; Thongleck Xiong, National Project Coordinator; Nuno Cunha, Senior Social Protection Specialist; and Khemphone Phaokhamkeo, former ILO Coordinator for the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Valuable inputs were also provided by Maryam Abdu, Chief of Social Policy, UNICEF, and Vilayphong Sisomvang, Director-General of the Department of Planning and International Cooperation, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

The Toolkit was developed under the framework of the UN Joint Programme. The UN gratefully acknowledges the funding provided by the Joint SDG Fund and the Government of Australia.

► About the Toolkit

The Toolkit consists of three parts:

- 1. Training Manual** which is a guide for conducting training sessions/workshops on social protection. It consists of facilitation tools, techniques and instructions as well as handouts to be distributed to participants. It is complemented by the Learning Pack and PowerPoint presentations (PPTs).
- 2. Learning Pack** contains background information on social protection, to equip facilitators to conduct the lectures and discussions. The Learning Pack is mainly for the trainers, but can be distributed to participants after the training has been completed.
- 3. PowerPoint Presentations**, which can be used and adapted by trainers to deliver trainings.

This document comprises the Training Manual and the Learning Pack.

The Toolkit is designed for government officials, especially from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao Social Security Organization, and National Health Insurance Bureau; as well as for academia; civil society organizations; and development partners for their capacity-building activities and advocacy efforts. It is designed so that those who are trained will:

- Understand what social protection is and become familiar with core concepts related to it
- Learn about how social protection programmes can be designed and implemented
- Become familiar with key social protection instruments
- Understand how interventions fit together into a system
- Learn about concepts underpinning social protection programme design
- Strengthen skills and confidence in facilitation to deliver training to others

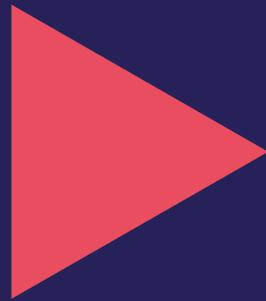
This Toolkit has three modules: Module 1 is a foundational module on Social Protection. Module 2 is on the national social protection framework in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Module 3 is a training of trainers module that strengthens participants' skills and confidence in facilitation.

▶ Target Audience

This Toolkit is designed for the following key target audiences: government officials and staff at both the national and provincial levels; civil society organizations, including membership-based organizations; and development partners. The trainers could either provide ongoing, intermittent training, such as doing it in blocks (for example, two-hour or three-hour sessions), or extended training, such as multi-day intensive training.

Below are the key target audiences and how the trainers can use the training manual (with adaptation):

Target Audience	Purpose/Use of the Training Toolkit	How to Design the Training
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Train provincial authorities to plan for implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) and its social protection schemes 	More technical discussions using the Learning Pack from Modules 1–2; Ongoing, intermittent training of 1–2 days
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adapt to their local/village/community trainings ▶ Increase understanding of local CSO partners/practitioners ▶ Advocacy to campaign for certain rights or certain scheme designs necessary in their localities 	More technical discussions using the Learning Pack from Modules 1–2; Ongoing, intermittent training of 1–2 days
Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use for their capacity-building activities as part of policy design or implementation 	Can be intermittent or multi-day intensive training



Social Protection Training Manual

▶ Session Schedule Overview

The modules and sessions are shown below.

Introductory Session			
35 minutes	10 minutes	Getting to know each other	Activity 1, Handout 1
	25 minutes	Rules and expectations	Activity 2
Module 1: Introduction to Social Protection			
60 minutes	Session 1: Risks and coping mechanisms in communities This session will explore the question of why social protection is so important to Lao people.		
	60 minutes	Mapping the risks and practical solutions in communities	Activity 3, Handout 2
40 minutes	Session 2: Basic concepts of and background on social protection		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explore how social protection can help us meet the needs of Lao people. ▶ Explore what is meant by the term social protection. ▶ Explore what is meant by the life-cycle approach to social protection. 		
	30 minutes	Presentation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Social protection ▶ International standards on social protection and social protection floors ▶ What is the “staircase” approach? ▶ Social protection in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 	
	10 minutes	Jargon busting	Activity 4

65 minutes

Session 3: Existing social protection system in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

This session aims to begin to build a picture of the social protection needs of the country.

20 minutes	Building a picture of social protection in the Lao People's Democratic Republic	Activity 5, Handout 3
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30 minutes	Social protection system in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Based on Assessment-based National Dialogue results and local social protection data)
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15 minutes	Who wants to be a millionaire?	Activity 6
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45 minutes

Session 4: The role of social protection

This session aims to help participants understand why social protection is important.

15 minutes	Myths or facts	Activity 7
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30 minutes	Case study: Child Support Grant in Thailand
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120 minutes

Session 5: Targeting approaches

Learn about key elements of social protection, particularly cash transfers.

60 minutes	Understanding the complexity of targeting	Activity 8, Handout 4
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30 minutes	Lecture on targeting approach and case study on the social pension for indigent senior citizens in the Philippines
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30 minutes	Targeting social protection	Activity 9
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60 minutes

Session 6: Types of social protection

30 minutes	Conditional versus unconditional	Activity 10
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30 minutes	Case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Mother and Early Childhood Grant (MECG);▶ Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme (CCTE)	
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30 minutes

Session 7: Consolidating understanding of social protection

30 minutes	“Skeptics” versus “believers”	Activity 11
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Module 2: National Social Protection Strategy

75 minutes

Session 1: The National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)

Learn about the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

45 minutes	Mapping the NSPS to existing social protection in the province	Activity 12
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30 minutes	Presentation: National Social Protection Strategy (Overview)	
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60 minutes	Session 2: Financing social protection		
	Explore options of financing social protection in other countries, with examples.		
	30 minutes	Lecture on social protection financing	
	30 minutes	Triple "A": Expanding the fiscal envelope	Activity 13, Handout 5

30 minutes	Session 3: Moving forward with the NSPS		
	30 minutes	Implementing the NSPS at the provincial level	Activity 14

Module 3: Facilitation and Preparation

30 minutes	Session 1: Roles of the facilitator
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30 minutes	Session 2: Facilitation techniques
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45 minutes	Session 3: Challenges faced by facilitators
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90 minutes	Session 4: Planning and preparation
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▶ Training Surveys

Training surveys are an indispensable part of running a successful training programme. The pre-training assessment (Annex I) can be administered before or at the start of the training. It will help trainers understand the participants' level of knowledge and what they expect, which can help in planning and taking decisions related to the agenda and content. On the other hand, the post-training evaluation (Annex II) measures the effectiveness of the training programme in improving the participants' knowledge. Furthermore, it can help trainers make improvements and plan for future training programmes by evaluating what worked and what did not.

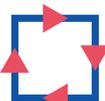
The pre-training assessment is usually administered one month before the training, while the post-training evaluation is administered immediately after the final training session. To facilitate efficient data collection and analysis, tools such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey can be used.

▶ Pre-Training Checklist

Successful training takes significant planning and preparation. The training checklist (Annex III) lists all the materials needed for every session. It can also help trainers remember minute details for the training to run smoothly.

Introductory Session

► Activity 1: Getting to know each other

 Times	10 minutes
 Objective	Participants move about the room to learn more about fellow participants
 Materials	Printouts of Handout 1 (1 per participant) Markers or ballpoint pens (1 per participant)
 Preparation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pass out Handout 1 and a pen to each participant.2. Explain the objective of the game and the rules.
 Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask participants to find someone who matches a characteristic on Handout 1 and to write that person's name in the corresponding box.2. Participants must get the names of 5 people that complete a row horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.3. Tell the participant to shout BINGO when they get a line of 5.

Facilitator's Note

Wrap up the activity after 10 minutes even if none of the participants has completed a row. Highlight that most of these characteristics are related to social protection, particularly life risks, circumstances, and coping mechanisms.

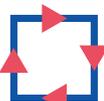
► Handout 1: Get to know each other

Human Bingo

Find someone in the room who admits to one of the characteristics below and write their name in the box. Complete a row across, down, or diagonally and you win!

Has at least 1 child	Took out loans to pay for school	Worked while going to university	Is an only child	Has private health insurance
Never been to a hospital	Is the same age as you	Is the youngest child	Married	Solo breadwinner of the family
Not married	Has a disability	Free	Lives alone	Has a family member that got hospitalized in the last 1 year
Has a family member that had an accident in the past year	Is the oldest child	Renting a house	Solo parent	Has a part-time job
Owens a house	Has been sick for the past 6 months	Living with parents	Who has more than 4 siblings	Went to public school

▶ Activity 2: Rules and Expectations

 <p>Times</p>	<p>25 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>Clarify and document what participants expect from the training and what they might be worried about at the start of Day 1.</p>
 <p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 5 large sheets of paper (flipchart size) ▶ 4 markers ▶ Masking tape
 <p>Preparation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write the objectives of the training on a flipchart sheet. 2. Display the flipchart sheet outlining the objectives of the training. Leave it there for the entirety of the training. Post a blank flipchart sheet on the wall with the heading "House Rules". 3. Post 3 more flipchart sheets on the wall and label each with one of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Content/Methodology b. Training facilitators/Resource speakers c. Participants
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide the participants into three groups. 2. Assign each group to a flipchart sheet, among 'Content/Methodology', 'Training facilitators/Resource speakers' and 'Participants'. 3. Ask the groups to write their expectations from the training based on the topic assigned to them. Give 5 minutes. 4. After 5 minutes, each group will move to the next sheet. They will read what the first group has written and add their own expectations. They can also agree with what the earlier group has written. This will also take 5 minutes. 5. Repeat this process for a third time so that all the groups have interacted with all three sheets.

6. After 3 rounds, the facilitator will read what the groups have written. The facilitator will level off participants' expectations by reassuring them about which expectations will be met. Based on the participants' expectations and with the assistance and agreement of the participants, the facilitator will then summarize and write down the rules for the training on the separate "House Rules" sheet.
7. Display the flipchart sheets where everyone can revisit them and as a reference during the whole of the training.

Facilitator's Note

Guide the participants while going on rounds. Make sure everyone is participating. It is also important that the house rules come from the participants and are agreed on. Give samples if they are having difficulty:

Content/Methodology

- ▶ Fun and participative
- ▶ With ample breaks
- ▶ A lot of ice breakers

Training facilitators/Resource speakers

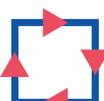
- ▶ Knowledgeable
- ▶ Speaks clearly
- ▶ Energizing

Participants

- ▶ One-mouth rule
- ▶ No mobile phones during session

Module 1: Introduction to Social Protection

- ▶ **Session 1: Risks and Coping Mechanisms in Communities**
- ▶ **Activity 3: Mapping the Risks and Practical Solutions in Communities**

 Times	60 minutes
 Objective	To identify hardships and risks faced by real people and the practical coping measures/solutions they adopt.
 Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Printouts of Handout 2 (1 copy per participant)▶ 6 sheets of flipchart paper▶ 6 markers▶ Masking tape
 Preparation	None
 Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask the participants to sit in 6 groups.2. Each participant is given a copy of Handout 2, featuring the scenario of a man with 4 children.3. The facilitator identifies some of the risks faced by this family: poverty, need for healthcare, disability, need for education and childcare, and crop failure.

4. Each participant spends 5 minutes reflecting on similar situations from their professional or personal lives.
5. Each group is assigned a different vulnerable family type. Using Handout 2 as a guide, each group is given 30 minutes to construct a scenario of what life is like for this family and to discuss the risks they would face. The group will record their results on a flipchart sheet.
 - ▶ The vulnerable family types will be assigned as follows:
 - Group 1:** Has a working family member who had an accident
 - Group 2:** Has a new-born child, a 6-year-old daughter with a cognitive disability, and a 12-year-old son
 - Group 3:** The father is a farmer from an ethnic minority
 - Group 4:** Working parents have migrated for work
 - Group 5:** A family who recently lost their breadwinner
 - Group 6:** Working daughter living with 2 dependent older parents
 - ▶ Each group defines the family's characteristics, such as number of members, age, area of work, and so on. Other than their specific vulnerabilities, the family should be typical of the participants' region.
 - ▶ Each group identifies 5 possible risks faced by their family.
 - ▶ Each group maps practical coping mechanisms adopted by the family for the risks. Please note that the focus is to be on the coping mechanisms adopted by the family, and not on possible government interventions.
6. Each group presents their family and the family's risks and coping mechanisms in the plenary.
7. In the plenary, discuss the following questions:
 - a. What are some of the differences between the risks and struggles of women and men?
 - b. What are some of the differences between the risks and struggles of people when they are young and when they are older?
 - c. How has the broader social, economic and political context impacted their individual life stories?
 - d. What are some of the strategies that women and men have developed to deal with the challenges facing them?

► Handout 2: Mapping Risks and Coping Mechanisms in the Community

A man lives with his wife and 4 children in a village. The children are ages 3, 5, 9 and 12. The youngest child is disabled. The man's mother also lives with them. She is 65 years old and helps to take care of the children, but often falls sick and suffers from great pain. The village healer and midwife told the man that the grandmother and the 3-year-old child need to go to a provincial hospital, but he has no time or money to take them.

Last year, there was heavy rainfall and the floods destroyed the crops. The family had no income and used all their savings to buy food.

The 5-year-old and 9-year-old children go to school, but the oldest dropped out 3 years ago. The parents hope to send all their children to school and maybe even university, so that they can get good jobs and leave the cycle of poverty.

The man has never heard of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Scheme, which would entitle them to free healthcare. He has borrowed money from his brother who works in the city and is considering borrowing more from the village lender. He is also planning to start tea farming, but does not know how nor does he have the money to start.



Risks

- Poverty
- Need for healthcare
- Disability
- Need for education and childcare
- Crop failure

Coping Mechanisms

- Used up savings
- Borrowed money from family
- Borrowing from the village lender?
- Start a new, more lucrative job?



Facilitator's Note

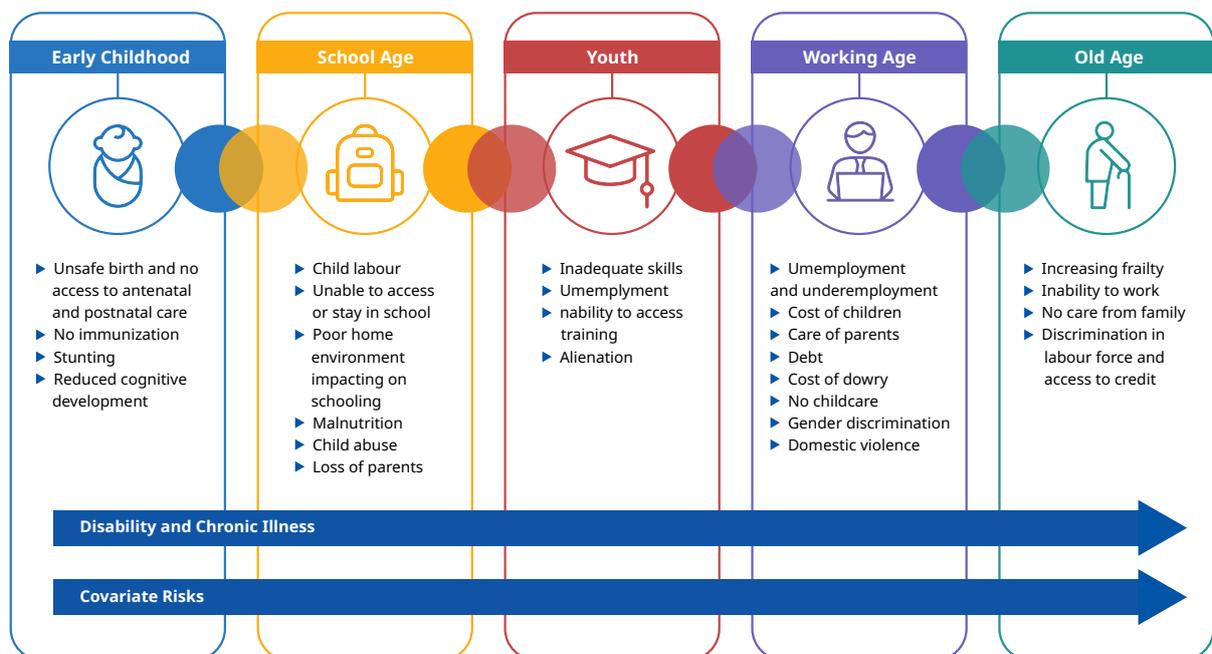
Keep the groups' answers and observation notes. Prepare a summary of similarities and differences. You will need this when discussing the topic of social protection.

Learning Points

There are many causes of poverty and insecurity but, often, they are related to stages in an individual's life cycle. Individuals face challenges and risks at each stage of their lives, which also impact their broader social networks, including their families, households, friends, groups, and communities. The types of challenges faced by individuals and that make them vulnerable to reductions in living standards vary as people move across the life course. (Transform 2017)

Women also have specific risks and vulnerabilities across life stages (such as health risks associated with childbearing and sexual activity, caregiving and domestic responsibilities, legal and workplace discrimination, widowhood, and so on).

Risks Across the Life Cycle

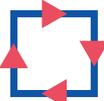


Source: Development Pathways.

In order to avoid sinking into poverty, vulnerable individuals or groups facing challenges can become preoccupied with coping strategies that are informal and often negative. These includes borrowing money, reducing non-food consumption, foregoing medical treatment for themselves or family members, selling assets, or removing children from school. While anyone can be vulnerable, the “poor” and “near poor” are particularly at risk, since they have fewer assets, reserves or other opportunities to fall back on.

▶ Session 2: Basic Concepts of and Background on Social Protection

▶ Activity 4: Jargon Busting

 <p>Times</p>	<p>10 minutes</p>									
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>To explain the concepts in a participatory manner, not as a unidirectional lecture.</p>									
 <p>Materials</p>	<p>PowerPoint of social protection terms and definition</p>									
 <p>Preparation</p>	<p>None</p>									
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide the participants into 3–4 groups or in groups based on the seating arrangement 2. Ask a representative from each group to pick 1–2 of the following terms: <table border="1" data-bbox="564 1585 1315 1973"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="564 1585 810 1711">Social Security</td> <td data-bbox="810 1585 1056 1711">Health Insurance</td> <td data-bbox="1056 1585 1315 1711">Non-contributory Scheme</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="564 1711 810 1836">Poverty</td> <td data-bbox="810 1711 1056 1836">Social Welfare</td> <td data-bbox="1056 1711 1315 1836">Social Protection Floor</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="564 1836 810 1962">Informal Workers</td> <td data-bbox="810 1836 1056 1962">Public Works Programmes</td> <td data-bbox="1056 1836 1315 1962">Vulnerable Groups</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Social Security	Health Insurance	Non-contributory Scheme	Poverty	Social Welfare	Social Protection Floor	Informal Workers	Public Works Programmes	Vulnerable Groups
Social Security	Health Insurance	Non-contributory Scheme								
Poverty	Social Welfare	Social Protection Floor								
Informal Workers	Public Works Programmes	Vulnerable Groups								

3. Each group will discuss what their term(s) means.
4. Give one point to any group who provides a correct definition. If the definition is wrong, give the other groups a chance to provide an answer.
5. Show the actual definitions of the terms. Explain that these definitions are from the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS).
6. The group with the highest score wins the game.

Facilitator's Note

Highlight the points from participants' responses that match with the correct answer.

Learning Points

Social protection terms and their definitions:

Social Protection is a set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion throughout the life cycle. Social protection systems address all these policy areas through a mix of contributory schemes (social security and national social health insurance) and non-contributory tax-financed benefits (social welfare).

Social Security is a programme protecting national social security fund members and their families against life-course contingencies like healthcare, work-related contingencies, maternity, unemployment or sickness, old age pension, death and survival benefits as specified. Social security is financed from contributions by workers and their employers.

Social Welfare is a set of social services designed to prevent and solve social problems and promote social development, including promoting a social safety net to ensure a basic livelihood for people in society. Social welfare includes the provision of essential services to people to meet the basic needs for decent livelihood development – including good education, good health, adequate shelter, decent employment and income – to ensure the welfare and security of society.

Vulnerable Groups refer to groups particularly threatened by social, economic, political or other pressures.

Informal Workers refers to workers who are self-employed.

Health Insurance is to ensure access to essential healthcare services, and is financed by co-payments and by contribution from the Government.

Non-contributory Scheme is a scheme where members are not required to make contributions to receive benefits.

Poverty means a lack of basic needs for daily life, such as insufficient food to meet required energy needs (approximately 2,100 calories per person per day), lack of essential clothing and shelter, incapacity to access essential healthcare and basic education, and lack of access to basic infrastructure networks.

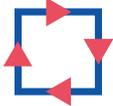
Public Works programmes provide income transfers to the poor through employment and are often designed to smooth income, particularly during “slack” or “hungry” periods of the year. The programmes often build infrastructure such as rural roads, irrigation, water harvest facilities, tree plantations, schools, healthcare facilities

Social Protection floor is a nationally defined set of basic social security guarantees that should ensure, as a minimum, that over the life cycle all in need have access to essential healthcare and to basic income security, which together secure adequate access to goods and services defined as necessary at the national level.

▶ Session 3: The Existing Social Protection System in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic

▶ Activity 5: Building a picture of Social Protection in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic

 <p>Times</p>	<p>20 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>To begin to build a picture of the social protection needs of a country</p>
 <p>Materials</p>	<p>Printouts of Handout 3 (1 A4 printout per animal)</p>

 <p>Preparation</p>	<p>Post the animal pictures in different parts of the room</p>
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants: “Which of these animals best represents social protection in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic?” 2. Participants are asked to stand near the animal that they have selected. 3. The groups that have gathered at each animal will discuss their reasons for selecting that animal for 10 minutes. 4. Volunteers summarize the groups’ answers in the plenary.

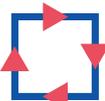
 **Facilitator’s Note**

Highlight the key words in the groups’ answers that were used to describe social protection in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic.

► Handout 3: Which of these Animals Best Represents Social Protection in the Lao People’s Democratic Replublic?



► Activity 6: Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

 Times	15 minutes
 Objective	To begin to build a picture of the social protection needs of a country.
 Materials	Set of three cards with the letters A, B and-C printed on them (6 sets).
 Preparation	Give each table cards with the letters A, B and C.
 Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask participants multiple-choice questions based on existing data on the social protection system in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (see the Learning Point below on Social Protection in the Lao People's Democratic Republic).2. Give 30 seconds for each group to discuss their answer and pick a letter.3. When the time is up, the groups will show their responses.4. The facilitator will show the correct answer.

Learning Points

Social Protection System in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

1. In 2019, what percentage of the population had National Health Insurance Scheme coverage?
 - a. 87%
 - b. 93%
 - c. 62%

2. What percentage of the population is covered by old-age social protection measures?
 - a. Below 5%
 - b. Between 5% and 10%
 - c. Above 10%

3. How many people are in informal employment in the country?
 - a. 45.5%
 - b. 60.5%
 - c. 75.5%

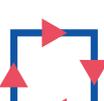
4. How much is the National Health Insurance Scheme co-payment at the health centre level?
 - a. 5,000 kips
 - b. 10,000 kips
 - c. 30,000 kips

5. What percentage of GDP is spent on social protection measures in the Lao People's Democratic Republic?
 - a. Below 1% of GDP
 - b. Between 1% and 2% of GDP
 - c. Between 2% and 3% of GDP

Source: ILO Social Protection Dashboard

▶ Session 4: The Role of Social Protection

▶ Activity 7: Myths or Facts?

 Times	15 minutes
 Objective	Test the knowledge of the participants and break common misconceptions about social protection.
 Materials	None
 Preparation	None
 Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Instruct the participants to line up shoulder-to-shoulder.2. Tell the participants that you are going to read them a series of statements, and they will have to determine whether each statement is a “fact” or a “myth”.3. Begin reading the statements.4. Ask the participants to step forward if their answer is “fact” and backward if their answer is “myth”.5. Instruct them to return to the line after each question.

Facilitator's Note

Highlight the points from participants' responses that match with the correct answer.

Learning Points

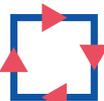
Social Protection: Facts or Myths

1. "Welfare makes people lazy": Myth
2. "There is too much fraud in social assistance": Myth
3. "There is enough money to cover solidarity mechanisms": Fact
4. "Social and health services only benefit the poor": Myth
5. "Public health, education, and social services are good for economy": Fact

Play this video after this activity: <https://www.srpoverty.org/2021/06/21/new-animated-video-5-myths-about-social-protection/>

▶ Session 5: Social Protection Targeting Approaches

▶ Activity 8: Understanding the Complexity of Targeting Choices

 Times	60 minutes
 Objective	To understand the difficulties of choosing one risk over another, and the negative feelings when a beneficiary feels she or he is deserving but is not selected.
 Materials	Printouts of Handout 4 (2 sets)
 Preparation	Cut along the lines in the printouts and fold each beneficiary card in half so its contents cannot be seen. Distribute the first set of cards first, before distributing the second set.
 Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask participants to sit in 6 groups, different from the last session.2. Divide the beneficiary cards among the 6 groups, ensuring that none of the groups receives any duplicate cards. There should be at least one card for each group member.3. Ask all of the participants to pick 1 beneficiary card at random.4. Each participant opens their selected card and thinks about it for 5 minutes. Tell them to think carefully about the character on their card (Where do they live? When did they last eat? What might they hope for?)

How much can they do to change their situation, if they wanted to? How much agency do they have to change their vulnerability, and so on?). Tell the participants to identify in their minds the reasons why the beneficiary on their card deserves social protection.

5. Each group will then discuss for 30 minutes, with the final objective of the group selecting 2 beneficiaries. Each participant is to provide arguments for why the beneficiary on their card should be selected/targeted.
6. The groups must reach a consensus on the 2 beneficiaries to be selected.
7. Each group chooses a volunteer to present in the plenary.
8. The volunteer presents, highlighting the reasons for the group's targeting choices.
9. After the sharing, discuss the following questions:
 - ▶ Who received social protection? Why?
 - ▶ How did you feel, and why?
 - ▶ What valuable lessons can you draw from this?
 - ▶ Did the groups make similar decisions?

Facilitator's Note

Use questions on a slide to facilitate debriefing, take note of responses on a flipchart and comment on trends.

Learning Points

In this session, the following lessons can be derived:

- ▶ All targeting mechanisms generate errors and costs, so it is important to know why the choice of targeting mechanisms is contested and criticized.
- ▶ There are ethical dilemmas in targeting, as it can lead to social divisiveness and perceptions that excluding some people from benefits is socially unjust.
- ▶ Targeting mechanisms face design and implementation difficulties in reaching those who need the assistance most; consequently, some of the most vulnerable can be excluded.
- ▶ Typically, interventions using proxy means testing feature "inherent 30–40% inclusion and exclusion errors", while poverty data collection and analysis to inform targeting, and keeping this information up to date, can be expensive.
- ▶ In addition, targeting can potentially increase social tension. Although evidence on the impact of broader targeting on social cohesion is limited, with mixed findings.

Knowledge Box

A Targeted Approach to Social Protection

Targeting refers to any mechanism to identify eligible individuals, households and groups for the purposes of transferring resources or providing preferential access to social services. “Popular targeting mechanisms include means testing, proxy means tests, categorical, geographic, community-based, and self-selection”.

The foremost rationale for targeting “is to direct programmes to those who will most benefit”. Targeting may have other aims:

- ▶ to maximize poverty reduction;
- ▶ to ensure no one is “left behind”;
- ▶ to contain the costs of provision; and
- ▶ to make the most efficient use of resources when faced with budget limits.

And sometimes it is used primarily for political gain.

Source: Carter et al. 2019

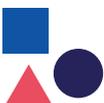
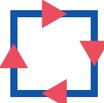
▶ Handout 4: Beneficiary Cards



15-year-old child heading a family of 3 younger siblings, living in a small hut in the village	Old lady in a village taking care of 4 children whose parents have migrated for work
20-year-old unemployed man, recently released from prison after serving a sentence for theft	19-year-old woman with severe physical and mental disabilities who needs constant care, coming from a wealthy family
Poor, 9-year-old rural boy whose only meal each day is from his school	20-year-old university student from a very poor farming family

<p>Pregnant 14-year-old girl who has dropped out of school</p>	<p>25-year-old homeless man living on the street for 12 years and doing small jobs to earn money</p>
<p>40-year-old man with asbestosis (chronic and debilitating disease) who was fired from the mine 5 years ago</p>	<p>Qualified doctor in a rural hospital who lost both her arms in a car accident</p>
<p>Illiterate, low-skilled foreign migrant worker</p>	<p>18-year-old woman working in a small garment factory below minimum wage</p>
<p>Domestic worker working 16 hours a day, trying to meet the living costs for a family of 6 children</p>	<p>67-year-old retired widow who inherited a house but has no income or pension</p>
<p>Family man in deep rural area who suffers from tuberculosis and lives 40km from the nearest clinic, with no roads in his area</p>	<p>35-year-old man, supporting his family and unemployed brother, living in the town</p>

▶ Activity 9: Targeting Social Protection

 <p>Times</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>To think about different design choices and to explore arguments for/against each of these choices.</p>
 <p>Materials</p>	<p>Cards with the following written on them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Poverty Targeting ▶ Geographical Targeting ▶ Categorical Targeting ▶ Community-based Targeting ▶ Universal Approach
 <p>Preparation</p>	<p>Post the cards in different corners of the room or on the flipchart stand</p>
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide the participants into 4 groups. 2. Ask a representative of each group to pick one of the following social protection programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Maternal and Early Childhood Grant ▶ Social Pension ▶ National Health Insurance Scheme ▶ COVID-19 Emergency Cash Grant <p>No two groups can select the same programme.</p> 3. Ask the participants, “What targeting approach do you think is the most appropriate for your social protection programme in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic?”

4. Encourage the participants to reflect privately on the previous sessions where targeting was discussed. This is not a group discussion.
5. Ask the participants to stand in front of the card with their answer:
 - ▶ Poverty Targeting
 - ▶ Geographical Targeting
 - ▶ Categorical Targeting
 - ▶ Community-Based Targeting
 - ▶ Universal Approach
6. Encourage people to share why they stood where they are.

▶ Session 6: Types of Social Protection

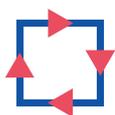
▶ Activity 10: “Conditional Versus Unconditional

 <p>Times</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>To think about different design choices and to explore arguments for/against all the choices.</p>
 <p>Materials</p>	<p>Cards with the following written on them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conditional ▶ Soft Conditions ▶ Fully Unconditional



Preparation

Post the cards in the different corners of the room or on the flipchart stand.



Procedure

1. Ask the participants, **“What conditionality approach do you believe in?”**
2. Encourage the participants to reflect on the previous sessions where risks and real circumstances were discussed.
3. Ask the participants to stand in front of the card with their answer:
 - ▶ Conditional
 - ▶ Soft Conditions
 - ▶ Fully Unconditional
4. Encourage people to share why they stood where they are.



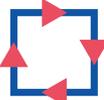
Knowledge Box

Definitions of conditionality

- ▶ **Conditional cash transfers** require beneficiaries to comply with specific conditions to be eligible for the transfer. These are often related to school attendance or healthcare (for example, 90 per cent school attendance or pre-natal check-ups). Punitive measures or sanctions are imposed (for example, transfers are stopped) if beneficiaries fail to comply with these conditionalities.
- ▶ **Soft conditionality:** A hybrid approach. The idea is that reminding people why they are receiving the cash transfer increases the likelihood of achieving the programme’s goals, without the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) burden of a truly conditional programme (Hemsteede 2018). Unlike with conditional benefits, failing to comply with the soft conditions does not result in the punishment or sanction of beneficiaries.
- ▶ **Unconditional cash transfers** do not require any specific actions to be undertaken by targeted beneficiaries.

▶ Session 7: Consolidating Understanding of Social Protection

▶ Activity 11: “Skeptics” Versus “Believers”

 <p>Times</p>	30 minutes
 <p>Objective</p>	To assess participants' knowledge and attitude towards social protection.
 <p>Materials</p>	Two cards with the following written on them: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ “I believe social protection is a handout and makes the poor dependent.”▶ “I believe social protection is an investment for the future.”▶ Masking tape
 <p>Preparation</p>	Set-up two stations at opposite sides of the room with the two cards above. In between the two stations, place an approximately 3m long masking tape line to divide the room into a skeptics side and a believers side, such that the two face each other (as two opposing teams).
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ask the participants to recall what we have learned since Session 1.2. Ask them to consider their position on social protection and to choose which of the following two statements best reflects their position: “I believe social protection is a handout and makes the poor dependent”; or “I believe social protection is an investment for the future”.3. Instruct the participants to stand on the side of the tape that represents their position and to think about the reasons why they support the position they hold.4. Encourage participants to share their insights in the plenary.

Facilitator's Note

Debrief in plenary so that participants can present their points. Check whether the two groups have made similar points, and check to see how (and if) skeptics are being convinced by believers. Below (in no particular order) is an incomplete set of possible points that may come up for illustration and preparation purposes only.

Skeptics' opinions are deep rooted, and we may have some of these as well – despite being social protection practitioners. Evidence alone is not always enough to convince people. We need to be able to fully understand their positions in order to reason with them, touching those “buttons” that will resonate.

Ask participants to share any important mind shifts they may have experienced, and where and how they intend to use this change of mindset in their current work environment.

Learning Points

Some possible points and responses:

Skeptics

- ▶ Creates a breeding ground for corruption
- ▶ Unaffordable
- ▶ Does not build a competitive economy in a globalized context
- ▶ Fosters dependency and laziness
- ▶ Huge training initiatives are required before this can even begin to have a hope of starting – don't have the resources
- ▶ The income gap/inequality can be addressed in other, better ways - by “trickle-down” economics
- ▶ Social protection can be changed or repealed – our constitution isn't fixed
- ▶ Increases the danger of paternalism and creates a behaviour disincentive
- ▶ Creates a bloated bureaucracy that becomes an unproductive drain on state resources

Believers

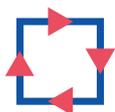
- ▶ Clear guidelines to avoid mismanagement can be put in place and strictly and transparently monitored
- ▶ Typically, efficiency can occur
- ▶ Social protection builds an inclusive economy
- ▶ Research shows that social protection actually feeds and grows the economy and decreases poverty and dependency
- ▶ Social protection serves people, our most vulnerable fellow citizens, and arguing against it lacks political will and ultimately could be political suicide
- ▶ Social protection is a human right
- ▶ A healthy, able and engaged workforce is a productive one

Source: Transform 2017

Module 2: National Social Protection Strategy

- ▶ **Session 1: The National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)**
- ▶ **Activity 12: Mapping the NSPS to Existing Social Protection in the Province**

 Times	45 minutes
 Objective	To familiarize participants with the contents of the NSPS, to link with concepts and structures.
 Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Printouts of the National Social Protection Strategy brochure (1 for each participant)▶ 6 sheets of flipchart paper▶ Markers
 Preparation	Distribute the NSPS brochure to each participant.



Procedure

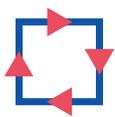
1. Ask participants to sit in 6 groups, different from the last session.
2. Ask them to spend 5 minutes going through the brochures by themselves.
3. Each group discusses for 30 minutes with the aim of mapping the NSPS activities to existing social protection in their province, including the Lao Social Security Organization (LSSO) and National Health Insurance (NHI) programmes.
4. Each group records their mapping on a flipchart sheet.
5. The activity is followed by a presentation on the NSPS to confirm their answers.

▶ Session 2: Financing Social Protection

▶ Activity 13: Triple “A”: Expanding the Fiscal Envelope

 Times	45 minutes
 Objective	To reflect on the barriers and enablers to expanding the financial envelope from a political economy perspective – assessing real feasibility and achievability of different financing options.
 Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Printout of Handout 5 (1 copy)▶ 2 sheets of flipchart paper▶ Tape or mounting putty
 Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Cut along the lines in Handout 5 to create 4 individual cards.

- ▶ Tape 2 flipchart sheets together (portrait orientation to obtain a large square) and draw three interlocking circles on them, giving each circle a name: ACCEPTANCE, AUTHORITY, ABILITY (see the diagram below). Post this on the wall for all participants to be able to gather in front of it during the activity.



Procedure

1. Invite participants to study the slide with the three interlocking circles of Acceptance, Authority, and Ability.
2. Explain each term using the questions within the boxes above and the following guiding questions

Authority

- ▶ Does the existing law allow you to do it?
- ▶ Are the mandates and responsibilities of government institutions aligned with it?
- ▶ Will the private sector support it?
- ▶ Will village and community authorities support it?

Acceptance

- ▶ Is there acceptance of the idea?
- ▶ Is there acceptance of its costs?
- ▶ Can dialogue with employer and worker organizations and CSOs help?
- ▶ Can you improve the level of acceptance by communicating the idea well?

Ability

- ▶ Are there enough staff to plan and implement reform?
- ▶ Do the staff have the skills to plan and implement reform?
- ▶ Is training of staff required?

3. Divide the participants into 4 groups and distribute one card from Handout 5 (containing one potential financing solution) to each group:

- ▶ Raising funds through external aid (grants)
- ▶ Taxing revenues in the mining sector
- ▶ Simplifying the mechanisms for paying tax and social security contributions
- ▶ Enforcing compliance of large companies and SMEs with social security contribution payments (through inspection mechanisms and punitive measures)

4. Based on their understanding of the session on Financing Social Protection, ask them to discuss within their group where within the three circles the solution on the card could fall, given the Lao context.

5. Invite each group to stand up and present their “answer” to the plenary, sticking their card on the spot they have chosen within the circles.

6. Ask whether others in the room agree or disagree... get a debate going!

7. Once all options have been assessed, see whether there are any in the central “sweet spot” (marked as “Achievable” above), and ask whether these appear to be truly feasible... and whether they should therefore be prioritized?

Facilitator’s Note

Ask participants to share their views as to how they could go about actioning the prioritized solutions in their social protection system. What are the first steps they can undertake that are within their own realm of control. If some options are outside the “sweet spot”, working on/ improving the points in the guiding questions can help to move the options into the sweet spot.

▶ Handout 5: Triple A Card

<p>Raising funds through external aid (grants)</p>	<p>Taxing revenues in the mining sector</p>
<p>Simplifying the mechanisms for making social security contribution payments</p>	<p>Inspecting and enforcing compliance of enterprises with social security</p>

▶ Session 3: Moving Forward with the NSPS

▶ Activity 14: Implementing the NSPS at the Provincial Level

 <p>Times</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ To identify common challenges in implementing social protection in the provinces.▶ To identify what is the priority in the participants' province.



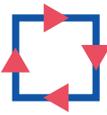
Materials

Sheets of flipchart paper (1 per group)



Preparation

Group the participants according to their province



Procedure

1. Each group has to nominate one person to facilitate/lead the discussion and a second person to note down the points on flipchart paper and present in plenary later.
2. Identify the existing social protection programmes in your province.
3. Discuss with the group the following questions:
 - a. What are the obstacles and challenges in implementing these social protection programmes in your province?
 - b. What are possible solutions to these challenges?
 - c. What specific areas in social protection would you like to prioritize?
 - d. What type of support will you need from the national government in implementing this?
4. Each group presents their results to the plenary.
5. Group members add more information if anything was missed.





Social Protection Learning Pack

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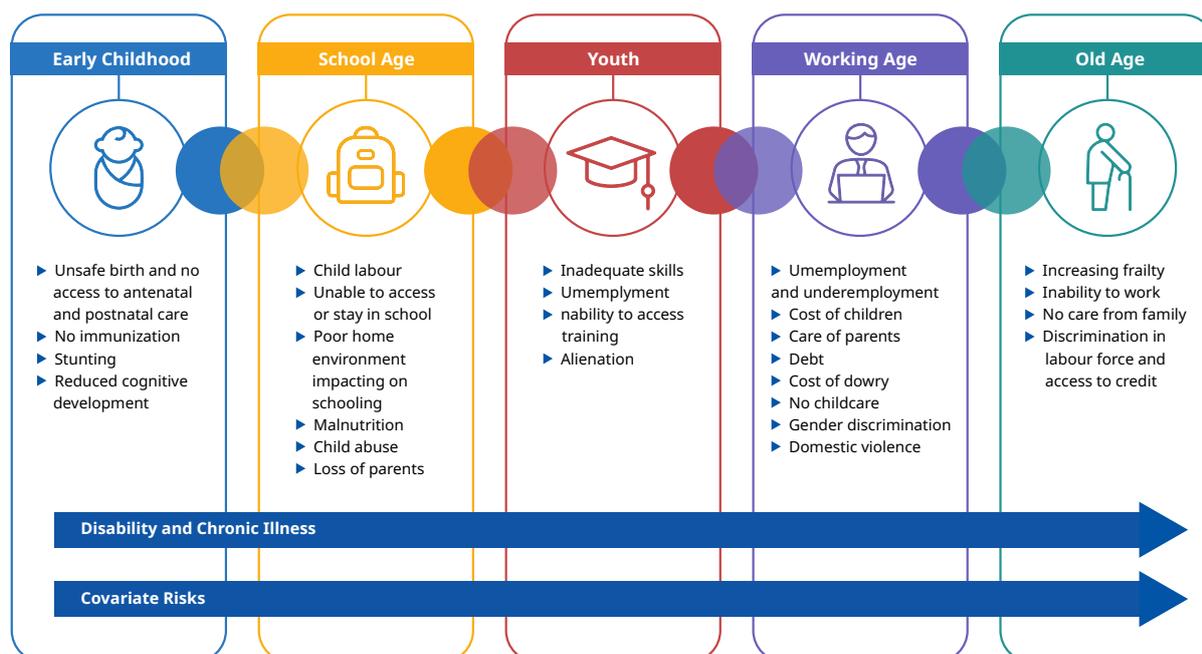
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Module 1: Introduction to Social Protection

► Session 1: Risks and Coping Mechanisms in Communities

There are many causes of poverty and insecurity but, often, they are related to stages in an individual's life cycle. Individuals face challenges and risks at each stage of their lives, which also impact their broader social networks, including their families, households, friends and communities. The types of challenges faced by individuals that make them vulnerable to falls in living standards vary as people move across the life course (Transform 2017).

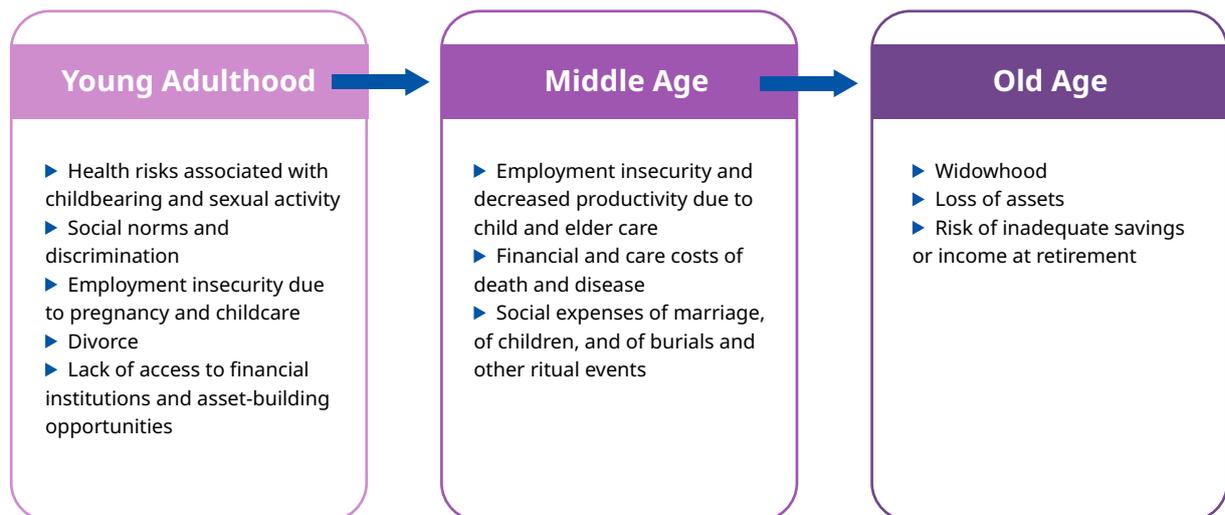
Risks Across the Life Cycle



Source: Development Pathways

Women face specific risks and vulnerabilities over life stages. The risks women face in their daily lives in developing countries are shaped by differences from men in biological attributes and social norms and by differences over the life cycle. This increases women's vulnerability to income shocks, and impairs their ability to save for old age (Cameron 2019).

Specific Risks and Vulnerabilities Faced by Women Over the Life Cycle



Source: Lund and Srinivasan 2000

In order to avoid sinking into poverty, vulnerable individuals or groups usually end up adopting coping strategies that are informal and negative:

- ▶ Borrowing money
- ▶ Drawing down savings;
- ▶ Deducing non-food consumption;
- ▶ Reducing food consumption;
- ▶ Delaying payment obligations;
- ▶ Selling assets;
- ▶ Buying essentials on credit;
- ▶ Foregoing medical treatment for themselves or family members;
- ▶ Pawning assets for cash;
- ▶ Some family members migrating;
- ▶ Selling assets;
- ▶ Removing children from school (WIEGO 2020).

While anyone can be vulnerable, the poor are particularly at risk since they have fewer assets, savings or other socio-economic opportunities to fall back on.

► Session 2: Basic Concepts of and Background on Social Protection

What is Social Protection?

People face risks or other contingencies during their life cycle that have financial consequences:



Maternity



Sickness



Unemployment



Work Injury



Medical Care

Life Cycle



**Families
with
Children**



Invalidity



**Death of
a Breadwinner**



Old Age

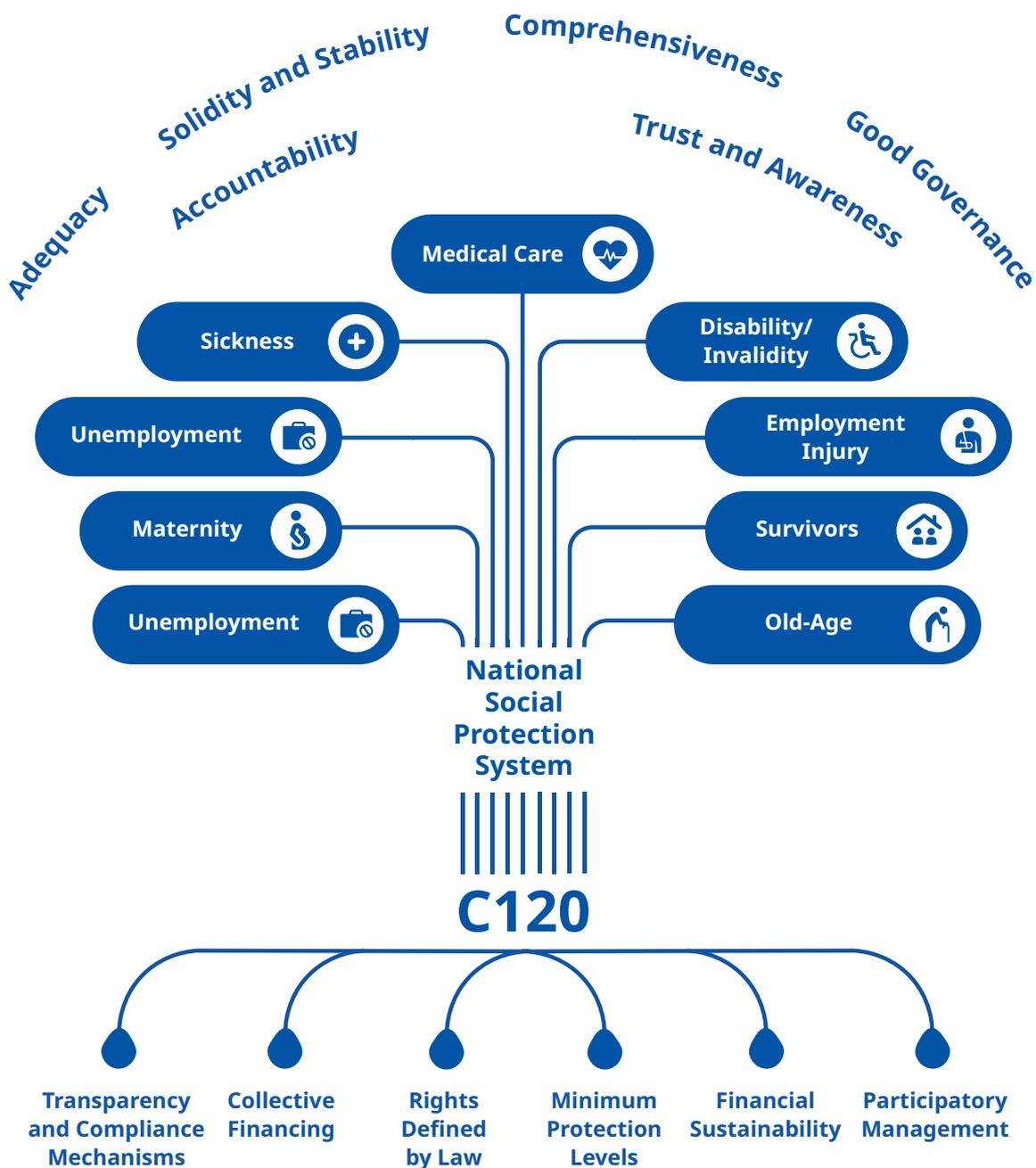
Social protection is provided to members of society against the economic and social distress caused by such contingencies. It is a **set of policies and programmes** designed to **reduce and prevent poverty**, vulnerability and **social exclusion** throughout the **life cycle**.

International Standards on Social Protection

International standards lay down obligations and guidelines for countries to follow. These standards can help in drafting laws and regulations and in designing and implementing social protection programmes. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has joined the international community in adopting international standards and goals that focus on the right to social protection and its development, including:

- **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)** – Social protection fulfils social and economic rights anchored in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, as prescribed within Articles 22 and 25. Social protection systems are based on the right of everyone to healthcare, education, decent work and an adequate standard of living throughout the life cycle.

- ▶ **The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)** prescribes the right to receive social protection in Articles 9, 11, 12 and 13, stating that no one should live below a certain standard of living, and everyone should have access to at least essential social services (as per Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment No. 19 on the right to social security).
- ▶ **The ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), and the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)** – The ILO’s flagship social security Convention defines the nine areas of social security and provides guidance to countries on developing their social security systems. Recommendation No. 202 provides guidance on building nationally defined social protection floors and reaffirms that they are economically affordable for any country. Social protection floors can be introduced, developed and maintained anywhere, taking into consideration particular national circumstances.



Source: ILO, 2020

Principles in Convention No. 102

State's Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ To provide and guarantee benefits stated by law.▶ To ensure the proper functioning of the scheme: supervise and administrate the concerned institutions and services.
Adequacy and Predictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Benefits should adjust with the cost of living and general income.▶ Pre-determined and periodical benefits at minimum levels.
Collective Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Costs shall be borne collectively by workers' and employers' contributions and/or taxes, and should avoid hardship.
Right to Appeal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Right to appeal in case of refusal of benefits or complaints regarding quality or quantity of benefits.
Progressive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Gradually extend coverage.

Principles in Recommendation No. 202

Universality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Universal coverage of residents.
Non-Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Based on equal treatment (and gender equality).▶ Responsiveness to special needs.▶ Social inclusion, including the informal economy.
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Accountable and sound financial management, administration.
Rights and Dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Respect for rights and dignity of people.▶ Full respect for collective bargaining and freedom of association for workers.

Delivery ▶ High-quality public services that enhance delivery.

Evaluation ▶ Regular monitoring and periodic evaluation.

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable socio-economic and environmental development in social harmony. The SDGs are recognized in the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan to be a priority area for Government action. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is focused on achieving these development goals by 2030, and the NSPS is a reflection of the Government's commitment. Therefore, the NSPS carefully chooses its goals and objectives to help to achieve SDG targets directly linked to social protection. The extension of social protection figures prominently as a means to achieve several SDG targets:



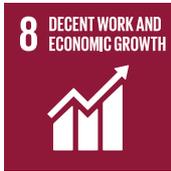
Target 1.3
Implement social protection systems for all



Target 3.8
Achieve universal health coverage



Target 5.4
Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work



Target 8.5
By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men



Target 10.4
Adopt social protection policies to achieve greater equality

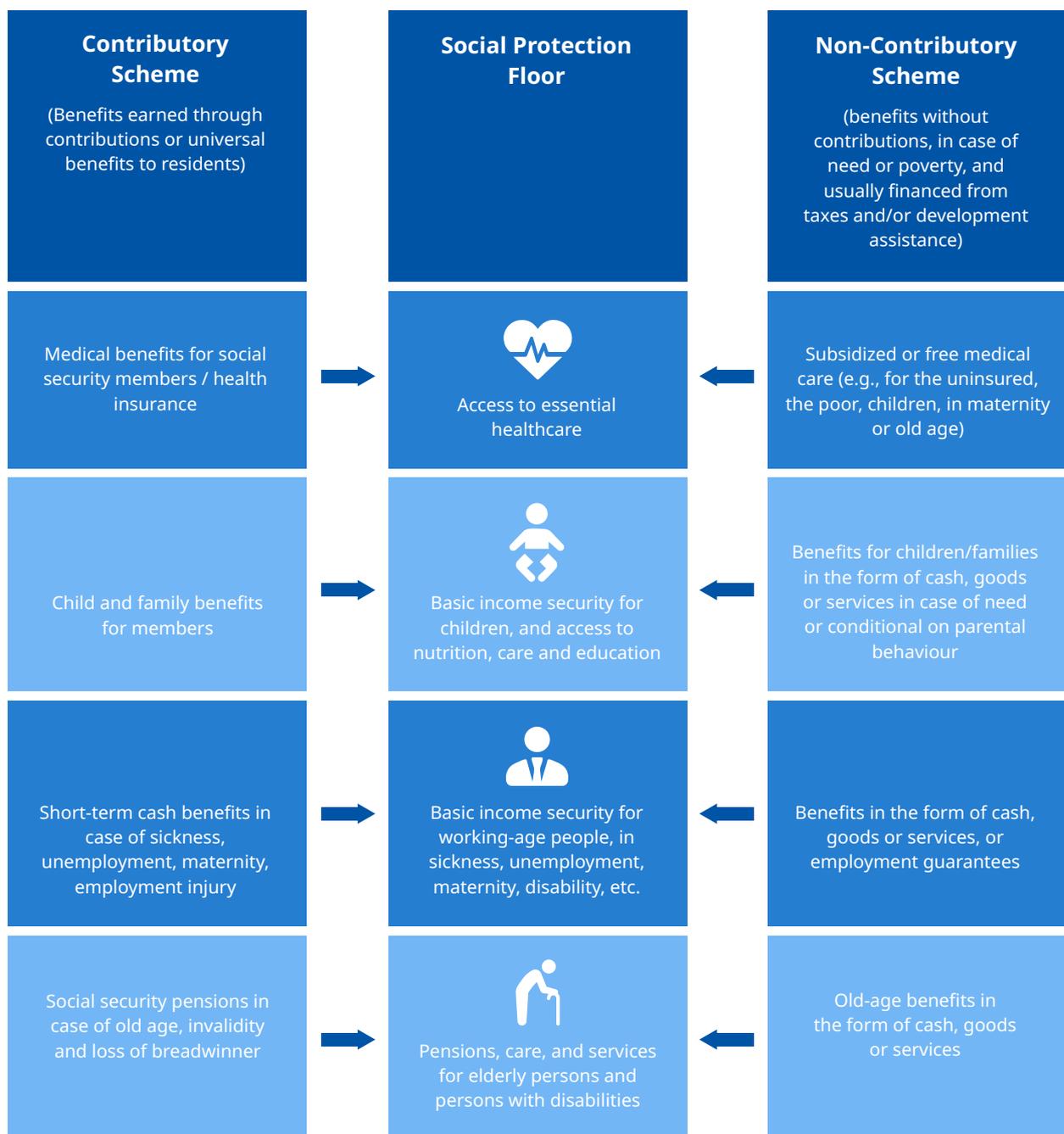
What is a Social Protection Floor?

A **social protection floor** is a nationally defined set of basic guarantees aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion for all, especially prioritizing those who are vulnerable, such as children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the unemployed.

The social protection floor can be defined in the form of four guarantees:

- ▶ **Essential healthcare**, including maternity care for all residents;
- ▶ Basic income security for **children**, and access to nutrition, care and education;
- ▶ Basic income security for **working-age people**, in sickness, unemployment, maternity, disability, and so on; and
- ▶ Pensions, care and services for **elderly persons and persons with disabilities**.

Principles in Recommendation No. 202



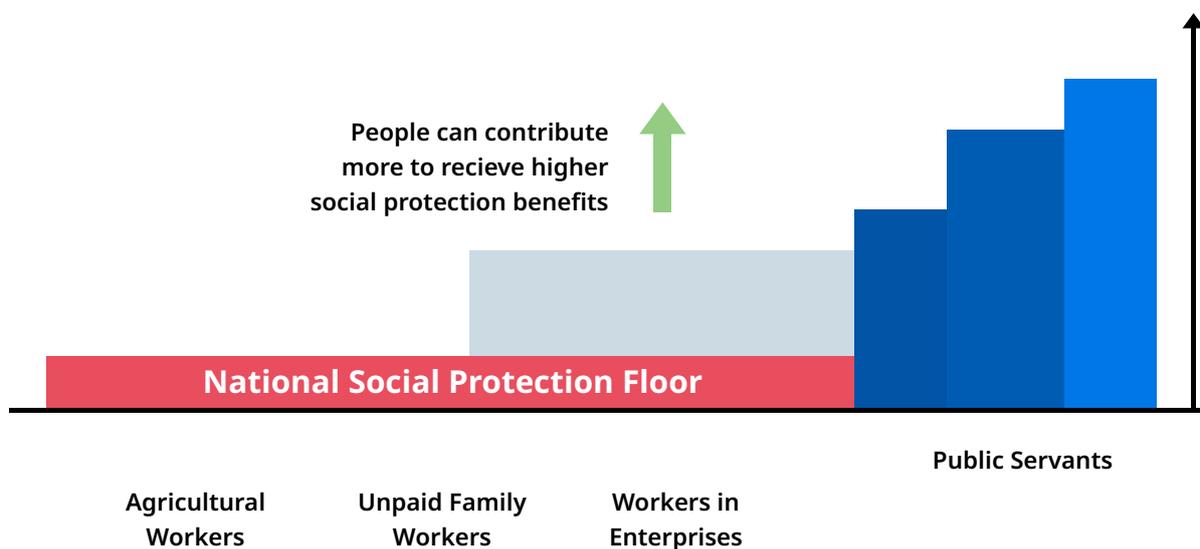
Extending the Social Protection Floor: The Staircase Approach

The ILO's approach to the extension of effective social protection coverage consists of the following dimensions:

- ▶ The horizontal dimension consists of the extension of a national social protection floor to more people, prioritizing the poorest and most vulnerable and gradually reaching all residents.
- ▶ The vertical dimension seeks to provide higher levels of social protection benefits and services to those who are covered.

The objective is to progressively develop higher levels of protection, rather than just maintaining the basic level. The metaphor that emerged is that of a "social protection staircase". As economies grow and fiscal space is created, social protection systems can and should move up the "staircase", extending the scope, level, and quality of the benefits and services provided (ILO 2016).

The "Staircase" Approach to Extending Social Protection Coverage



Social Protection Terms and Definitions in the NSPS

Social Protection is a set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion throughout the life cycle. Social protection systems address all these policy areas through a mix of contributory schemes (social security and national health insurance) and non-contributory tax-financed benefits (social welfare).

Social Security is a programme protecting national social security fund members and their families against life-course contingencies like healthcare, work-related contingencies, maternity, unemployment or sickness, old age pension, death and survival benefits, as specified. Social security is financed from contributions by workers and their employers.

Social Assistance refers to assistance and service in response to material and mental needs.

Vulnerable Groups refer to groups particularly threatened by social, economic, political or other pressures.

Informal Workers refers to workers who are self-employed.

Poverty means a lack of basic needs for daily life, such as insufficient food to meet required energy needs (approximately 2,100 calories per person per day), lack of essential clothing and shelter, incapacity to access essential healthcare and basic education, and lack of access to basic infrastructure networks.

A **Non-Contributory Scheme** is a scheme where members are not required to make contributions to receive benefits.

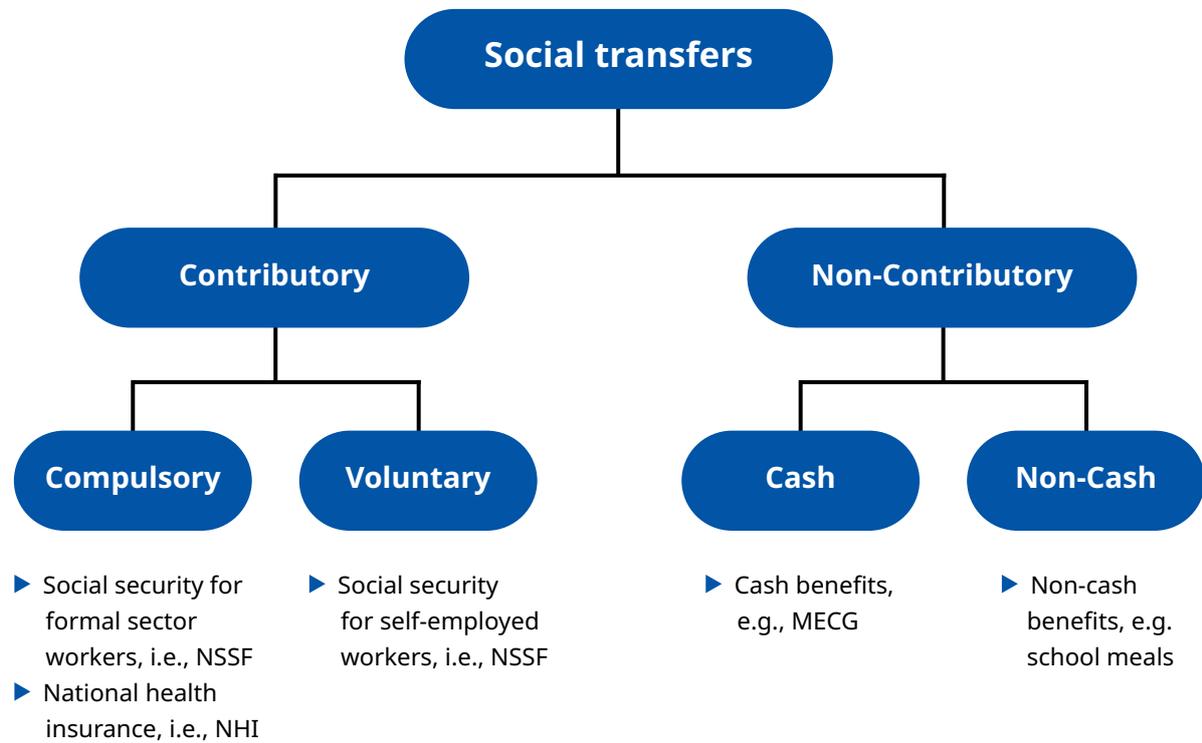
Public works programmes provide income transfers to the poor through employment and are often designed to smooth income, particularly during “slack” or “hungry” periods of the year. The programmes often build infrastructure such as rural roads, irrigation, water harvest facilities, tree plantations, schools and healthcare facilities.

Social Welfare is a set of social services designed to prevent and solve social problems and promote social development, including promoting a social safety net to ensure a basic livelihood for people in society. Social welfare includes the provision of essential services to people to meet the basic needs for decent livelihood development – including good education, good health, adequate shelter, decent employment and income – to ensure the welfare and security of society.

► Session 3: Social Protection System in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic

The Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic recognizes the role of social protection in reducing poverty and inequality and in promoting socio-economic development and social cohesion. Working to improve the conditions of the poor is just as essential for this strategy, as is ensuring that those who have already achieved adequate income security will not fall back into poverty (NSPS).

Below is the existing social protection in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.



NSSF = National Social Security Fund; NHI = national health insurance;
MCEG = Mother and Early Childhood Grant

Social Protection Floors in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Social Protection Floor		Target Population			
		Public Sector	Private Sector	Informal Sector	
				Non-Poor	Poor
Health	Health Coverage	Yes	Low Coverage	Medium Coverage	Medium Coverage
Children	Child/Family Benefit	Low	Low Coverage	Low Coverage	No Coverage
Working Age	Sickness	Yes	Low Coverage	Low Coverage	No Coverage
	Maternity	Yes	Low Coverage	Low Coverage	No Coverage
	Loss of Working Capacity	Yes	Low Coverage	Low Coverage	No Coverage
	Employment Injury and Occupational Diseases	Yes	Low Coverage	No Coverage	No Coverage
	Unemployment	Yes	Low Coverage	No Coverage	No Coverage
	Death of the Breadwinner	Yes	Low Coverage	Low Coverage	No Coverage
Elderly	Old-Age Pensions	Yes	Low Coverage	Low Coverage	No Coverage

Based on the Assessment Based National Dialogue conducted in 2017, the following is the assessment of the social protection floor in the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

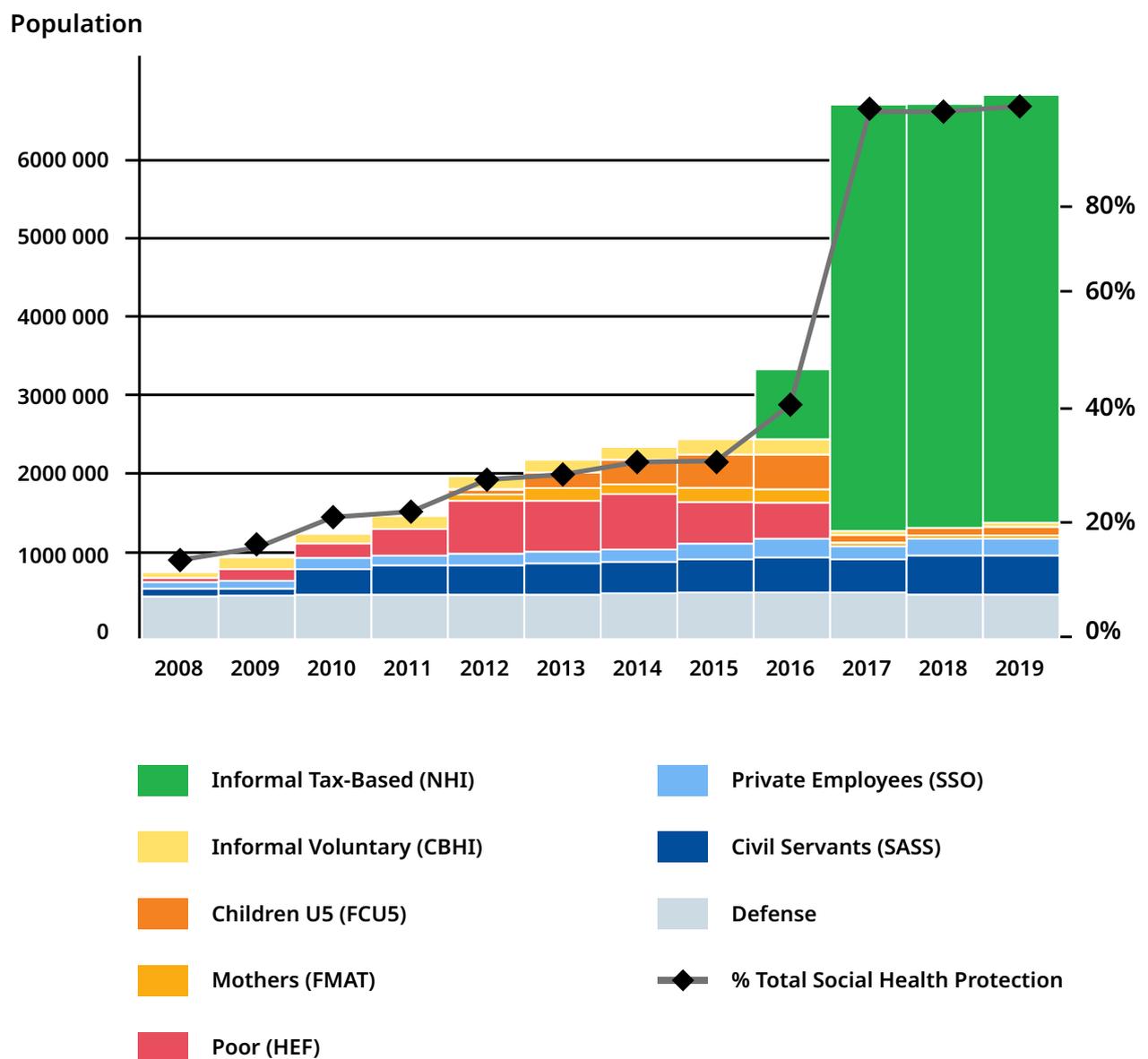
1. Social Health Protection

According to the social protection floor framework, achieving a minimum guarantee of health protection requires the provision of affordable healthcare that “meets the criteria of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality”. The main barriers to achieving this minimum standard for all residents are:

- ▶ A lack of trained medical personnel and lack of advanced treatments and drugs in remote areas.
- ▶ A lack of geographic access for remote populations.
- ▶ Financial barriers, including exposure to the risk of catastrophic health expenditures, which often lead to increased impoverishment, in particular among the already poor and near poor.

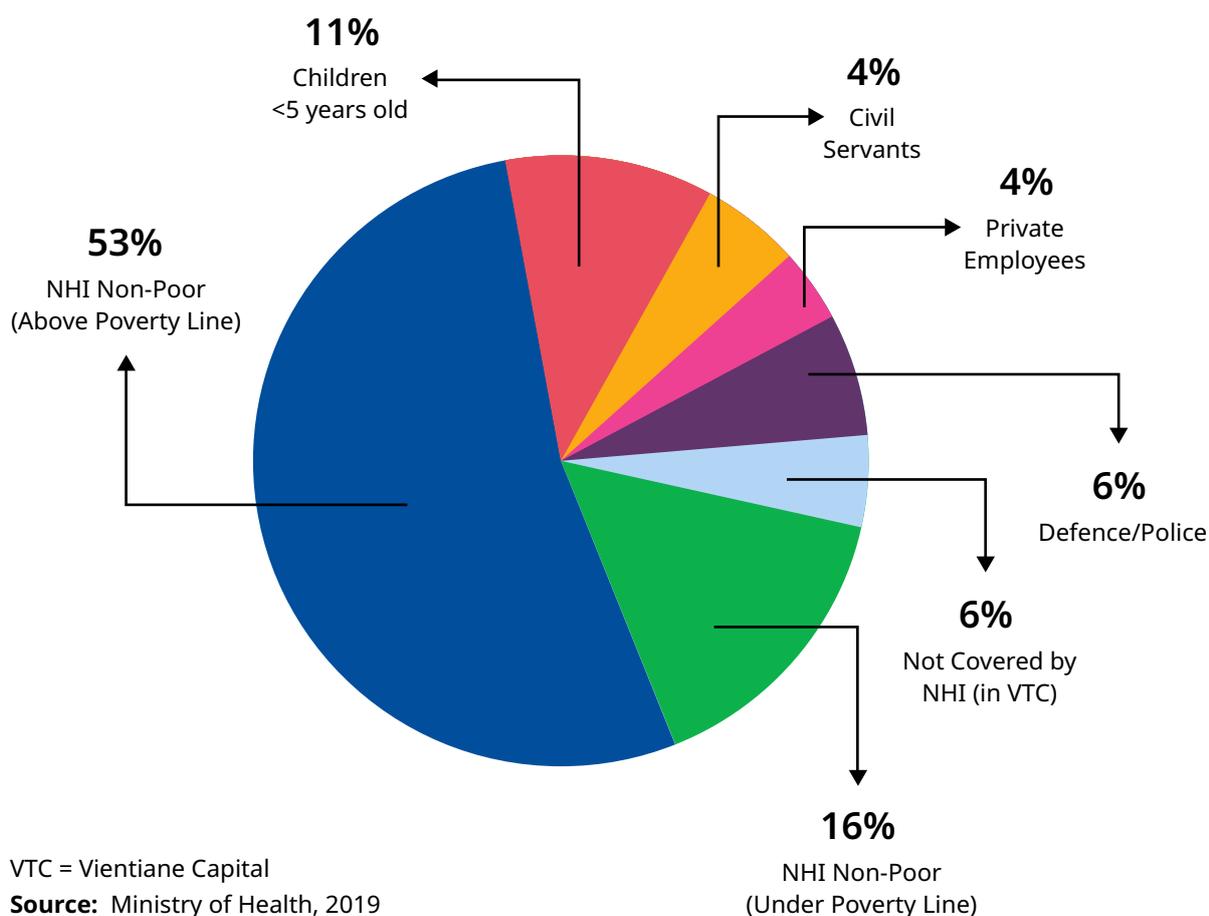
Under the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS), the Government is aiming to achieve 80 per cent population coverage by 2020 and universal health coverage by 2025. As of 2019, the legal coverage of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Scheme was at 93 per cent.

Coverage of Social Health Protection in Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2008-19



Source: Ministry of Health, 2019

Target Beneficiaries in 2019



In 2019, in line with the National Health Insurance Law, the Ministry of Health initiated a full merger of the formal sector schemes with NHI. The NHI scheme now relies predominantly on tax-based financing, which is combined with contributions from workers in formal employment. This ensures that those without the means to contribute are not excluded from accessing treatment.

To access care under NHI, patients pay a low co-payment at facility level ranging from 5,000 to 30,000 kips (roughly US\$0.50 to US\$3), depending on their treatment needs:

Co-Payment at Facility Level

- ▶ 5,000 kips at health centre level
- ▶ 10,000 kips for outpatient treatment at district and provincial levels;
- ▶ 30,000 kips for inpatient treatment at district and provincial levels.

In line with a national policy adopted in 2012, expectant mothers and children under 5 years old are exempt from these payments. In addition, poor patients are exempt, as well as formal workers contributing to the scheme.

2. Social Protection Floor for Children

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has so far not achieved the social protection floor for children. Several schemes aim to provide access to nutrition, education and healthcare for children. However, due to limited coverage and the often inadequate amount of funding for these schemes, children do not yet enjoy adequate and guaranteed access to these essential goods and services. The existing schemes should be improved and expanded with additional funding.

Coverage of existing schemes social protection schemes targeting children

Scheme	Target Group	Coverage
Free Schooling (Block Grants to Abolish School Fees)	Students at all levels of education.	Students in pre-primary, primary and secondary education. Inadequate level of block grants. Unofficial fees still exist.
Cash Grants / Scholarships for Secondary Education	Students in poor families.	2 901 students (2017)
School Meals	Primary and secondary school students in disadvantaged districts.	2 135 primary schools out of a total of 8 884; 200 secondary schools out of a total 1 586. (2017)
Village Nutrition Centres (Poverty Reduction Fund- Livelihood Opportunities and Nutritional Gains (PRF-LONG))	Mothers and young children	429 mothers and children (2017)
Mother and Early Child Grant (MECG)	Pregnant women and infants	2,596 (2022)

3. Social Security for the Working-Age Population

A. Social Security for Formal Economy Workers

The social protection system for formal economy workers includes benefits under the Labour Law (No. 43/NA of 2013) and through the contributory social security system, which operates under the Social Security Law (No. 34/NA of 2013)

Following the adoption of a new Social Security Law in 2013 (No. 34/NA), the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) was set up to merge the two schemes that existed at the time – the State Authority for Social Security (SASS) for public sector employees; and the Social Security Organization (SSO) for workers in the formal private sector – in order to improve risk sharing and sustainability. Additionally, the NSSF for the first time extended legal (voluntary) coverage to informal and self-employed workers, with the stated objective of rapidly expanding membership.

Coverage of Existing Social Security Schemes/Benefits for Formal Economy Workers

Scheme/Benefit	Target Group	Coverage
NSSF Schemes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Unemployment benefit ▶ Sickness benefit ▶ Employment injury ▶ Occupational disease and non-work-related disability benefit ▶ Maternity benefit ▶ Childbirth grant ▶ Survivor's benefit ▶ Death grant ▶ Pensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Formal economy workers ▶ Public sector workers ▶ Voluntary self-employed and informal members 	<p>15% of the total population, including dependents (as of 2020)</p> <p>No. of NSSF members: Civil servants: 180 609 Formal enterprise: 121 698 Voluntary insured member: 12 446</p>
Under the Labour Law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Severance pay ▶ Paid sick leave ▶ Paid maternity leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Formal economy workers 	<p>Incomplete. Lack of compliance among employers.</p>

Note

- ▶ Civil servant and formal enterprise scheme members receive **9 benefits**.
- ▶ Voluntary insured scheme members receive **7 benefits** (no unemployment and employment injury benefits).
- ▶ Labour Law benefits comprise entitlements with employer liability, consisting of severance pay, paid sick leave, paid maternity leave, and paid leave for a work injury. De facto coverage and access to these benefits are uncertain, with anecdotal evidence suggesting low levels of employer compliance.

Employer and employee social security contributions as a percentage of employee's wage, by type of benefit scheme

Type of Benefit	Type of Benefit Scheme		
	Civil Servant	Formal Enterprise	Voluntary Insured Scheme
Health Insurance	1.5	1.5	1.5
Work Injuries or Occupational Disease	0.5	0.5	n/a
Short-term Benefits (Maternity, Sickness, Death)	2.5	2.5	2.5
Long-term Benefits (Bension, Loss of Working Capacity, Family)	12	5	5
Unemployment Benefit	n/a	2	n/a
Total:	16.5	11.5	9
Share of Contribution			
Employers	8.5%	6%	9%
Employees	8%	5.5%	

n/a = not applicable.

Contributions:

B. Social protection for the informal economy and the poor

The rural informal economy makes up the vast majority of the Lao population. About 80 per cent of the economically active population earn their living outside of formal employment. About 72 per cent are in the primary economy (agriculture), a large proportion of them as subsistence farmers. This group receives the least coverage of any form of social protection.

As mentioned above, the NSSF for the first time extended legal (voluntary) coverage to informal and self-employed workers, at a contributory rate of 9 per cent. Although the National Social Security Fund accepts voluntary informal and self-employed workers, membership remains very low. The benefits and modalities mainly cater to the needs of formal economy workers. Based on the Lao Social Security Organization (LSSO) 2020 Annual Report, there are only **12,446 voluntary members** under the LSSO. Meanwhile, informal workers are covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme.

Moreover, seasonal lack of work or income is widespread among rural workers and small-scale farmers, leading to cycles of food and income insecurity. Policies to address this group – such as public works projects or vocational training – have not yet been fully developed.

Other social welfare or antipoverty programmes mainly consist of ad hoc disaster relief assistance and small-scale programmes targeting specific vulnerable groups or the poorest areas.

4. Social Protection for the Elderly

At present, no social protection schemes specifically target the elderly, except for pensions as part of the contributory NSSF. Based on ILO Social Protection Dashboard (2022), only an estimated 6.3 per cent of the country's elderly receive such a pension. As such, there is a lack of basic income security for the vast majority of the elderly, who are ineligible for formal social security pensions due to having spent their economically active years in the rural informal economy. Recommendations by national stakeholders include considering the creation of a minimum social pension for this group, as well as establishing in-kind benefits such as free access to healthcare, housing or transportation.

▶ Session 4: The Role of Social Protection

Social Protection: Facts or Myths?

There are many myths about social protection that obstruct one's understanding of social protection as a powerful force for protecting individuals and societies from risks.

To illustrate what social protection is about – and more importantly to debunk some of the misconceptions around it – the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Oliver De Schutter, is presenting an animated video. The video is focusing on the 5 most persistent myths:

Myth 1: “Welfare makes people lazy”

Myth 2: “There is too much fraud in social assistance”

Myth 3: “There is not enough money to cover solidarity mechanisms”

Myth 4: “Social and health services only benefit the poor”

Myth 5: “Public health, education and social services are bad for economy”

Watch

Watch the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Oliver De Schutter, debunking common myths about social protection in “5 Myths about Social Protection”:
<https://www.srpoverty.org/2021/06/21/new-animated-video-5-myths-about-social-protection/>

Key Roles of Social Protection:

- ▶ Social protection plays a critical role in realizing the human right to social protection for all, reducing poverty and inequality, and supporting inclusive growth – by boosting human capital and productivity, supporting domestic demand and facilitating structural transformation of national economies.
- ▶ Social protection is a key element of national strategies to promote human development, political stability and inclusive growth.
- ▶ Investments in social protection will help countries to develop the full productive potential of the population, contribute to the formalization of employment, support economic and social change, foster sustainable and equitable growth, reduce vulnerability, and boost economic and social development.

Source: ILO, n.d.-a.

Case Study: Child Support Grant in Thailand

Watch

Cash Support Grant in Thailand

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bQjAZEHWZQ&t=30s>

Minutes: 13:49

This video is about the concept of Thailand's Child Support Grant as social protection for children from low-income families. Child support grants are regular cash payments made to the parents or caregivers of children living in poor households to help meet essential living costs. In some countries, they are called "child allowances" or "child benefits".

Thailand's Child Support Grant provides a minimum level of social protection for children under 6 years of age. Since its landmark adoption in 2015, the scheme has undergone two expansions and is currently providing a 600-baht monthly cash grant to 2.3 million children under 6 from families with a per capita annual income below 100,000 baht.

In September 2020, the National Child and Youth Committee (NCYC) approved extending the Child Support Grant to cover all children under 6, with the decision now pending the Cabinet's approval. If endorsed, the scheme will benefit all 4.2 million children under 6 in Thailand.

According to an evaluation conducted by the Thailand Development Research Institute in 2018, about 30 per cent of children from poor families who were eligible for the grant were missing out due to errors during screening and registration – a common and well-documented challenge globally for cash assistance schemes that aim to reach the poorest.

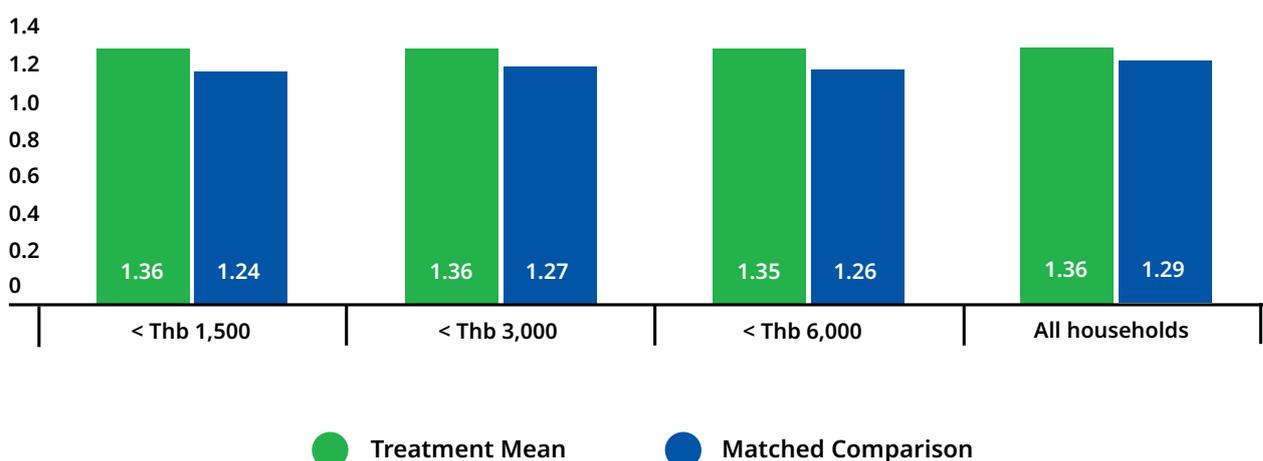
The universal Child Support Grant scheme will require an additional budget of 1.5 billion baht, which will bring the total spending on the grant to around only 0.16 per cent of projected GDP in 2024. In 2027, an estimated 27 billion baht will be required for the universal Child Support Grant. However, the total budget needed is going to decrease in the coming years due to a declining child population. Evidence shows that the country can afford expanding the cash assistance scheme while maintaining its fiscal sustainability.

Source: UNICEF Thailand 2022.

Impacts of Thailand's Child Support Grant (CSG)

- ▶ Resulted in better nutritional outcomes: Children in households receiving the CSG faced a lower risk of wasting compared to children in similar households not receiving the grant, and this effect is statistically significant across all the relevant sub-samples.
- ▶ Resulted in better access to post-natal services: Infants in households receiving the CSG accessed post-natal care more than comparable infants in similar households that did not receive the CSG. The effect is greatest in the extreme-poor households where the number of visits was 9 per cent higher; while for infants receiving the grant compared to the matched comparison groups and in the overlapping sub-sample of poor and near poor households the number of visits was 7 per cent higher.
- ▶ Women's empowerment: Mothers in extremely poor households receiving the CSG were more likely to be the primary decision-makers in food expenditure decisions and had more control over their income compared to mothers in similar extremely poor households that did not receive the CSG. The differences for other sub-samples and the whole sample were not significantly different, but for these other groups, the shares of women with primary control are already higher than the share in the extremely poor group.

Women's decision-making power on food expenses within the household



Questions for reflection:

- ▶ What did you learn from Thailand's Child Support Grant that can be applied in the Lao context?

▶ Session 5: Social Protection Targeting Approaches

Within the context of social protection, targeting refers to any mechanism to identify eligible individuals, households and groups for the purposes of transferring resources or providing preferential access to social services. Popular targeting mechanisms include means testing; proxy means tests; categorical, geographic, and community-based selection; and self-selection.

The foremost rationale for targeting is to direct programmes to those who will benefit most. Targeting may have other aims:

- ▶ To maximize poverty reduction.
- ▶ To ensure no one is “left behind”.
- ▶ To contain the costs of provision,
- ▶ To make the most efficient use of resources when faced with budget limits Or it may even be done for political gain.

The use of targeting is contested, criticized both for pragmatic reasons (as all targeting mechanisms generate errors and costs) and for ethical reasons (as it can lead to “social divisiveness and perceptions that excluding some people from benefits is socially unjust”). Targeting mechanisms face design and implementation difficulties in reaching those who need the assistance most; consequently, some of the most vulnerable can end up being excluded. Typically, interventions using proxy means testing feature “inherent 30–40% inclusion and exclusion errors”; while poverty data collection and analysis to inform targeting (and keeping this information up to date) can be expensive. In addition, targeting can potentially increase social tension. However, evidence on the impact of broader targeting on social cohesion is limited, with mixed findings (Carter et al. 2019).

Key Targeting Approaches

Benefits and drawbacks of different targeting options.

	Universal Targeting and Categorical Targeting	Geographic Poverty Targeting	Poverty Targeting (PMT)	Community-Based Targeting
Benefit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A universal approach has low administrative costs, as no targeting costs apply, and it is easier for administrators to implement, especially in countries like the Lao People’s Democratic Republic with limited infrastructure and human resource capacities. 2. Reduced exclusion errors apply; that is, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This option often results in reduced administrative costs, as targeting poor districts comes with a maller administrative effort than poverty targeting through proxy means testing (PMT). (Census-based geographic poverty mapping is available in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduced benefit-related programme cost, as a narrowly targeted group of people are eligible. 2. In the case that exclusion and inclusion errors are kept moderately low, it can have high cost-effectiveness in reducing poverty, and thus provides feasible option in case of budget constraints as well as having political appeal. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involves community members themselves gathering to rank or identify those households that they define as poor, usually with some discussion amongst the group at the outset on the definition or criteria associated with poverty (Alatas et al. 2012). 2. Can be more accurate than proxy means

poor people are more likely to benefit from this approach.

3. Prevents potential social stigma attached to poverty targeted benefits.
4. Promotes social inclusion and dignity of vulnerable populations.
5. The universal nature of programmes and reaching everyone equally can help make the human right to social protection a reality and promote social cohesion in communities.

2. Reduced exclusion errors apply; that is, poor people are more likely to benefit.

3. Geographic poverty targeting can substantially reduce inclusion errors relative to a full universal approach and can thus be a more cost-efficient approach, especially when there is a low budget and a focus on minimizing inclusion errors. Especially when targeting smaller administrative units (for example, districts as opposed to regions), large efficiency gains in targeting the poor have been found. This is favourable for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, as district-level poverty rates are available from the 2015 census.

4. A geographic poverty targeting approach is more easily transformed into a universal approach than in the case of a PMT system.

3. Poverty targeting can be a good starting point upon first introduction of a programme, which can then progressively move to a universal approach over the medium/long term.

tests in identifying the very poor especially in remote, rural areas.

3. Yields greater satisfaction in the community, which often has positive repercussions such as fewer disagreements or protests when programmes are implemented (Yusuf, 2010; Alatas et al, 2012).

- Drawbacks**
- Overall high programme cost, as a large number of people are eligible. Such costs are particularly difficult to achieve and sustain in low-income countries. Such expensive programmes may thus only be in place for the short term and disappear thereafter.
 - Introduction and gradual rollout of a large-scale programme may take several years. This is especially the case in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, where very few social welfare programmes are funded for a long period of time and implemented by the Government. With most programmes existing as donor-run projects, there is scarce national infrastructure for social welfare programmes (such as equipment, ICT and skilled human resources). Thus, the system needs setting up first, and this can take a long time – particularly considering the rural geography of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
 - Although universal programmes may have some political appeal due to a large share of the population being eligible (as opposed to poverty-targeted programmes), there may be low political appeal at the central level based on the logic that resources would be better spent on areas, such as infrastructure.
- Overall higher programme cost than poverty targeting using means testing/PMT, as all people in a given district are eligible.
 - May require a rollout rate by district that reaches maturity only after several years.
 - Poor people living in non-poor districts are excluded, and thus, penalized (exclusion errors).
 - Inclusion errors may also increase in comparison to an ideal means-tested/PMT programme
- Generally, this approach results in high exclusion and inclusion errors due to several shortcomings in design, often failing to reach the poorest and most vulnerable, and which leads to inefficiencies.
 - Exhibits highest overall programme cost per beneficiary, due to high targeting cost.
 - May cause social conflict in communities, as people living in the same community might not understand why they are not eligible, while their neighbour is.
 - May not have buy-in from community leaders/village heads, who are very familiar with the situation of community/village members, but do not play a role in the PMT design and decision-making.
 - It is contrary to a rights-based approach.
- There is risk of inclusion errors; relatively rich households may be included due to corruption.
 - 'Elite capture' (higher status community members influencing the distribution of benefits). The community may not have the full picture of some households' real assets (Handa et al, 2012).
 - It shifts some costs from administrators to community members (Development Pathways, 2019).

Source: ILO, unpublished; BMZ, 2017.

Case Study: Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens in the Philippines:

Watch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b22h3PoYgo>

Minutes: 9:39

The Philippine pension system underwent recent reforms that led to an increase in the number of social pensioners to 2.8 million indigent senior citizens in 2017 and an increase in the amount of the Social Security System pension. Yet, approximately 40 per cent of Filipino senior citizens are still left without a pension.

The Coalition of Services of the Elderly and HelpAge International reviewed the implementation and impact of the social pension and found that a universal social pension would be better suited to the needs and context of the country. For this to happen, and in order to not leave any senior citizen behind, especially the “missing middle” or the informal sector that is usually left behind, the study recommended that the Social Pension Program under the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 (Republic Act 9994) should be amended.

This video captures some of the benefits, gaps and challenges faced by older persons and implementers in the Philippines’ current social pension system, as well as recommendations for a new approach that will benefit not just a portion, but the entire ageing Philippine population.

▶ Session 6: Types of Social Protection: Conditional

- ▶ Conditional cash transfers require beneficiaries to comply with specific conditions to be eligible for the transfer. These are often related to school attendance or healthcare (for example, 90 per cent school attendance or pre-natal check-ups). Punitive measures or sanctions are imposed (for example, transfers are withdrawn) if beneficiaries fail to comply with these conditionalities.
- ▶ Soft conditionality: A hybrid approach. The idea is that reminding people why they are receiving the cash transfer increases the likelihood of achieving the programme's goals, without the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) burden of a truly conditional programme (Hemsteede 2018). Unlike with conditional transfers, failing to comply with the soft conditions, does not result in punishment or sanction to beneficiaries.
- ▶ Unconditional cash transfers do not require any specific actions to be undertaken by targeted beneficiaries.

Another important policy choice is whether access to benefits should be made conditional on recipients complying with specific behaviours and actions set out by governments. Conditions are often linked to school attendance or health check-ups, where non-compliance results in a sanction, such as the withdrawal of a benefit (UN ESCAP 2018).

For example, under the Reducing Rural Poverty and Malnutrition Project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the cash transfer is conditioned on attendance at monthly village-level Social and Behaviour Change Communication sessions as well as beneficiary utilization of key health and nutrition services, namely, antenatal care for pregnant women, growth monitoring and promotion sessions for children ages 0–2 years, and age-appropriate vaccination for children ages 0–2 years (World Bank 2019).

The Conditionality Debate

The Case For:

- ▶ Conditionality can help overcome situations where households do not have a full understanding of the benefits of services, such as the returns of education.
- ▶ Conditionality may also address a situation where those responsible for key decisions in households lack information or interest in investments that policymakers consider key for a country's economic and human development.
- ▶ Conditionalities may reinforce and/or induce positive behaviour, such as sending girls to school to overcome existing gender dynamics and traditional norms.
- ▶ It may be easier to gain political support from policymakers, taxpayers and sometimes communities themselves if transfers are linked with specific responsibilities.

The Case Against:

- ▶ From a human rights perspective, individuals have a right to social protection that is not conditional on their performance of certain actions, and therefore conditionality undermines principles of human dignity, equity and non-discrimination.
- ▶ Conditionalities may further marginalize or penalize those most vulnerable to poverty and deprivation, as they also may be those least likely to be able to comply with conditions due to distance, disability, discrimination or language barriers. Also, poor families cannot comply with some conditionalities as schools and doctors frequently ask for "fees" despite both education and healthcare supposedly being free.

- ▶ Conditionality can unintentionally create perverse incentives and opportunities for abuse of power by certain groups, particularly by those responsible for monitoring and enforcing conditions, further exacerbating power inequalities.
- ▶ Conditionality can also decrease poor households' ability to choose the most appropriate investments, while assuming that they are not capable of wise choices, and as such, sector-specific conditionality can run the risk of undermining the multisectoral and mutually reinforcing impacts of cash transfers.
- ▶ Conditionality carry a higher financial and administrative burden due to the monitoring of compliance, and their effective implementation depends on the existence of human capacity and supply of quality services at national and subnational level.

There are alternatives to the use of conditions and sanctions. Governments can also introduce nudges or symbolic encouragement into the design of schemes. For example, children could be enrolled in the social protection scheme on school premises to demonstrate the link between the benefit and the pursuit of education. Caregivers could be asked to sign a pledge to send their children to school or, as in South Africa's Child Support Grant, the name of the programme conveys a strong message on the purpose of the programme, without enforcing conditionality (UN ESCAP 2018).

Source: UNICEF 2016.

Case Study 1: Mother and Early Childhood Grant (MECG)

The Mother and Early Childhood Grant (MECG) is part of a joint initiative between UNICEF, the ILO and the UNCDF aimed at improving access to health and child protection services in the Lao People's Democratic Republic for pregnant women and children.

There are a total of 982 beneficiaries in 46 villages of Sanamxay district enrolled under the MECG, which is a cash transfer pilot for pregnant women and young children aimed at improving the uptake of vaccinations and access to antenatal and postnatal care, as well as child protection services. The pilot involves 529 pregnant women and 453 children under six months of age.

Beneficiaries of the initiative will directly receive a monthly benefit of 150,000 kips, made in bi-monthly payments of 300,000 kips, via U-Money or a cash-to-door approach provided by Star Fintech.

Compared to Reducing Rural Poverty and Malnutrition Project mentioned above, the MECG has only "soft" conditionality built into the design. There is no explicit conditionality attached to transfers, but there are clear messages for MECG beneficiaries on the purpose of the programme. Below is the list the "soft conditions" of the MECG:

- ▶ Pregnant women should receive antenatal care from a Health Worker at the health facility at least four times during pregnancy.
- ▶ All Pregnant women should always sleep under a mosquito net.
- ▶ Pregnant woman with vaginal bleeding, severe abdominal pain, difficult breathing should go to the nearest clinic as early as possible.
- ▶ Pregnant woman should deliver at the health facility assisted by a trained health worker.
- ▶ A baby should be breast fed within the first hour after delivery.
- ▶ Register your baby at least a week after delivery.

For Clarification or Grievances About the Program Please Contact:

District Labor and Social Welfare Office:

Tel: 020 9983 5199

Provincial Labor and Social Welfare Department:

Tel: 036 211 037

Department of Social Welfare, MOLSW:

Tel: 021 213 005

Case Study 2: Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme (CCTE)

Watch

Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) programme

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkOfM5grXM>

Duration: 3:44

Turkey has implemented its successful Conditional Cash Transfers for Education (CCTE) Programme since 2003, benefiting millions of families and children. In 2017, under the partnership of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, the Ministry of National Education, the Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF, the CCTE Programme was extended to cover school-age refugee children residing in Turkey under temporary/international protection. The programme is funded by the European Union, and governments of Norway and the United States of America.

The eligibility rules and transfer values that are applied to Turkish children in the national CCTE Programme also apply to Syrian and other refugee beneficiaries in the CCTE for Refugees. The families receive cash support every two months through Kızılaycard on the condition that the child has attended school regularly (at least 80 per cent) in the preceding school months.

Students enrolled in Turkish public schools, temporary education centres, and Accelerated Learning Programs are all eligible to benefit from the programme.

Source: UNICEF, n.d.

Questions for Reflection:

- ▶ Who carries the burden of complying with conditions? This goes both for the beneficiaries as well as for the implementing parties.
- ▶ Do you think the absence of conditions can lead to dependency and complacency?
- ▶ What could be some gendered impacts of the conditions?



Module 2: National Social Protection Strategy

▶ Session 1: National Social Protection Strategy

The National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) is based on the Prime Minister's Decree on Endorsement and Promulgation of National Social Protection Strategy, No. 224/PM, dated 1 April 2020.

National Social Protection Strategy

Vision

By 2030, Lao people have access to basic social protection services, consisting of health insurance, social security and social welfare, in an equitable, adequate, effective and sustainable way.

Principles

The NSPS is guided by the principles of equity, adequacy, effectiveness, universality, progressivity and sustainability; under the condition of universality, all Lao people will have access to social protection services in the same conditions regardless of age, sex, geographic location, socio-economic group or any other consideration.

Overall Goals

By 2025, the social protection system will be developed gradually and aim to provide higher protection to those more in need. Social protection services will have a reasonable standard of quality everywhere in a manner that will permit them to fulfil their mission successfully

Specific Goals

▶ Goal 1: The Health Insurance System is Further Developed and Strengthened.

Strengthen the health insurance schemes to ensure effective access to quality healthcare without financial hardship in a cost-effective manner to all Lao people through tax-based funding and reach universal health coverage by 2025

▶ Goal 2: The Social Security System is Further Developed and Strengthened.

Strengthen social security schemes to be more systematic and effective. Upgrade the capacity of the National Social Security Fund to collect contributions and provide social protection services for insured government officials, workers in formal employment and self-employed individuals, including eligible family members, while increasing the available reserves and ensuring the sustainability of the National Social Security Fund.

▶ Goal 3: The Social Welfare System is Further Developed and Strengthened.

Expand and strengthen social welfare schemes to be more systematic and effective. Develop and scale up benefits and services to children from poor families or in vulnerable situations, persons with disabilities, older adults and low-income and informal sector workers, and provide emergency assistance to people who are affected by natural or man-made disasters. Provision of block grants to schools, scholarships to poor students and school meals to promote poverty reduction and human resource, social and economic development.

The NSPS Defines Three Strategic Objectives

1. Health Insurance

Objective 1.1: Strengthen health insurance schemes to be more systematic and effective in ensuring that everyone has access to health services.

Activity 1: Develop and implement a legal framework for universal health coverage.

Activity 2: Develop systems and build capacities of the National Health Insurance authority.

Activity 3: Develop and comply with minimum standards for healthcare facilities.

Activity 4: Increase access to healthcare services in rural areas.

Activity 5: Ensure sufficient and timely government budget allocation to health.

2. Social Security

Objective 2.1: All the workers and self-employed workers in the formal sector are covered by social security.

Activity 1: Expansion of social security coverage for all formal economy workers.

Activity 2: Enforce regular inspections at enterprises registered with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Activity 3: Promote enrolment in social security.

Activity 4: Ensure robust actuarial design and sufficient fund reserves.

Activity 5: Improve collection of social security contributions and benefits.

Objective 2.2: Social security covers an increasing number of workers in the informal sector.

Activity 6: Adapt the current scheme design to the characteristics of workers in non-standard forms of employment

3. Social Welfare

Objective 3.1: Social welfare has expanded its coverage and services to meet the needs of target groups.

Activity 1: Provide services and benefits to pregnant women and to children.

Activity 2: Provide services and benefits to persons with disabilities and UXO-survivors.

Activity 3: Provide services and benefits to older adults.

Activity 4: Provide services and benefits to victims of natural and man-made disasters.

Activity 5: Expand the National School Meal Programme to all state kindergarten, pre-primary, primary and secondary schools in the villages of poor districts throughout the country.

Activity 6: Increase allowance to students at the lower secondary level, prioritizing students from poor families and vulnerable groups.

Activity 7: Allocate national budget to education on time and expand coverage.

Activity 8: Provide allowances for vocational training, skills development and technical training to the poor and working-age people in vulnerable situations to enable them to access decent employment opportunities.

Activity 9: Develop production organizations and public services and facilitate access to decent work.

Implementing Measures

1. Coordination and Multi-Sector Unity

- ▶ The National Social Protection Committee (NSPC) will be responsible for: the general implementation of the NSPS; the coordination of the various implementing bodies; the coordination with development partners; the monitoring and evaluation of the NSPS implementation; and the assessment of the overall situation of social protection in the country.
- ▶ The NSPC is a government-initiated mechanism without a permanent standing committee, and has responsibilities as a secretariat to the Government on social protection in the country. The NSPC acts as the coordination body and is assisted by its own Secretariat, which performs closer monitoring of the implementation of activities and helps to coordinate the implementing bodies, among other tasks.
- ▶ There will be local level committees chaired by the Vice-Governor, with the Department of Labour and Social Welfare as Vice-Chair, and constituted of members from relevant local departments.
- ▶ The coordination of the implementation of NSPS Strategic Objective 1 (health insurance) will fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. The Lao Social Security Organization will be responsible for Strategic Objective 2 (social security), and the responsibility of coordinating the implementation of Strategic Objective 3 (social welfare) falls to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and Sports, and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

2. Resource Mobilization and Financial Sustainability

- ▶ **Health Insurance:** The resources needed to implement health insurance activities will come from the contributions of insured individuals and the Government's matching fund, as stated in the National Health Insurance Law.
- ▶ **Social Security:** The budget to implement social security activities will come from contributions from workers, employers and the Government's matching fund, as stated in National Social Security Law.
- ▶ **Social Welfare:** A specific Social Welfare Funding Mechanism will be developed with the goal of facilitating a more effective utilization of the resources available, including domestic resources but also resources available from official development assistance.

3. Cooperation with Development Partners

- ▶ Development partners are of central importance to the success of the NSPS, particularly during the first stages.
- ▶ The NSPC will establish a Sector Working Group for Social Protection that will serve as a coordination mechanism with development partners to mobilize funds and resources to implement social welfare activities.

4. Advocacy and Capacity-Building

- ▶ The NSPC will be the focal point for ensuring a good understanding of social protection interventions at all levels of the Government.
- ▶ While the planning capacity of the central level of the Government will benefit from a more strategic understanding of social protection, local levels will increase their capacity to implement interventions using approaches more specific to the tasks they are required to perform.
- ▶ Research studies will be produced through collaboration between research institutions and development partners to increase the understanding of social protection-related issues in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
- ▶ Awareness campaigns utilizing mass media and social media will be developed so the general public will have a better understanding and improved awareness of social security, National Health Insurance, and the new social welfare benefits

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

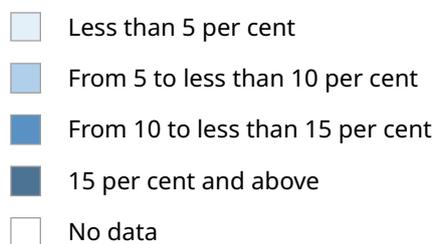
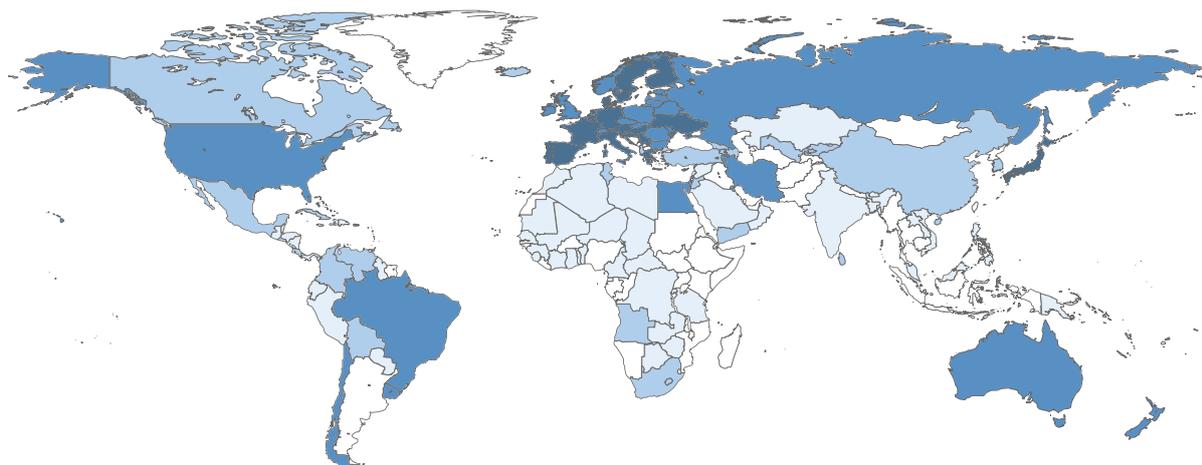
- ▶ The NSPS will be evaluated at a midterm review in the year 2023 to assess the progress of the implementation of Phase I, the impact of the activities already performed, as well as to create necessary adjustments to improve operations and results up through 2025.
- ▶ The second semester of 2024 will see a meeting of the NSPC with development partners to share the results of the final evaluation and to start the preparation of the next steps towards achieving Vision 2030.
- ▶ A methodology will be developed for the mid-term review to take place in 2023, which will combine quantitative and qualitative methods.



► Session 2: Financing Social Protection

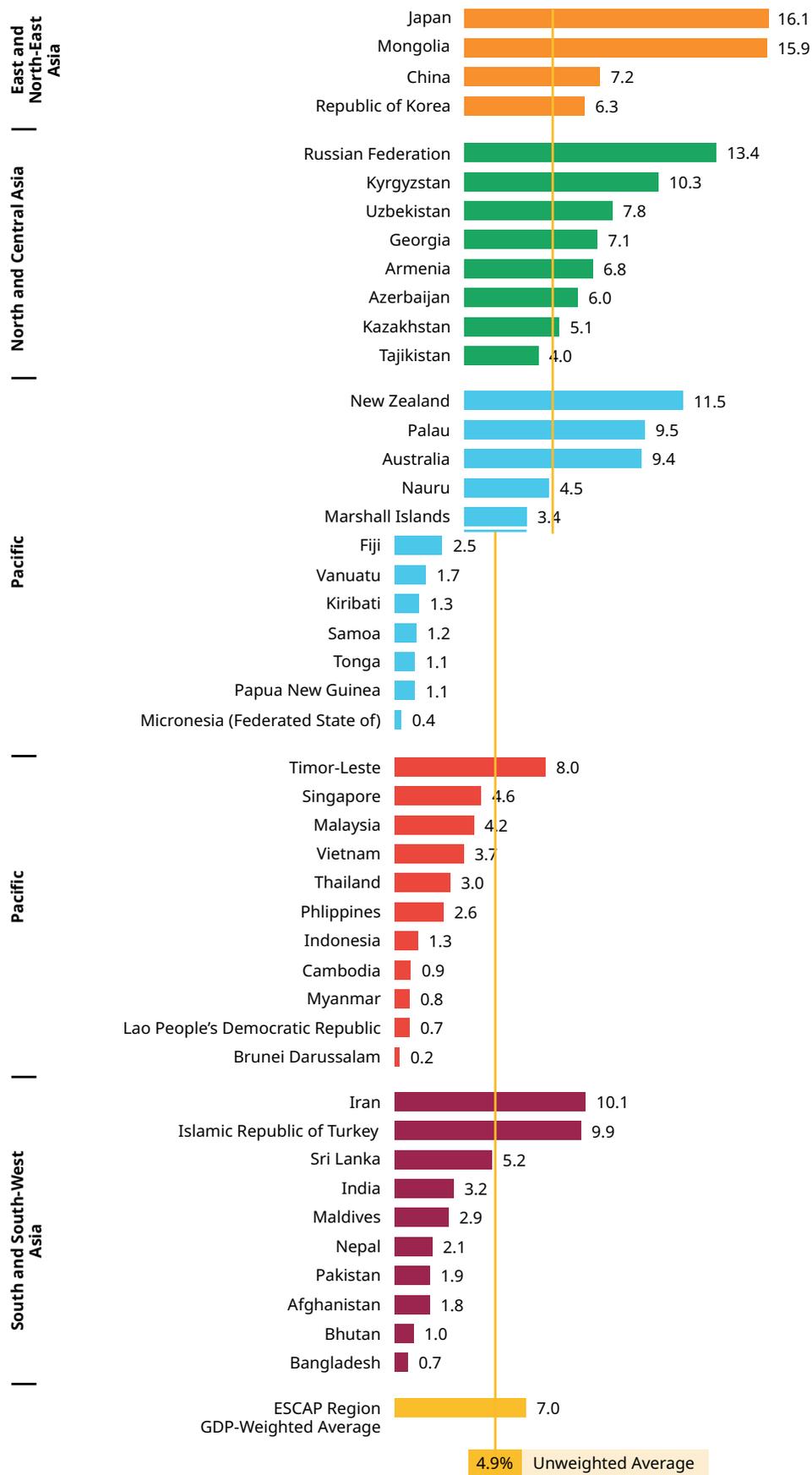
How Much Do Different Countries Spend on Social Protection?

According to the estimates presented in the ILO's World Social Protection Report: 2017–19, on average, countries in the world allocate 11 per cent of their respective gross domestic products to social protection excluding health-related public expenditure. The size of the population in different countries can also be used as a weight to calculate mean percentages of GDP allocated to social protection: in this case the result shows that for the “average” resident in different countries, only 8.4 per cent of the GDP of the country is allocated as social protection benefits in the form of cash and in-kind.



Source: ILO 2017.

Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific: An Overview



Source: ILO n.d.-b.



- ▶ In **Asia and the Pacific**, developing countries spend around **3.7 per cent of their GDP** on social protection – one-third of the global average.
- ▶ **This underinvestment** is the reason why 60 per cent of the region's population has no protection if they become sick, develop a disability, or become unemployed, pregnant or old.

To Give Some Examples:

- ▶ **Only 21 out of 49 countries** provide social protection for children and families.
- ▶ **Only one out of five unemployed** receive unemployment benefits.
- ▶ **Fewer than 4 out of 10 people** have access to affordable healthcare.
- ▶ **Just over half of all older persons** receive an old-age pension.

The Lao Government spends, on average, 1–2 per cent of GDP on social protection. The ILO estimates that in order to provide a basic level of protection to all, low and lower middle income countries will need to raise spending on social protection to between 5.1% and 15.9 per cent of GDP.

Principles That Should Guide the Financing of Social Protection

Progressive Realization: “Progressive realization” acknowledges that the full enjoyment of human rights will not come in a day, but demands that, every day, it comes a little closer. This obligation recognizes that the resources at the disposition of a government are limited; nevertheless, a government must take specific steps to ensure that people's enjoyment of economic and social rights improves over time.

Maximum Available Resources: The criterion of “maximum available resources” means that governments cannot shrug off human rights obligations on the grounds of lack of resources. Governments must show that they are making the maximum use of available resources toward realizing human rights.

Non-Retrogression: “Non-retrogression” means that once a particular level of enjoyment of rights has been realized, it should be maintained. It should not move backwards.

What is the State's Responsibility for Financing Social Protection?

The State has an important role to play in ensuring that social protection is funded. Some of the areas the State could focus on include:

- ▶ Collecting social insurance contributions.
- ▶ Collecting taxes.
- ▶ Setting tax rates.
- ▶ Hosting tripartite negotiations with employers and workers to set social insurance contribution rates.
- ▶ Imposing sanctions in cases of non-payment of social insurance contributions and taxes.
- ▶ Co-contributing to social insurance schemes.
- ▶ Budgeting and paying for cash and food transfers.

Source: WIEGO 2022.

Resource Mobilization to Create Fiscal Space for Social Protection

As with spending decisions, there is a similar disparity in how governments raise resources for social and economic development. Many countries have succeeded in mobilizing significant resources for public investments during downturns. By utilizing all possible options to maximize fiscal space, these countries have achieved a virtuous circle of sustained growth which, in turn, generates further resources. These countries serve as inspiring examples to others who have been trapped in limited fiscal space, low social spending and weak economic growth.

The uniqueness of each country requires that fiscal space options be carefully examined at the national level, and that alternatives be fully explored in a social dialogue. Most countries adopt a mix of fiscal space policies, usually selected from a combination of the eight options that are available to governments to generate additional resources for social protection, as summarized below:

Financing Options	Description	Example(s)
Re-allocating Public Expenditures	This is the most orthodox option, which includes assessing on-going budget allocations through Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs) and other types of thematic budget analyses; replacing high-cost, low-impact investments with those with larger socio-economic impacts; eliminating spending inefficiencies; and/or tackling corruption.	<p>Egypt created an Economic Justice Unit in the Ministry of Finance to review expenditure priorities, and Costa Rica and Thailand shifted military spending to finance universal health services.</p> <p>Philippines: The group Social Watch Philippines-Alternative Budget Initiative “conducts research and lobby efforts in coming out with annual budget analysis, campaigning against lump sum funds, and engaging the national government and the legislature in the budget process” to fund the social protection programmes, among others. For example, the budget for Social Pension for Indigent Senior Citizens gradually increased from 871 million pesos in 2011 to 23 billion pesos in 2021.</p>

Increasing Tax Revenue

This is a main channel achieved by altering different types of tax rates – such as, on consumption, corporate profits, financial activities, personal income, property, imports or exports, natural resource extraction, and so on – or by strengthening the efficiency of tax collection methods and overall compliance.

Bolivia (South America), **Botswana** (Africa) and **Zambia** (Africa) are all developing countries that have used their natural resources to generate income – through taxes and other measures – to finance social protection and to reduce poverty and inequality.

The **Indonesian** Government gradually withdrew expensive and unsustainable fuel subsidies, while introducing cash transfers to offset the adverse impact on the poor. It also gradually extended healthcare to the entire population, creating a universal healthcare system.

Iran also did a fuel subsidy reform, and provided a universal cash transfer and social health protection, which increased social acceptance of the subsidy reform among the population.

Expanding Social Security Coverage and Contributory Revenues

In existing social security systems, increasing coverage – and therefore the collection of contributions (including through simplifying registration and payment procedures and making digital options available) – is a reliable way to finance social protection, freeing fiscal space for other social expenditures. Social protection benefits linked to employment-based contributions also encourage formalization of the informal economy.

In **Brazil** the Government:

1. reduced the cost of formalization and provided incentives to companies and people to formalize;
2. made the contributions lower for micro-, small, and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) than in the formal sector; and
3. implemented a “monotax” called “Simples”, which allows MSMEs and self-employed workers to make a single and easy payment for taxes and social security contributions.

This resulted in 23 million additional workers paying social security contributions, and thus, fiscal space increased.

Argentina, Uruguay and **Ecuador** have also successfully implemented similar mechanisms.

Lobbying for Aid and Transfers

This requires either engaging with different donor governments or international organizations in order to ramp up North–South or South–South transfers.

The [Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors \(2020\)](#), which comprises more than 200 civil society organizations, has been calling for a Global Fund for Social Protection for the neediest countries, to be financed by the Global North.

A global social protection fund to kickstart national systems of social protection is affordable, with the financing coming from a range of sources, including:

- ▶ Official development assistance (ODA), by increasing ODA commitments towards building social protection systems.
- ▶ Increased international cooperation on taxation.
- ▶ Through international financial institutions (ITUC 2021).

Eliminating Illicit Financial Flows

Given the vast amount of resources that illegally escape developing countries each year – estimated at ten times total aid received – policymakers should crack down on money laundering, bribery, tax evasion, trade mispricing and other financial crimes that are both illegal and deprive governments of revenues needed for social and economic development.

Using Fiscal and Central Bank Foreign Exchange Reserves

This includes drawing down fiscal savings and other state revenues stored in special funds, such as sovereign wealth funds, and/or using excess foreign exchange reserves in the central bank for domestic and regional development.

Chile, Norway and Venezuela, among others, are tapping into fiscal reserves for social investments.

Borrowing or Restructuring Existing Debt

This involves active exploration of domestic and foreign borrowing options at low cost, including concessional loans, following a careful assessment of debt sustainability. For countries under high debt distress, restructuring existing debt may be possible and justifiable if the legitimacy of the debt is questionable and/or the opportunity cost in terms of worsening deprivations of vulnerable groups is high.

South Africa issued municipal bonds to finance basic services and urban infrastructure.

In recent years, more than 60 countries have successfully renegotiated debts, and more than 20 have defaulted/repudiated public debt, such as **Ecuador**, **Iceland** and **Iraq**, directing debt servicing savings to social programmes.

Adopting a More Accommodating Macroeconomic Framework

This entails allowing for higher budget deficit paths and higher levels of inflation without jeopardizing macroeconomic stability

A significant number of developing countries have used deficit spending and more accommodative macroeconomic frameworks during the global recession to attend to pressing demands at a time of low growth and to support socio-economic recovery.

Source: Transform 2017.

 **Watch**

Case Study: “Building Forward Better: Investing in Africa’s Workers”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IcNckNVOXQ>

Duration: 5:03

This video was produced by International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)-Africa and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) on the financing of social protection in Africa. This case shows how tax justice makes economic sense, while balancing budgets on the backs of the poor does not (for example, through indirect taxes such as value added tax, or VAT). It also proposed financing social protection by pushing for genuine payment of 0.7 per cent of the GDP of Organisation for Economic Co-operation for Development (OECD) States (which are predominately developed countries) as well as the creation of a Global Social Protection Fund.

Sample problems on Financing Social Protection

Problem 1:

In Country D, government revenue is low because there is a low rate of tax collection. This means that the Government does not have enough funds to invest in extending social assistance programmes to include more informal workers. How could the Government increase tax revenue to increase the funds they have for social assistance programmes?

Solution: Governments can increase general revenue by increasing tax revenue collection by:

- ▶ Improving administrative systems by making it easier for people and companies to pay taxes and by identifying and criminalizing those big businesses and large taxpayers who are not paying all their taxes.
- ▶ Increasing corporate taxes on big businesses and mining companies, and raising income, property and inheritance taxes on wealthy individuals. This will tax the richest people in a country more than the poorest. At the same time, the government can reduce VAT rates to support small business owners and workers by reducing the price of goods and services they rely on every day.
- ▶ Removing tax breaks for mining companies and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as a way to increase tax revenue from large corporations. These additional funds can help to finance social protection programmes and public services.

Problem 2:

In all countries, women and young people tend to earn less and have more irregular income than other workers in the informal economy. This will make it more difficult for them to contribute to social insurance schemes. Women may also contribute less due to breaks from work during their lives due to childbirth and caring for household members. Young women during their reproductive years are more likely to live in poverty because of their childcare responsibilities and lower earnings. It will be particularly difficult for this group of workers to contribute to social insurance schemes, even though they need maternal and child healthcare and income support. It will also likely mean their benefit levels will be lower than other workers with higher earnings who have contributed more to the social insurance scheme. How could the social protection schemes be structured so that the particular circumstances of women and young workers are taken into account?

Solution: There are options for governments to design social insurance schemes that specifically support young people and women by:

- ▶ Introducing a “solidarity” component that is non-contributory – that is, the State exempts some informal workers from paying contributions while still allowing them to be eligible for benefits.
- ▶ Matching co-contributions that are paid by the State.
- ▶ Informal workers paying a significantly reduced contribution as compared to formal workers.
- ▶ Contribution schedules being more flexible so that workers only pay when they are able.
- ▶ Making care credits available to subsidize the contributions of women workers when they take time off from work to care for children.

For young women who are among the most vulnerable, the most effective and equitable strategy may be to extend social assistance in the form of cash or food transfers, rather than trying to extend social insurance.

Source: WIEGO 2022

Module 3: Facilitation and Preparation

▶ Session 1: Roles of the Facilitator

The facilitator in an adult learning situation is a fellow learner, rather than a “teacher” with all the answers. A facilitator’s role is to generate ideas and new knowledge, and to motivate participants to do the same.

Facilitation is a form of leadership. A facilitator has the opportunity to model the type of leadership qualities that can bring about transformational change. That means holding high standards of integrity and fairness by being impartial, inclusive, transparent and accountable, and by sharing power and authority with participants. In a mixed audience of men and women, the facilitator can demonstrate gender equality by ensuring that men and women receive equal voice, roles and responsibilities as related to the training.

A key role of the facilitator is also to encourage participants to move beyond the training event itself, translating and applying new skills to concrete action in communities and in the workplace.

The facilitator has important responsibilities:

- ▶ To get the right people in the room for the training and to create a safe space for learning.
- ▶ To help identify and keep the focus of the training on shared learning goals.
- ▶ To promote inclusive participation that links new knowledge to life experience (and action!).
- ▶ To encourage participants to test received ideas in order to gain new knowledge, skills and confidence.

Check List for Facilitators:

- ▶ Be very clear about your role: Your behaviour more than your words will convey that you are not the teacher but a fellow learner.
- ▶ Be aware of your eyes: Maintain eye contact with participants.
- ▶ Be aware of your voice: Try not to talk too loudly, too softly or too much.
- ▶ Be aware of your “body language”: Consider where you sit or stand and other ways in which you may unconsciously exercise inappropriate authority.
- ▶ Be aware of your responsibility: Make sure everyone has a chance to be heard and be treated equally; encourage differences of opinion but discourage argument; curb those who dominate; draw in those who are hesitant.
- ▶ Be aware when structure is needed: Explain and summarize when necessary; decide when to extend a discussion and when to go on to the next topic; remind the group when they get off the subject.
- ▶ Be aware of your power and share it: Ask others to take on responsibilities whenever possible (for example: taking notes, keeping time, and, ideally, leading discussion).

▶ Session 2: Facilitation Techniques

Verbal Tools for Training Facilitation

When facilitating a group conversation in a training session, you can use a number of simple verbal tools to engage participants and to make sure everyone is involved.

Probing

Probing is used to determine the mood or general opinion of the group towards a certain topic or point in the discussion. Just asking for a “thumbs up, thumbs down” survey can be enough to get an impression of the general opinion of the group.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means to express the same content that was just stated before but with your own words in order to check that both you and other members of the group have the same understanding of a concept and to give a further opportunity for understanding among some participants who may not have understood it the first time.

Redirecting Questions and Comments

Redirecting a question to the group helps to involve participants more in the discussion. In addition, it also helps the reflection of the group.

Bridging and Referring Back

Recalling an earlier discussion or idea can help the group to better follow the discussion and to connect ideas together.

Shifting Perspective

If the group gets stuck at some point in the discussion, try to shift the perspective and look at the problem from a different angle.

Summarizing

Repetition promotes learning, and summarizing what has been learned so far will help the group reinforce the learning. Do it often or ask someone from the group to do it; a participant who rethinks and recaps the learning content aloud will likely retain significantly more memories about it.

Giving Positive Reinforcement

It is important to encourage people (especially less assertive ones) to state their opinions. Therefore, when someone brings up a good point, make it known that you think it is a good point. This will show the person that his/her participation is appreciated, and will help the person feel confident enough to bring other ideas into the discussion.

Active Listening

- ▶ Attend to what the person is saying. Show you are listening. Inform them you will be taking notes. Provide verbal and non-verbal feedback, such as making eye contact, nodding and smiling.
- ▶ Repeat or paraphrase what the person is telling you to encourage a fuller response. For example, a skeptic might say: "I really can't participate in this training." Your answer could be: "So you think you cannot participate in this training? Tell me more."
- ▶ Reflect the feelings and experiences the person is describing. Pick up cues. For example, say: "So, you are quite upset about this"; "You give me the impression that this worries you a lot"; or "From what you have been saying, it seems to me that you find yourself in a dilemma. You are skeptical about the content of this training, but you are a little bit curious as well."
- ▶ Summarize the person's feelings and experiences to focus on an issue or ask for confirmation. For example, you could say: "I understand that you don't want to participate in certain parts of the training, but you would be willing to try the introductory session. Is that correct?"
- ▶ Probe. Ask questions in a supportive way that encourages the person to provide more information or to clear up any confusion. For example, you could say: "I'm not sure I have understood fully what you said about X" or "Can you say a little more about Y?"
- ▶ Give feedback on the person's ideas or feelings. Disclose relevant personal information about yourself. For example, you could say: "I understand your reluctance, because I had similar worries before my first training as well."
- ▶ Be supportive. Show some warmth and caring. For example, you could say: "It sounds as if you have found quite a good solution. We can certainly talk more about this later, if you wish."
- ▶ Stay quiet. Give the person time to think as well as talk. Be comfortable with silence.

Source: HelpAge International 2020.

Encouraging Women's Participation

Women have many competing priorities, and their assigned gender roles may not encourage – or permit – participation in public activities or training events. As such, it may not be enough to simply invite women to participate in a training and expect a strong turnout. Instead, organizers will need to proactively promote women's participation.

Experienced facilitators know this means spending more time and resources building relationships of trust with women in groups and individually. This may include activities such as spending time with them during the breaks and understanding their stories or giving them a more active role in the activities.

▶ Session 3: Challenges Faced by Facilitators

Participant Type	Why It Happens	What To Do
Quiet One	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Bored▶ Indifferent▶ Timid▶ Superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Gain their interest by asking their opinion.▶ Question the person next to them. Then ask the quiet one to comment on the view expressed.▶ Compliment the person the first time they contribute. Be sincere.▶ Show respect for the person's experience, then ask for their ideas.
Heckler	Probably good-natured most of the time, but distracted by their job or personal problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Keep your temper under control.▶ Honestly agree with one idea, then move on to something else.▶ If the person states a false fact, throw it to the group to turn down.▶ Talk privately with the person as a last resort to find out what is bothering them.
Rambler	One idea leads to another and takes this person miles away from their original point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ When the person pauses for breath, thank them, refocus the group's attention and move on.▶ In a friendly manner, indicate that "we are a little off the subject".▶ As a last resort, use your training schedule as an excuse.▶ Glance at your watch and say: "Time is limited."

<p>Ready Answer</p>	<p>Really wants to help, but makes it difficult by keeping others from participating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Cut the person off tactfully by questioning other participants. ▶ Suggest that “we put others to work”. ▶ Ask the person to summarize. This will keep them attentive and capitalize on their enthusiasm.
<p>Conversationalist</p>	<p>Chatter is usually about personal things, but may be related to the topic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Call the person by name and ask an easy question. ▶ Call the person by name, repeat the last opinion expressed, and ask their opinion of it. ▶ Include them in the discussion.
<p>Clash of Personalities</p>	<p>Two or more individuals clash, dividing the group into factions and endangering the success of the session.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Try to highlight areas of agreement between the two participants. Draw attention to the objective of the session. ▶ Direct a question on the topic to someone not involved in the disagreement. ▶ As a last resort, frankly state that personalities should be left out of the discussion.
<p>Wrong Track</p>	<p>Brings up ideas that are obviously incorrect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Say: “That’s one way of looking at it”, and tactfully make any corrections. ▶ Say: “I see your point, but can we reconcile that with our current situation?” ▶ Handle the situation tactfully, since you will be contradicting the person. Remember, all members of the group will hear how you respond to each individual. You can encourage or discourage participation by the way you communicate.

<p>Mule</p>	<p>Does not see the other side. Supports their own viewpoint no matter what.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ask other members of the group to comment on the person's ideas. They may add another perspective and help the person see differently. ▶ Remind the person that time is short. Suggest that they accept the majority view. ▶ Say you are willing to talk to the person later. Then follow up.
<p>Talker</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Highly motivated ▶ Show-off ▶ Well informed ▶ Just plain talkative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Slow the person down by asking them some difficult questions. ▶ Say: "That's an interesting point. Now let's see what the others think of it." ▶ Draw on the person's knowledge and relay this to the group yourself. In general, for any over-talkative person, you should highlight the need for everyone to have the chance to participate.
<p>Griper</p>	<p>Has a pet peeve, complains for the sake of it, or has a legitimate complaint.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Point out that the aim is to work as efficiently and cooperatively as possible under the present circumstances. ▶ Tell the person you will discuss their problem with them privately at a later time. ▶ Ask another member of the group to respond to the person's complaint.

Source: HelpAge International 2020.

▶ Session 4: Planning and Preparation

Trainings take time to plan, especially when built around relationships of trust and confidence, and they are based on an assessment of participants' needs and interests. Once the aims of the training are established, logistics and other planning considerations also take time and energy. Creating a planning team can help to share these responsibilities and keep timing on track. Three elements to consider in the team are:

- ▶ **Logistics:** Securing the location, providing for translation and technology needs, setting up the room and checking sounds, lights, temperature, arranging for refreshments and food.

Location, Timing and Preparation of Venues:

When sending invitations for the training, find out if any participants have any specific requirements, for example, regarding accessibility, diet or communication.

Prior to the meeting, make sure you consider the following:

- ▶ Can persons with disabilities reach the venue? Will they need any special form of transport to get there? Is there money in the budget to cover the cost of transport or a caregiver, if needed?
- ▶ Can persons with disabilities enter the venue? For people with limited mobility, is the entrance easy to use, with a ramp or hand rails to help people go up steps? Or is there an alternative entrance available?
- ▶ Can persons with disabilities easily reach the meeting room (or hotel room)? Is the meeting room (or hotel room) on the ground floor, or if not, is there a lift? Is the floor surface even? Is there enough light for people to see where they are going?
- ▶ Can persons with disabilities move around in the meeting room easily? Is the room large enough, is there space for smaller break-out groups? Is there enough floor space for flipcharts and enough wall space to hang flipchart sheets up? Is the lighting good?
- ▶ Can persons with special communication needs take part in the training discussions? Can participants with low vision or hearing difficulties sit near the front? If a participant uses sign language, do you have a sign interpreter?
- ▶ Can persons with disabilities use the toilets? Can they be reached easily? Are the doors wide enough? Are the toilets easy to get on and off?

Source: HelpAge International 2020

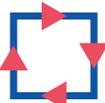
- ▶ **Administration:** Sending out invitations and keeping track of RSVPs, taking care of payments and invoices, putting together packets of materials and supplies, processing evaluations and follow-up communications.
- ▶ **Facilitation:** Identifying the target audience and assessing their learning needs; designing the training agenda and setting learning objectives and outcomes; identifying and inviting guest speakers or experts; facilitating learning events and creating customized lecture notes.





Evaluation and Recap

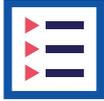
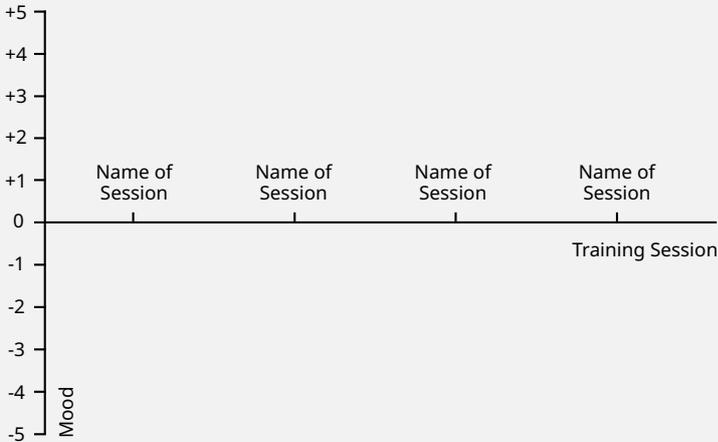
► Day 1 Evaluation

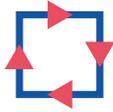
 <p>Times</p>	5 minutes
 <p>Objective</p>	Identify key learning points at the end of Day 1.
 <p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">► 3 sheets of flipchart paper► Marker pens (1 per participant)► Post-It Notes
 <p>Preparation</p>	<p>Take the three sheets of flipchart paper and draw a different emoji on each one: a smiley face, one with a blank expression and one looking sad, as follows:</p> 
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hand round Post-It Notes and ask participants to write down any comments they have about the day, including about the logistics (such as breaks, snacks or venue); facilitation (such as pace, clarity, fun factor); and the content. Tell them to write only one comment per Post-It.2. Ask them to put each Post-It on the sheets of flipchart paper under the emoji that most accurately reflects their comment.

► Day 1 Recap

 <p>Times</p>	15 minutes
 <p>Objective</p>	Remind participants what they have learnt, and clarify any issues before starting the Day 2.
 <p>Materials</p>	5 pieces of paper
 <p>Preparation</p>	<p>Write each of the following questions on a piece of paper (one question per piece of paper):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">► What do you now know that you did not know before?► What shift in your thinking did you experience?► What would you do differently now?► What did you learn yesterday that you are still struggling with?► How do you feel about what you learned here?
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hand round Post-It Notes and ask participants to write down any comments they have about the day, including about the logistics (such as breaks, snacks or venue); facilitation (such as pace, clarity, fun factor); and the content. Tell them to write only one comment per Post-It.2. Ask them to put each Post-It on the sheets of flipchart paper under the emoji that most accurately reflects their comment.

► Day 2 Evaluation

 <p>Times</p>	<p>10 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>Identify key learning points at the end of Day 2.</p>
 <p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 2 sheets of flipchart paper ▶ Red marker pens or little round red stickers
 <p>Preparation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put up the two sheets of flipchart paper next to each other to create one large sheet. Draw x- and y-axes on the paper. The y-axis should be at the far left of the paper and be labelled from -5 at the bottom to +5 at the top. The x-axis should go across the page to the right. 2. Label the x-axis "Training sessions". Write the names of each of the sessions along the x-axis (for example, "Risks and coping mechanisms in communities", "Financing social protection"). 3. Label the y-axis "Mood". 4. The final chart should look something like the image below: <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

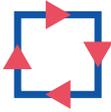


Procedure

1. Ask participants to rate their mood along the y-axis for the different sessions by drawing red dots (or placing stickers). Overall, do they feel the trainer has met the objectives of the day? Leave the room during this exercise or be obviously busy to give participants some privacy.

► Day 2 Recap

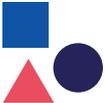
 Times	15 minutes
 Objective	Remind participants what they have learnt, and clarify any issues before starting the Day 3.
 Materials	Blank papers and pen
 Preparation	None



Procedure

1. Ask participants to write an appropriate question about the topics discussed on Day 2 on a standard piece of paper.
2. Form a circle away from any tables, furniture or other obstacles. If the weather is nice, this is a great outdoor activity.
3. Ask participants to crumple their sheet of paper to make a “snowball”.
4. Say “Let’s have a snowball fight” and start throwing the snowballs. Allow 30 seconds for the participants to throw, catch and throw again as many snowballs as they can.
5. At the end of 30 seconds, blow a whistle to stop the snowball fight. Ask each participant to pick a snowball and open it.
6. Ask one participant to read the question written on the paper and respond to the question. Play several rounds with different questions if you want to review the training content.

► Day 3 Wrap-up and Evaluation

 <p>Times</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>
 <p>Objective</p>	<p>Review whether participants' expectations have been met and their worries addressed at the end of Day 3.</p>
 <p>Materials</p>	<p>The original expectations flipchart sheets created by participants during the Introductory Session (Activity 2).</p>
 <p>Preparation</p>	<p>None</p>
 <p>Procedure</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask participants to think back to their expectations from Day 1. Ask them if they feel their expectations have been met? Give them 5–10 minutes to quietly think about this. 2. Emphasize that learning will continue through practice. Suggest that the group stay in touch with each other to exchange experiences and support each other. 3. Ask a volunteer to share what their next action will be. What will they do over the next three months after the training? 4. Ask another 3-4 volunteers to share their next actions if they are different from what has already been mentioned.



UNITED NATIONS
LAO PDR

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Training for on Social Protection in Lao PDR

ເມສາ 2022, ສີ່ເມືອງຊຽງຂວາງ, ແຂວງຊຽງຂວາງ



A man in a light blue striped shirt and glasses is speaking into a black microphone. He is standing and gesturing with his right hand while holding the microphone with his left. He is addressing a group of people seated at tables in front of him.

A man in a light blue shirt is seated at a table on the left, looking towards the speaker. He has his arms crossed and is wearing glasses.

A woman with glasses and a dark patterned top is seated at a table, looking towards the speaker. A black handbag is on the table in front of her.

A man in a blue shirt is seated at a table, looking towards the speaker. He is looking down at something on the table.

A man in a white shirt is seated at a table, looking towards the speaker. He is wearing a headset with a microphone.

Several people are seated at tables in the foreground, facing the speaker. They are wearing headsets with microphones. The tables are covered with white cloths and have several blue water bottles, pink sticky notes, and other items on them. One man in the foreground is wearing a blue shirt and is looking towards the speaker while holding a pen over a notebook.



Annexes

► Annex I. Pre-Training Assessment

Personal Information					
Name (Optional)					
Organization		Job Title			
Years Working in the Organization		Gender		Age	
Previous Social Protection Training					
Have you previously attended training on social protection?			<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		
If yes, give details of what and where (Please list all related social protection trainings/courses you attended)					
How would you rank your interest in learning social protection?			<input type="radio"/> No interest <input type="radio"/> Little interest <input type="radio"/> Somewhat interested <input type="radio"/> Very interested		
Please self-assess the level of your current knowledge on the following topics:					
	Able to teach someone else	Able to teach someone else	Know nothing	Know something, no experience	Some experience, still require supervision
Basic principles of social protection					

Social protection frameworks and functions					
Social protection design and programming					
Social protection financing					
National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)					
Implementation Roadmap of the National Social Protection Strategy					
Health Insurance in Lao PDR					
Social Security in Lao PDR					
Social Welfare in Lao PDR					

Lao PDR = Lao People's Democratic Republic.

► Annex II. Post-Training Evaluation

1. Please Rate the Logistics and Preparation for the Training on a Scale of 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Excellent)

	1	2	3	4	5
Communication Prior to the Training					
Communication During the Training					
Logistics and Organization of the Training					
Accommodation					
Accessibility of the Venue					
Interpretation					

2. Please Rate the Facilitation of the Training on a Scale of 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Excellent)

	1	2	3	4	5
Clarity of Presentations and Explanations					
Support to Participants and Confidence-Building					
Choice of Exercises and Facilitation Methods and Tools					
Time-Keeping and Attention to Energy Levels					
Accessibility of Sessions					

3. Please Rate the Content of the Training on a Scale of 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Excellent)

	1	2	3	4	5
In terms of its relevance to your work and the knowledge and skills you have gained					
Comments					

4. Which Sessions Did You Find Most Useful?

Comments

5. Which Sessions Did You Find Least Useful?

Comments

6. Which Topics Might You Need More Help or Practice with to Become Confident About Them?

Comments

7. Overall, Did the Training Meet Your Expectations?

- Yes, completely
- Partially
- No, not at all

Comments

8. Was Anything Missing That Should Have Been Included in the Training?

Comments

9. Have You Any Other Comments or Suggestions, Including Activities You Think Would Be Useful for Future Training?

Comments

► Annex III. Training Checklist

A list of materials the trainers should prepare for each session is given below.

Session	Checklist	Remarks
Introductory Session		
Activity 1: Getting to Know Each Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Printouts of Handout 1 (1 per participant) <input type="radio"/> Markers or ballpoint pens (1 per participant) 	
Activity 2: Rules and Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> 5 sheets of flipchart paper <input type="radio"/> 4 markers <input type="radio"/> Masking tape 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write the objectives of the training on a flipchart sheet. 2. Display the flipchart sheet outlining the objectives of the training. Leave it there for the entirety of the training. 3. Post a blank flip chart sheet on the wall with the heading "House Rules". 4. Post 3 more flipchart sheets on the wall and label each with one of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Content/Methodology b. Training facilitators/ Resource speakers c. Participants
Session 1: Activity 3: Mapping the Risks and Practical Solutions In Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Printouts of Handout 2 (1 copy per participant) <input type="radio"/> 6 sheets of flipchart paper <input type="radio"/> 6 markers <input type="radio"/> Masking tape <input type="radio"/> Write group number and assignment <input type="radio"/> PPT on Session 1 	<p>Group 1: Has a working family member who had an accident</p> <p>Group 2: Has a new-born child, a 6-year-old daughter with a cognitive disability, and 12-year-old son</p> <p>Group 3: The father is a farmer from an ethnic minority</p> <p>Group 4: Working parents have migrated for work</p> <p>Group 5: A family who recently lost their breadwinner</p> <p>Group 6: Working daughter living with 2 dependent older parents</p>

Session 2: Basic Concepts of and Background on Social Protection

- PowerPoint of social protection terms and definition
- PPT of Session 2

Activity 4: Jargon Busting

Session 3: Existing Social Protection Systems in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

- Printouts of Handout 3
- PPT of Session 2
- Set of three cards with the letters A, B and-C printed on them (6 sets)

1. Write the objectives of the training on a flipchart sheet.
2. Display the flipchart sheet outlining the objectives of the training. Leave it there for the entirety of the training.
3. Post a blank flip chart sheet on the wall with the heading "House Rules".
4. Post 3 more flipchart sheets on the wall and label each with one of the following:
 - a. Content/Methodology
 - b. Training facilitators/ Resource speakers
 - c. Participants

Activity 5: Building a picture of social protection in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Activity 6: Who wants to be a millionaire?

Day 1 Evaluation

- Three sheets of flipchart paper
- Marker pens (1 per participant)
- Post-It Notes

Take the three sheets of flipchart paper and draw a different emoji on each one: a smiley face, one with a blank expression and one looking sad, as follows:



Day 1 Recap

- 5 pieces of paper

Write each of the following questions on a piece of paper (one question per piece of paper):

- ▶ What do you know now that you did not know before?
- ▶ What shift in your thinking did you experience?
- ▶ What would you do differently now?
- ▶ What did you learn yesterday that you are still struggling with?
- ▶ How do you feel about what you learned here?

Ball up the papers together in layers so they look like a cabbage.

Session 4: The role of social protection**Activity 7: Myths of facts?**

- Print: Myths or facts?
- PPT on Session 4
- Video: "UN OHCR Myths or Facts"
- Video: "Child Cash Support in Thailand"

Session 5: Targeting approaches**Activity 8: Understanding the complexity of targeting choices****Activity 9: Targeting social protection**

- Printouts of Handout 4 (2 sets)
- PPT on Session 5
- Video: "Social Pension in the Philippines"

Session 6: Conditional or Unconditional Cash Transfer**Activity 10: Conditional Versus Unconditional**

- PPT on Session 6
- Video: "CCTE"
- Cards with the following written on them:
 - ▶ Conditional
 - ▶ Soft Conditions
 - ▶ Fully Unconditional

Day 2 Evaluation

- 2 sheets of flipchart paper
- Red marker pens or little round red stickers

1. Put up the two sheets of flipchart paper next to each other to create one large sheet. Draw x- and y-axes on the paper. The y-axis should be at the far left of the paper and be labelled from -5 at the bottom to +5 at the top. The x-axis should go across the page to the right.
2. Label the x-axis "Training sessions". Write the names of each of the sessions along the x-axis (for example, "Risks and coping mechanisms in communities", "Financing social protection").
3. Label the y-axis "Mood".

Day 2 Recap

- 6 paper (1 for each participant)

Session 7: Consolidating understanding of social protection

Activity 11: "Skeptics" versus "believers"

- Printout of "Skeptics" and "Believers"
- Two cards with the following written on them:
 - ▶ "I believe social protection is a handout and makes the poor dependent."
 - ▶ "I believe social protection is an investment for the future."
- Masking tape

Set-up two stations at opposite sides of the room with the two cards above. In between the two stations, place an approximately 3m long masking tape line to divide the room into a skeptics side and a believers side, such that the two face each other (as two opposing teams).

<p>Module 2: Session 1: The National Social Protection Strategy</p> <p>Activity 12: Mapping the NSPS to existing social protection in the province</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Printouts of the NSPS brochure (1 for each participant) ○ 6 sheets of flipchart paper ○ Markers ○ PPT on Module 2: Session 1 	
<p>Session 2: Financing social protection</p> <p>Activity 13: Triple “A”: Expanding the fiscal envelope</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Printout of Handout 5 (1 copy) ○ Flipchart ○ Tape ○ PPT on Module 2: Session 2 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cut along the lines in Handout 5 to create 4 individual cards. 2. Tape 2 flipchart sheets together (portrait orientation to obtain a large square) and draw three interlocking circles on them, giving each circle a name: ACCEPTANCE, AUTHORITY, ABILITY. Post this on the wall for all participants to be able to gather in front of it during the activity.
<p>Session 3: Moving forward with the NSPS</p> <p>Activity 14: Implementing the NSPS at the provincial level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sheets of flipchart paper (1 per group) 	
<p>Day 3 Wrap-up and Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The original expectations flipchart sheets created by participants during the Introductory Session (Activity 2). 	

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