
48. Universal versus employment-based social protection?¹

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In an ideal, socially and economically just world – perhaps an eco-social welfare state – access to decent work would, for all adults who wish to work, coincide with a comprehensive, universal, rights-based social protection system, comprising both social insurance and social assistance for all. Unfortunately, reality is different. The International Labour Organization (ILO) – arguably the UN patron agency for rights at work – brokered the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (C102) over 70 years ago (1951), but its pick-up in countries has remained very low: to date, only 63 countries have ratified.² It essentially linked social insurance to employment in the formal economy. In subsequent decades, social protection was conceptualised as one of the four pillars of decent work (Somavia 1999), and social assistance received more attention, as welfare states evolved, and policy makers acknowledged that income support needed to reach beyond those in formal employment.

Despite the longstanding and complex social protection efforts, today four billion people – more than half of the world population – are not covered by social protection. The majority of adults – 2 billion workers – are caught in the so-called informal economy (ILO 2022), with the trend towards casualisation of work tendentially increasing this number. Women are particularly affected, both because of the gendered inequitable nature of their employment, and their multiple roles in the care economy (UN Women 2021) as are other socially marginalised groups. The informal economy, or casual labour, means meagre wages, minimal workplace or environmental safety, no job security or claimable work contract, no protection from harassment, and no form of employment-related insurance. Only 16 per cent of the lowest-income quintile in low-income countries has any coverage (Schüring 2021: 49). Thus, when these workers fall ill, have an accident, become disabled or grow old, or lose their job, there is no income replacement, since social insurance³ is in general only accrued in formal economy jobs (even there not necessarily; Behrendt and Nesterenko 2022). Social assistance remains underdeveloped in most low-income countries, so there is no fallback on publicly funded income support, such as for example unemployment pay, a disability benefit, or a social pension.

Migrant workers – currently an estimated 281 million people living in countries other than their home country (IOM 2022) face challenging situations. Those who are “recorded” or registered can pay into social security, may be eligible for social assistance in the country of residence, and in some instances enjoy the transferability (“portability”) of paid-in contributions when they move (United Nations 2018). The majority of migrants, however, remain outside this practice.

Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) face an even more distressing situation. In 2022, there were 100 million refugees and IDPs, the highest number recorded since the end of World War II (UNHCR 2022). When and if acknowledged as refugees or asylum seekers, and/or residing in refugee/IDP camps, a modicum of social assistance provides the persons concerned with cash or in-kind transfers and access to (basic) health services. This is not related to

employment. However, it is not rights-based either, insofar as benefit amounts or food rations are a function of national or international emergency aid flows and not guaranteed, let alone systemic (Kool and Nimeh 2021: 410f.), and can be and are reduced when funds are insufficient. In response to the large numbers of refugees in their countries, some governments, such as Kenya and Uganda, are now revising their social assistance programming to include coverage of refugees (Holmes and Lowe 2023).

The numbers of refugees and migrants are likely to increase as violent conflicts and political oppression increase (CIVICUS 2023) and the nefarious impacts of climate catastrophes destroy livelihoods (IPCC 2022). Experts estimate that by 2050, over 260 million people may become internally displaced as a result of climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, heat stress, and decreased crop productivity (Clement et al. 2021: xv), while the scale of related outward migration and flight has not yet been measured. The plight and insecurity of these groups highlight the challenges and complexity of social protection – or the broader remit of decent work – and the urgency to act.

This chapter offers a chronicle, tracing the more recent evolution of social protection, from the re-active, stand-alone social assistance or cash transfer movements of the 1990s, to the integrated approach now emerging which could serve to re-insert social protection into a systemic “decent work” agenda, and perhaps even into an eco-social contract (UN 2021; UNRISD 2022). Social protection is understood here as the overarching term comprising social insurance, based on contributions by employers, workers and in some cases the government, into a fund, often parastatal; and social assistance, usually funded from a government’s tax revenues, or co-financed from official development funds, such as in emergency settings (ILO 2021; ILO 2022).

POLITICAL AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE LATE 1990S

In the course of emerging hyper-globalisation (Piketty 2014; UNCTAD 2018; UNRISD 2022) since the 1980s, neoliberal policy approaches became predominant across most countries. In the private sector, this saw the advent of global value chains, and a downsizing or even dismantling of government regulatory responsibilities, e.g., over labour markets. In the public domain, the provision of social services was reduced, and there was a trend to commercialise health and education. Governments of their own volition, or under pressure from the international financial institutions, introduced structural adjustment programmes (SAP).

By the late 1990s, the economic, social and political fallout of these various structural adjustment processes led to the call for “safety nets” (Holzmann et al. 2003; Grosh et al. 2008). These were conceived to remedy the impact of austerity measures in general, structural adjustments requirements in particular, and the de-facto implications of unregulated exploitative global value chains locating to the least-cost, lowest-wage locations. The purpose of the safety nets was to prevent the lowest income or most vulnerable groups from falling into abject poverty because of decreasing public sector employment, falling real wages and dismantled public services.⁴

This safety net reaction transitioned into a vocal push, from governments, civil society and UN agencies for social protection in the sense of social assistance. Another more general trigger was the attention to poverty and an aspiration to lift households above the poverty line.

Ideas emerged around a trajectory from remedial to transformative social protection, the latter conceptualised as a means for individuals/households to transition out of income poverty into employment/decent work (Devereux and Sabbates-Wheeler 2004; Schüring 2021: 48).

Social assistance can follow a “targeted” remit to cover all households under the poverty line, or all particularly vulnerable groups, or can be “universally” distributed to all economic classes, usually by age group or other categories (Schüring 2021), with subsequent built-in redistribution via progressive taxation of higher-income groups. The latter can be conceptualised as a basic income grant or universal basic income (see Ruth Castel-Branco and Nicolas Pons-Vignon, this volume); the universal child benefit in the UK is an example of such an approach in an age-related application (United Kingdom n.d.).

Early and famous examples of large social assistance programmes include *Oportunidad/Prospera* (Mexico, introduced 1997) (World Bank 2014), the *Bolsa familia* (Brazil, launched 2003, building on preceding initiatives) (World Bank 2010), “Hartz IV” (Germany 2002) (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales 2003), and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) (India, 2006) (Ministry of Rural Development 2014). These are all examples of means-tested, i.e., targeted transfers, conditioned on particular behaviours, usually compliance with health-, job- or skills-seeking responsibilities (Schüring 2021: 47) of the recipient or her family to build “human capital”.

This “cash transfer movement” (Hanlon et al. 2010; Leisering 2019; Schüring 2021) is certainly welcome as a social band-aid. From their design, cash transfers extend beyond formal employment and were thus an innovation. But cash transfers types of social assistance have many shortcomings. Most programmes of the human development/human capital genre of social assistance have/had a productivist angle, as opposed to highlighting the right to income support. The compliance burdens on low-income and socially disadvantaged groups were often high and gendered, with women in the household expected to manage, and deliver proof of, education and health take ups of their children, even when these services were not easily accessible (Molyneux 2006; Razavi 2011).⁵ Employment schemes make jobs offers regardless of their quality, or their match with the recipient’s skills, capabilities or interests (example: Hartz IV), and workers in low-income countries are expected to take on exacting public works assignments (workfare) (example: MGNREGA: Ehmke 2015; Koehler 2017).

The benefit levels tend to be very low, barely reaching the poverty line threshold in low-income countries, and in the higher-income countries narrowly based on monetary targets as opposed to societal inclusion. Moreover, with means testing for poverty levels, or a focus on identity-based transfers, there is always a risk of discrimination and undermining an individual’s or a household’s dignity, notably in situations of community-led selection of transfer recipients (Audin 2020; Roelen 2020; Schüring 2021: 49; Kühner and Chou 2023).

Moreover, the first generations of these social assistance programmes were not attuned to addressing climate change, and social services were not factored in. Over time, however, some of the employment schemes did incorporate environmental infrastructure schemes (for the MGNREGA, see UNRISD 2016; for Brazil: *Bolsa Verde*, for South Africa *Working for Water*: Malerba 2021: 696f.). In recent years, many social assistance monetary transfers have been broadened to include social services for the recipient households as well (Schüring 2021). Some countries have added a basic basket of vouchers or cash for children to facilitate their access to educational or cultural services (e.g., Hartz IV) (Bundesministerium n.d.).

CAUTIOUS POLICY SHIFT

By the 2010s, after roughly a decade of different forms of cash transfers/social assistance programmes, global policy orientations began to shift, sometimes referred to as a “social turn” (UNRISD 2016; Koehler et al., 2021). The UN’s MDGs (2000-2015) were not achieving their goal to “halve poverty” by 2015, and the 2008 Great Recession gave a new prominence to social policy (ILO and WHO 2009; Schüring 2021). Modified, new approaches to social protection appeared on the horizon, such as the ILO Global Job Pact which covers both social protection and employment (ILO 2009; also see Deacon 2013). They paid increasing attention to using individual elements of social assistance transfers as stepping stones (Cichon, Behrendt and Wodsak 2011: 44) towards building a social protection system (Schüring 2021: 41). For example, the ILO Recommendation on social protection floors (R 202) adopted in 2012 proposes four guarantees as key to social assistance accompanying the life cycle – child grants, working-age support, social pensions for the elderly, and throughout: health – the latter expanding the notion of social protection beyond the safety net approach (ILO 2012).

The Floor approach was criticised on several accounts. Parts of the trade union movement objected that the minimalist approach (“floor”), risked undermining more ambitious efforts to formalise employment, and thereby assure access to social insurance with proper, and higher, benefit packages (Deacon 2013). Others criticised that it was merely a recommendation – i.e., lacking the traction of a binding Convention (see for instance Sepúlveda and Nyst 2012). Nevertheless, it provided new momentum by proposing that governments position social assistance on a continuum, with the built-in strategy of moving, step-by-step, from minimal benefits to universal full-fledged coverage, eventually built into broader, systemic social policy.⁶ The Recommendation text concentrates, however, on social protection and does not refer to employment, or to a broader notion of the role of a welfare state.

Thanks to effective advocacy, social protection as a stand-alone policy idea was integrated into the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN 2015), explicitly in SDG 1.3 “Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable”,⁷ as well as SDG 3.8 on essential health services, SDG 5.4. on social protection policies, and SDG 10.4 on fiscal, wage and social protection policies. It is implicitly also present in its more encompassing format of decent work, in SDG 8.5 on decent work and in 8.8 on labour rights.

Social protection as a policy recommendation also found its way into the Paris Agreement on Climate Change of the same year and into the UN’s Migrants (United Nations 2018) and Refugee Compacts (UNHCR 2018).

Subsequently, the UN wove the care economy into the social protection discourse. Building on SDG 5, the UN system developed arguments for the necessity to embed monetary transfers into a broader set of measures (UN Expert Group 2018; Chopra 2018). The notion of social protection was effectively broadened to include social care services and social infrastructure, elements that had been neglected both in the ILO Convention on Social Security, and in the Social Protection Floor recommendation.

At the multilateral level, the Social Protection Floor Recommendation, and notably since its anchoring in the widely accepted Agenda 2030, was sufficiently soft-toothed to bring together a coalition of UN agencies, human rights special rapporteurs, civil society and also the international financial institutions – the World Bank and the IMF – in the Social Protection Interagency Cooperation Board (SPIAC).⁸

Another initiative emerged from civil society actors – the Global Coalition for a Social Protection Floor.⁹ One of its outputs was research and advocacy towards creating an internationally sourced global social protection fund to finance either the technical support needed to introduce or reinforce social protection, or to actually cover transfers. These initiatives, underpinned by Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) special rapporteurs (Sepulveda 2014; de Schutter 2021) and ILO experts, produced detailed calculations of the cost of such a fund, and analytical and advocacy reports to the UN General Assembly (Ortiz et al. 2018; Kaltenborn 2020). The idea of such a fund plays a role in new models of multilateral funding efforts.¹⁰

At the country level, drawing on the Floor Recommendation,¹¹ the ILO and other UN agencies convinced many governments in low-income countries to map their existing social protection programmes, *inter alia* by intensifying exercises of mapping and costing the necessary fiscal budget expenditures.

The Covid pandemic in 2020 alerted governments, the UN, civil society, and broad swathes of the media to the literally life-threatening lack of social protection, as millions of people lost their employment, and many in the informal sector lost their livelihoods and homes altogether. It made palpable that the social assistance programmes since the 1990s had not included coverage for working-age informal sector cohorts, migrants, and underpaid or unpaid care work. The pandemic also revealed the depth of social exclusions, with those individuals, communities and countries most marginalised especially heavily affected, both in terms of access to health (and education) services and in terms of income replacement (UNRISD 2022). As a response, there was an unprecedented global surge in social protection measures in 2020–2021, with a record 3000 new, amended or topped-up governmental social protection programmes at country level. These include adaptations in social insurance (e.g., remunerated furlough) and increases in social assistance programmes.¹²

THE RATIONALE FOR UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

This brings us to the overarching question: in light of a resurgence of acute poverty, and increasing income and wealth inequalities and rising food insecurity and hunger, how to tackle the massive global gap in social protection? Given the pertaining commitments of the Social Security Convention, the Social Protection Floor Recommendation, the 2030 Agenda and the two Compacts on Refugees and on Migrants, should social protection be universally available for all citizens, or even for all residents of a country, regardless of age and situation, or should it be employment-based, resulting strictly from contributions into an insurance fund?

Neoliberal economic theories criticise universal coverage from an efficiency and effectiveness angle. The World Bank generally advocates for a targeted safety net approach in order to concentrate limited available fiscal resources on those households most in need of financial support, thus providing them with a larger and thus more meaningful monetary transfer (e.g., Grosh et al. 2008). It was also argued that targeted benefits avoided creating dependency behaviours by not covering households that would have alternative means of support (De Neubourg et al. 2007).¹³

Conversely, looking at social protection as a policy oriented to economic and social justice and ecological goals, several interconnected arguments for universal social protection,¹⁴ de-coupled from employment and citizenship, come to mind.

Pure common sense: in lower-income countries, large segments of the population lack social protection coverage, and their incorporation into the formal economy in the foreseeable future does not appear probable, while in higher-income countries increasing numbers of (younger) adults do not enter or are pushed out of formal employment.¹⁵ Hunger and income poverty and income and wealth inequalities are rising exponentially, and visibly (UNRISD 2022). In addition, the massive, continuous, and increasing displacements of people and communities, caused by conflict, climate catastrophes, poverty, and lack of decent work, point to the obvious need for alternative access to and funding for income – in the form of social protection. In light of global instabilities, there is a case to shift from employment-based and citizen-based social protection to resident-based programmes and systems (Kool and Nimeh 2021).¹⁶ A precursor for this approach can be found in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which commits to social rights for all children, regardless of their location and their or their parents' citizenship.

With regard to newer threats and challenges, the impact of climate change is very likely to create more distress-driven out-migration and flight. As Malerba (2021: 688ff.) points out, climate shocks as well as gradual, slow-onset climate impacts affect the lowest-income groups the hardest; because of their occupations and their locations within countries, they are least likely to have the means that are necessary to adapt to climate change. Moreover, countries in Asia and the Pacific and in Africa are the most vulnerable to climate change but are among those with the least resources to respond. To adequately address climate catastrophes, universal social protection systems are necessary in-country (Malerba 2021: 692), regionally and globally: climate refugees will deserve international support, including in the form of social protection in their countries of refuge.

Politically, those same trends of poverty, inequality, hunger, and displacement undermine social inclusion and social cohesion (Koehler 2021), both within countries and supra-nationally. Rights-based, universal social protection can address rising income poverty and hunger, and exploding income and wealth cleavages, and appeal to solidarity among income groups and across social classes (Deacon 2013; ILO 2019). It can serve to overcome the impact of social exclusion and marginalisation based on gender, caste, ethnicity, faith, citizenship and geographic location, and can avoid the stigmatisation created by targeted programmes. However, it must be systemic. The benefit payment amounts need to raise the income of the lowest quintile to at least allow for a decent standard of living, and on the fiscal revenue side need to incorporate genuinely progressive taxation schemes. The universalist social cohesion or eco-social contract intention is missed if it does not tackle income and wealth inequalities (UNRISD 2022).

This feeds into the fiscal argument for universal social protection – although social assistance places a burden on government budgets in the immediate term, beyond serving to achieve redistribution, it would be in sync with the Keynesian aggregate demand and anti-cyclical, automatic economic stabilisation argument (Ortiz et al. 2018; UNRISD 2022). Incomes would subsequently rise, feeding government revenues and thus replenishing the money spent. Most recently, an impact evaluation study found that temporary unconditional cash transfers for social assistance are “highly cost-effective, and their impact persists for years” (Legovini 2023).¹⁷

And last but not least, there is the human rights case for universality. Predating the Social Security Convention, social protection (at that time called social security) is cast as a right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This was made more concrete with the Covenant

on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (entry into force 1974) – which is binding for those 171 countries that are states party (Cichon, Behrendt and Wodsak 2011).¹⁸ It is a commitment to a country's own citizens; and, in light of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN 2015) has been elevated into a commitment to cover all residents of a country, regardless of citizenship,¹⁹ via the targets on universal social protection floors and universal health coverage. Universality is integral to this in the Agenda's language: leaving no one behind (ILO 2019).

Moreover, this commitment to universality can be interpreted as an international "extra-territorial obligation"; for example, for higher-income countries to facilitate access to social protection in lower-income countries by subsidising their social protection efforts (Kaltenborn 2020).

OUTLOOK

There is an initiative on the policy horizon which notionally could unite the social protection and decent work remit: the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, which the UN Secretary-General launched in 2021 (UN 2021).²⁰ This is of interest since it brings the Social Protection and Decent Work Agenda to an UN-agency-wide platform, in a sense "elevating" it above the ILO or the World Bank levels. The Accelerator was a reaction to the socio-economic and fiscal ravages of the Covid-19 pandemic, designed to bring together "member States, international financial institutions, social partners, civil society and the private sector to help countries create 400 million decent jobs, including in the green, digital and care economies, and to extend social protection coverage to the 4 billion people currently excluded" (ILO 2022). The Accelerator refers to human rights and international labour standards, including social dialogue (ILO 2022). By explicitly putting together decent work and social protection, it goes beyond the social protection floor approach. However, it underestimates the challenge of creating formal employment eligible for social security, and risks undermining the energy and momentum of the social protection movement that has crystallised around the Social Protection Floor.

A simultaneous report by the UN Secretary-General, Our Common Agenda (UN 2021), urges governments "to accelerate steps to achieve universal social protection coverage" and posits that "the gradual integration of the informal sector into social protection frameworks is also essential if we are to move towards universal coverage." (UN 2021, p. 18).²¹ Decent work is cast as a basic human right (UN 2021, p. 27). The Our Common Agenda text presents the normative idea of a renewed

social contract between Governments and their people and within societies, so as to rebuild trust and embrace a comprehensive vision of human rights. ... which should also include updated governance arrangements to deliver better public goods and usher in a new era of *universal social protection*, health coverage, education, skills, *decent work* and housing, as well as universal access to the Internet by 2030 as a basic human right. (UN 2021, p. 5, italics GK)²²

This approach needs to be stressed if global social policy wants to move towards an eco-social welfare state.

NOTES

1. I thank Christina Behrendt, Esther Schüring, and the volume's editors for crucial insights and comments. Any remaining misconceptions are mine.
2. There are many seminal, but neglected, precursors to social protection from the 1919–1945 period. Examples include the right to maternity benefits (from 1919!) C003 – Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), Article 3. www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312148:NO; the portability of acquired entitlements (from 1919!) in the Unemployment Convention, 1919 (No. 2) Unemployment Convention. Article 3. www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312147:NO; sickness insurance including for servants (care economy!) (from 1927), sickness insurance. Article 2. www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312169:NO; and coverage for old age and invalidity (from 1933) Old-Age Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 35).
3. Contributory social insurance covers persons in formal employment for a minimum period of time, and by definition covers nine areas. Because of the attachment to formal employment, in many countries, it is skewed, as it benefits “privileged” groups (government staff, employees in larger businesses, or members of the military). It tends to be gendered; and disadvantaged excluded communities/individuals (caste, ethnicity, faith-based and other minorities) are often not covered because of the politics and economics of social exclusion (Stewart 2008). Jobs in the care economy, traditionally fulfilled by women, are usually not covered because they are not registered, or the they work in a number of households without a single employer: Behrendt and Nesterenko (2022).
4. For example, many countries introduced user fees for education, so that families withdrew their children from school. In connection with fees for health services, households were hit by “catastrophic” health expenditures, defined as spending more than 10 per cent of income on health services, further exacerbating all forms of poverty; each year, more than 100 million people are driven into poverty because they have to pay for health services out of their own pockets (Kaltenborn 2020).
5. In principle but not always in practice, the benefit was discontinued in cases of non-compliance, adding a punitive element to the programme, especially since welfare services or psychosocial support to the household were not included in the initial programming.
6. The ILO country offices offered technical assistance.
7. This carries a precise statistical indicator for its measurement: 1.3.1 – Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/ systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable.
8. SPIAC was created in 2012 at the request of the G20. It has 20 members from United Nations agencies and organisations, multilateral and bilateral development agencies, civil society and other organisations. www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@nylo/documents/genericdocument/wcms_644769.pdf. For a review see ILO, FAO and UNICEF (2022).
9. An international alliance of over 100 civil society organisations: www.socialprotectionfloorcoalition.org/about.
10. It needs to be noted that the social protection fund idea competes with many other calls for multilateral Funds – the Climate Fund promised in 2009; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM); the Accelerator (see below); and most recently the SDG Fund proposed by the UN Secretary-General and the funding for climate change-related Loss and Damage demanded during the UNFCCC COP 2022 negotiations.

11. ILO GESS: www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowRessource.action?sessionId=HdQlp5NtZnpMiFc-kcfuZhbFLcANMfQeiu8ONTscfq9-6QJiXj5d!145745630?id=19100.
12. ILO Social Protection Monitor: Announced measures throughout the world. Dated 5/9/2022. www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowWiki.action?id=3426. Also see Gentilini et al. (2021).
13. See for example the controversy over exclusion and inclusion errors.
14. See ILO (2021) a for a more comprehensive case for universal social protection.
15. On the contrary, as/if economies decarbonise, de-industrialise, or move into the services sector, there is an observed trend towards casualisation of work. E.g. Behrendt, Christina, Quynh Anh Nguyen, and Uma Rani (2019).
16. Kool and Nimeh (2021: 412) deduct from Articles 22 and 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that “social protection rights were initially granted to all individuals, citizens and non-citizens”.
17. This assessment is of strategic interest, since it is a study by the World Bank Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) department, drawing on 38 randomised controlled trials from 14 developing countries: Legovini (2023).
18. For a discussion of the implications of the Covenant, as developed in comments, see Kaltenborn (2020).
19. See the support from World Bank and ILO USP2030. 2019. “Together to Achieve Universal Social Protection by 2030 (USP2030) – A Call to Action”. Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection. www.usp2030.org/gimi/RessourcePDF.action?id=55464.
20. www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2021/09/un-secretary-general-calls-for-accelerated-action-on-jobs-and-social-protection-to-avoid-an-uneven-global-recovery-and-prevent-future-crises, ILO (2022). Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, www.ilo.org/global/topics/sdg-2030/WCMS_846674/lang--en/index.htm.
21. Relevant decisions at the ILO’s governing board ILO 2021b commit to “improve coverage of those not yet adequately protected, including by ensuring access to adequate social protection for workers in all types of employment – formal and informal – and making social protection systems more inclusive and effective as enablers of national formalization strategies” (para. 13 p. 4). Also see ILO (2021c).
22. This vision has been bolstered in the call for an SDG Fund (UN 2023) which would “accelerate progress towards the SDGs, including through investments in renewable energy, *universal social protection*, *decent job creation*, healthcare, quality education, sustainable food systems, urban infrastructure, and the digital transformation” (UN 2023, p. 2) (italics GK).

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