

DRAFT CFS DECISION BOX:

SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR FOOD SECURITY

CSO comments, 13th July

The Committee notes that:

- social protection refers to measures that address food insecurity and vulnerability through social **transfers** assistance (safety nets), social insurance and efforts at social inclusion;
- the right to adequate food and the right to social protection are human rights under international law;
- social protection should pay attention to gender and related vulnerabilities and discrimination. This also includes the particular nutritional needs of women and children;
- social protection policies should adequately consider the challenges faced in contexts of political fragility, protracted crises or conflict situations where state capacities are limited;
- social protection systems should not be seen as a burden on fiscal systems but as investments in **people** human capital accumulation and economic growth.

The Committee recommends that:

1. **Member States should strive to design and put in place a comprehensive and nationally owned social protection system that contributes to ensuring the realisation of the right to adequate food for all and the right to social protection. This should consider:**
 - Development of a comprehensive social protection portfolio and action plan that seeks to address structural poverty and food insecurity, and to achieve MDG1 targets as part of a national food security and poverty reduction strategy.
 - The process should be country-led with rigorous stakeholder consultation, including the active participation of local communities. Social Protection Floor should be promoted to achieve income security for food security “The guarantees should ensure at a minimum that, over the life cycle, all in need have access to essential health care and to basic income security which together secure effective access to goods and services defined as necessary at the national level.”¹. It has to be a coordinated process which includes what has already been achieved in other UN agencies, such as ILO, rather than to establish a separate social protection process. ~~One possible model for the social protection portfolio is the ‘Food Security Floor’ as proposed for consideration in this report, which would identify a minimum set of appropriate social protection and other interventions that would realise the right to food in each country.~~
 - The design should start with a national food security assessment and should include: a mix of appropriate tools, goals and intended beneficiaries, targeting and registration methodologies, institutional arrangements, delivery mechanisms, accountability systems, sound monitoring and evaluation that includes impact indicators for nutrition, funding requirements and funding sources.
 - Ensuring inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination is crucial, to ensure that social protection is integrated with broader food security programming.
 2. **Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders should ensure that social protection systems pursue a ‘twin-track’ strategy to maximise their positive impacts**
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on food security, by providing essential assistance in the short-term and supporting livelihoods in the long-term, by:

- Adequate linkages are required between the two tracks of immediate and long term interventions making the transition from humanitarian assistance to predictable, longer-term development approaches, reaching the Social Protection Floor. These can improve the child nutrition and improve cognitive development, school attainments and future labour income, productivity and safety, thereby improving income potential and promoting development.
- Ensuring that social protection systems deliver social assistance or social insurance to food insecure people, while simultaneously protecting or building productive assets that contribute to economic growth and reduce the risk of future food insecurity. Examples are public works programmes and conditional cash transfers, which transfer food or cash while investing in physical infrastructure and human development capital formation respectively;
- Giving attention to its use to foster increased agricultural productivity for the poor through targeted input subsidies, weather based insurance, public works projects that create agricultural assets such as irrigation, and home-grown school feeding that purchases food from local smallholder farmers, as well as integrated programmes that link cash or food transfers to agricultural livelihood packages and extension services.
- Establishing strong linkages from social protection to complementary sectors such as education, health and agriculture. Social protection should also enhance poor people's access to key institutions, including markets and financial services. Any sustainable growth strategy needs a social protection component.

3. Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders need to give enhanced attention to the better design and implementation of social protection systems to address vulnerability to poverty and chronic as well as acute hunger, including access on demand to everyone who needs assistance at anytime of the year and stage of lifecycle from infancy to retirement, and by putting contingency financing in place for rapid scaling up when required. This requires attention to:

- Chronically vulnerable individuals who might need permanent assistance, recognising that not everyone can graduate out of food insecurity and reliance on transfers.
- Social protection must be predictable and reliable, to counteract the unpredictability and vulnerability of livelihoods that is a fundamental source of food insecurity, and it should be appropriate and sensitive to vulnerabilities at particular stages of life. Social protection schemes should be extended to rural areas and cover all communities.
- In prioritization of programmes, given resource constraints, countries are encouraged to adopt a lifecycle-based approach to nutrition. This would suggest that a priority for attention is social protection that addresses the critical “first 1000 days” from conception to 2 years old. Programmes should align with national nutrition policies; ensure maternal nutritional support and access to health care, as well as ongoing nutritional support for lactating mothers, and appropriate nutritious complementary feeding for children between 6 - 24 months. Potential programming includes direct transfers of appropriate food, and/or cash transfers to ensure access a nutritious diet, to care and services, and appropriate food where available in the marketplace.
- Social protection systems should be designed in such a way that they can respond quickly to shocks such as droughts, floods and food price spikes. Positive examples include demand-driven employment guarantee schemes in South Asia, and safety net programmes in East Africa that added new beneficiaries during the 2011 food crisis.

3. 4. Member States are urged to complement social protection programmes with appropriate legislation supporting the fulfilment of human rights, including those related to food and social protection, in particular:

- The right to food and social protection as recognised in international human rights law and by provisions recommended by the Social Protection Floors [Recommendation No. 202](#) of the International Labour Organisation.
 - Social protection programmes should be grounded in national institutional frameworks and incorporated into national legislation, so that governments recognise their duty to implement and deliver these basic human rights and residents have a legal basis for making food security claims on the state.
 - States should work towards the adoption of a national right to food strategy to ensure food and nutrition security for all, based on human rights and the formulation of policies and corresponding benchmarks.
 - Social protection, as part of a broader development strategy, must promote gender equality and the protection of women's rights and must be based on active and meaningful participation, transparency and access to information. As progressive rights governments should strive to prioritize resource allocation for their fulfilment.
 - [Should identify the importance of addressing vulnerability to under-nutrition by referring to evidence which suggests larger programme impact on nutrition for girls occur where transfers are unconditional or conditional on health and education as supposed to saving requirements and work.](#)
 - [Build in mechanisms to evaluate the cost of a nutritious diet, and use this to determine the size of cash transfers in contexts where market systems are functioning well and cash transfer is the most appropriate response.](#)
 - [Be flexible to allow for mid course corrections in the value of transfer and in the modality of transfer to meet the needs of people affected by covariate risks.](#)
 - [Include a mapping of vulnerabilities to covariate risks in the country as a part of contingency planning and creation as well as regular updating of a database to support targeting \(if needed\) in times of crisis.](#)
 - [Protect productive assets during time of crisis and address the 'resilience deficit' which results from recurrent crises.](#)
 - [Ensure minimum wage policies and employment schemes include rural workers as well as their right to negotiate a living wage which could secure enough food for the entire family.](#)
4. ***5. Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders provide support for and advocate for monitoring and evaluation of the impact of social protection programmes that includes impact indicators for improvement in the income and nutritional status of beneficiaries, including:***
- As a minimum, dietary diversity should be included as one such indicator, to provide a comparable measure of impact that can help to identify the most effective tools for addressing structural hunger and poverty.
 - Monitoring systems and evaluations should include a gender audit, to capture potential heightened risks facing women and the girl child.
 - [Governments should develop SP policies, programmes and instruments aiming to respond to the most important food entitlements failures, production, employment and income, trade, and transfers. Therefore the CFS urges governments to prioritize programmes that ensure small scale producers to maintain their access and control over their productive resources, to develop policies and programmes prioritizing employment, stable incomes and decent living wages, prioritize resilience through the reinforcement of local, national and regional food markets, and ensure transfers that promote social justice including through progressive tax reforms](#)

