

# Social Protection Brief No. 37

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## Social Protection Working Group

### At a glance

- Publications
- Working and Policy Papers
- Reports & Briefs
- Calls & Newsletters
- Events

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### About this working group:

The working group aims at exchanging information and discussing ongoing research related to social protection. Researchers dealing with social protection and interested in an international exchange are also welcome to join.

## Publications

[The role of informal worker associations in cushioning members during multiple interlinked crises in Kenya and Tanzania](#) by Nina Torm, Godbertha Kinyondo, Winnie Mitullah, Lone Riisgaard, Aloyce Gervas, Raphael Indimuli and Anne W. Kamau. *International Labour Review*, 2025, 64 (1), 1593–1615.

This article analyses the capacity of informal worker associations to provide social protection during times of multifaceted crises in Kenya and Tanzania. Focusing on informal workers in the construction, micro-trade and passenger transport sectors before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, we find that social cushioning provided by associations is more fragile during a covariate crisis than during idiosyncratic shocks. Country- and sector-level differences in crisis response emerge, yet similarities are also revealed as most associations restricted or altered their activities. Our findings highlight the need to strengthen formal protection systems to better handle covariate crises and thereby also prevent informal support structures from collapsing.

[Universal versus employment-based social protection?](#) by Gabriele Koehler. In: Madelaine Moore, Christoph Scherrer & Marcel van der Linden (eds.), *The Elgar Companion to Decent Work and the Sustainable Development Goals*, chapter 48, pages 615-626, Edward Elgar Publishing.

In an ideal world, decent work would coincide with a comprehensive social protection system under an eco-social welfare state. In reality, however, four billion people are not covered by social protection -informal economy workers, migrants, refugees. Women are particularly affected. This dire situation is a result of the downsizing or even dismantling of government regulatory responsibilities since the 1980s in step with emerging hyper-globalisation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights casts social protection as a right. In lower-income countries, the shift into formalized, decent work is not probable in the foreseeable future; in higher-income countries, increasing numbers of adults do not enter or are pushed out of formal employment. Conflict, climate catastrophes, poverty, and lack of decent work necessitate access to universal social protection. It can address income and social cleavages, and promote solidarity among income groups and across social classes. The recent UN initiative for a Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions could help re-unite decent work and social protection, and further a move towards an eco-social welfare state.

## Working and Policy Papers

[Working Paper Series on Social Policy in Demand](#) by the Department of Social Policy and Social Protection of the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences.

### Recent Publications Include:

- Ceylan, Y., Teixeira, F., Musim, N., & Kuloshe, S. (2024). *Disability-inclusive social protection in West Africa: People-centered, community-driven, and human rights-based* (Social Policy in Demand: A Working Paper Series, 2024/05). Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.18418/978-3-96043-120-6>

- Musim, N. G. (2024). *Social protection policies and fertility: How can social protection measures address the low fertility rate in Germany?* (Social Policy in Demand: A Working Paper Series, 2024/04). Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.18418/978-3-96043-115-2>
- Martens, J. (2024). *Management of climate-related hazards in Germany through adaptive social protection: The case of the Ahr Valley flooding in 2021* (Social Policy in Demand: A Working Paper Series, 2024/03). Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.18418/978-3-96043-117-6>
- Ceylan, N. Y. (2024). *Adaptive role of (universal) child benefits in emergency responses in Turkey* (Social Policy in Demand: A Working Paper Series, 2024/02). Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.18418/978-3-96043-116-9>
- Sauer, M. (2024). *Housing as a success factor for fair migration of skilled workers* (Social Policy in Demand: A Working Paper Series, 2024/01). Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.18418/978-3-96043-113-8>

**[Social Protection for Economic Inclusion in Latin America: the potential of comprehensive programming](#)** by de Carvalho, T. & K. Roelen (2025). CSGD Policy Paper #1. Milton Keynes: Centre for the Study of Global Development, The Open University.

In the last decade, the fields of social protection and economic inclusion have increasingly shifted from offering standalone support to providing comprehensive programming. Instead of delivering cash transfers, asset transfers or micro-credit as single component interventions, schemes combine multiple elements with the aim of making programming more impactful and ultimately more cost-effective.

Latin America has always been at the forefront of these efforts. In terms of social protection, it pioneered the conditional cash transfer (CCT) approach in the 1990s, and experiences in the region have since served as an example for many other countries. Providing families in poverty with cash in combination with behavioural requirements regarding children’s school attendance or health checkups and social work support has proven impactful in improving human capital development. A wide evidence base attests to their effect on family and children’s well-being outcomes. The role of CCTs in supporting economic inclusion, however, is less well documented.

## Reports & Briefs

**[Full Study: Strengthening the Linkages Between Social Registries and Climate Risk Data in Asia and the Pacific](#)** by the World Food Programme (WFP), April 2025

The Asia Pacific region is one of the regions most affected by climate change. In 2022 alone, extreme weather events affected over 64 million people in Asia and the Pacific and caused economic damage estimated at US\$57 billion. Asia-Pacific countries experienced, on average, six natural disasters a year over the past three decades – about twice as many as developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean region and about three times as many as in sub-Saharan Africa. The effects of climate shocks can have longer-term negative impacts on incomes and asset accumulation. Due to the increasing frequency and severity of disasters that disproportionately impact vulnerable communities, additional assistance and planning are needed to help households face increasing climate shocks.

## **Regional Policy Brief: Leveraging Social Registries for Climate Action in the Asia-Pacific Region by the World Food Programme (WFP), April 2025**

The Asia-Pacific region is the most disaster-prone region in the world. A significant portion of the population is exposed and vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather and climate events. People in the region are six times more likely to experience climate and other weather-related hazards than those outside the region. The impact of these climate-related hazards is staggering. Over a 30-year period (1970 to 2021), a total of 3,612 disasters attributed to weather, climate, and water extremes were reported throughout Asia. These hazards caused more than 984,000 fatalities and US\$1.4 trillion in economic losses. In 2022 alone, extreme weather events affected over 64 million people in the region and caused US\$57 billion in economic damages.

## **Country Policy Brief: Strategies for Leveraging Social Registries for Climate Action in LAO PDR by the World Food Programme (WFP), April 2025**

Lao PDR is experiencing significant climate-related hazards, primarily floods, droughts, and extreme heat, exacerbated by climate change. Floods are the most common natural hazard, with 19 recorded events from 1981-2020, impacting 83% of households in Vientiane and causing an average of 60% crop loss during heavy flooding. This poses a substantial risk to the 70% of the population reliant on agriculture. Drought is primarily concentrated in highland areas, while flooding predominantly affects major river basins, with Vientiane being particularly vulnerable. Recent events, such as tropical cyclone YAGI in September 2024, triggered floods and landslides, affecting thousands in northern provinces.

## **Country Policy Brief: Strategies for Leveraging Social Registries for Climate Action in Sri Lanka by the World Food Programme (WFP), April 2025**

Sri Lanka experiences significant natural hazards, primarily floods, droughts, extreme heat, and landslides, which are exacerbated by climate change. Floods are the most common type of natural hazard in Sri Lanka with 37 recorded events from 1981-2020, followed by droughts, then storms. In Sri Lanka, flood hazards are common across the country's lowland areas, whereas drought hazards are closely related to the timing and geography of the country's two monsoon seasons, the more robust Maha season and the milder Yala season, spanning from November to February and May to September, respectively. Nineteen million Sri Lankans are projected to live in locations set to become moderate or severe climate hotspots by 2050. Climate change projections show an increasing trend in extreme events and natural disasters that pose significant threats to Sri Lanka's economy and human health.

**Die Macht von Ideen und Geld** by Hujo, Katja. In: Nicola Wiebe et al. (eds.) *Umsteuern jetzt! Nur internationale Gerechtigkeit schafft soziale Sicherheit*, Brot für die Welt Analyse Nr. 110, Umsteuern jetzt! Nur Internationale Gerechtigkeit schafft soziale Sicherheit, pp. 47-51. Berlin: Brot für die Welt.

*Warum das Paradigma des residualen Sozialschutzes ein Hindernis für die Verwirklichung des Rechts auf soziale Sicherheit darstellt.*

Die COVID 19 Pandemie hat es deutlich gezeigt: Länder, die sich auf umfassende und universelle Sozialdienste und soziale Sicherungssysteme stützen, waren viel besser auf die großen Herausforderungen vorbereitet, die eine globale Gesundheitskrise dieser Dimension mit sich bringt. Sie schützten sowohl ihre Bevölkerung als auch ihre Volkswirtschaften durch beispiellose Maßnahmen im Bereich der öffentlichen Gesundheit, durch Einkommenstransfers

und Anpassungen bei der Leistungserbringung und sorgten für wirtschaftlicher Anreize. Die Erwartungen allerdings, dass die Krise einen Wandel in den sozialpolitischen Ansätzen und eine Ausweitung oder sogar Institutionalisierung einiger der Programme bewirken würde, die während der Pandemie vorübergehend eingeführt worden waren, haben sich hingegen nicht erfüllt. Im Gegenteil, vor dem Hintergrund mehrerer Krisen und einer schleppenden Erholung der Weltwirtschaft stehen Länder mit niedrigem und mittlerem Einkommen vor immer größeren Herausforderungen. Das wirkt sich negativ auf soziale Investitionen, Wohlstand und die nachhaltige Entwicklung aus. Dies hat wiederum zur Folge, dass die Entwicklungsländer in Krisenzeiten weniger widerstandsfähig sind, ihnen weniger Ressourcen für Investitionen in die soziale Sicherheit zur Verfügung stehen und sie einem stärkeren Druck von außen ausgesetzt sind.

### **Regional Brief: African Perspectives: Paving the road to the Second World Summit for Social Development by UNRISD**

The Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) will take place at a critical juncture: Five years before the end date of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in a post-pandemic context of complex and urgent challenges. While since 1995 more than a billion people have been lifted out of poverty, multiple crises, including the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, rising inequalities, and geopolitical tensions have created a challenging scenario for social development, democracy and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite remarkable progress in the areas of education, health and social protection, important challenges in the African region remain unaddressed, including persistent poverty, lack of decent work, intersecting inequalities (including gender inequality), economies that are characterized by low productivity and high informality, insufficient domestic resource mobilization and access to finance, and governance problems in some countries.

### **Regional Brief: Asian Perspectives: Paving the Road to the Second World Summit for Social Development by UNRISD**

The Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) will take place at a critical juncture: Five years before the end date of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in a post-pandemic context of complex and urgent challenges. While since 1995 more than a billion people have been lifted out of poverty, multiple crises, including the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, rising inequalities, and geopolitical tensions have created a challenging scenario for social development, democracy and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite notable advancements in social protection, environmental sustainability and gender inclusion, significant challenges in the Asian region remain unaddressed. These include income inequality, the digital divide, demographic pressures from aging populations and migration, persistent gender gaps, and vulnerabilities to climate change and environmental risks.

### **Regional Brief: Perspectives from Civil Society in the Nordic Countries: Paving the Road to the Second World Summit for Social Development by UNRISD**

The Second World Summit for Social Development will take place at a critical juncture: Five years before the end date of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in a post-pandemic context of complex and urgent challenges. While since 1995 more than a billion people have been lifted out of poverty, multiple crises, rising inequalities, climate change and

geopolitical tensions have created a challenging scenario for social development, democracy and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite remarkable achievements since the first WSSD, mainly the expansion of social protection and health coverage, proliferation of ILO standards, progress on gender equality and LGBTIQ+ rights, reduced inequality between countries, progress on just transition, and stronger multilateral cooperation, important challenges remain. Specifically, the Nordic consultation highlighted the lack of universal coverage of social protection and public services, backlash against gender justice and human rights, and entrenched discrimination against minorities such as Indigenous Peoples and migrants, lack of finance, risks associated with new technologies, unequal power relations, conflicts and violence, and the environmental crisis.

### **Regional Brief: Latin American and Caribbean Perspectives: Paving the Road to the Second World Summit for Social Development by UNRISD**

The Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) will take place at a critical juncture: Five years before the end date of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in a post-pandemic context of complex and urgent challenges. While since 1995 more than a billion people have been lifted out of poverty, multiple crises, including the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, rising inequalities, and geopolitical tensions have created a challenging scenario for social development, democracy and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Participants noted that over the past three decades, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have witnessed remarkable achievements, such as poverty reduction, progress in creating decent jobs, expansion of social assistance programmes and greater gender equality. However, these efforts have been undermined by persistent challenges such as structural inequalities, labour informality and political instability, while new challenges such as the digital divide and escalating climate risks require effective responses.

## **Calls & Newsletters**

**Call for Papers: International Workshop on (How) does social protection promote climate change mitigation and adaptation? Empirical evidence and way forward at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), Bonn, Germany, 26 – 28 November 2025**

The workshop aims to present and debate advances in social protection and climate change research. Its goal is to generate policy-relevant knowledge on how social protection systems can be strengthened in the context of climate change. We welcome papers that present new empirical evidence on the effectiveness of social protection in promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation. Special interest will be on the following themes:

- Design of climate-relevant social protection programmes
- Impact of climate-responsive social protection interventions
- Governance and finance frameworks

**To apply, please send your scholarly written abstract (500-600 words) to [socioeconomic@idos-research.de](mailto:socioeconomic@idos-research.de) by **30 April 2025**. (The deadline may be extended.)**

Abstracts should provide description of: (i) the research objective(s), question(s), and original contribution(s); (ii) data and methods; and (iii) the expected results and policy implications.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

With our best greetings,

Francesco Burchi, Project Lead & Senior Researcher Programme Transformation of Economic and Social Systems, IDOS

Daniele Malerba, Senior Researcher Programme Transformation of Economic and Social Systems, IDOS

Mariya Aleksandrova, Project Lead & Senior Researcher Programme Environmental Governance, IDOS

Markus Loewe, Project Lead & Senior Researcher Programme Transformation of Economic and Social Systems, IDOS

### [Call for Applications: Master's Programme in Social Protection at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Germany](#)

The MSc Social Protection programme is currently accepting applications for the winter semester 2025/26 from students who do not require a visa to study in Germany. The application deadline is May 31, 2025. The application period for international students requiring a visa is now closed and will reopen on December 1, 2025, for the subsequent intake.

For prospective students from developing countries, the [DAAD Helmut Schmidt Scholarship Programme](#) will be open for applications from June 1 to July 31, 2025. This scholarship provides a fully funded opportunity for future leaders in the field of social protection.

### [Newsletter on LinkedIn: MSc Social Protection Insights](#)

The Master's Programme in Social Protection at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Germany Our programme publishes a bimonthly LinkedIn newsletter, "MSc Social Protection Insights", featuring programme updates, resources, and alumni perspectives.

## Events

### [Event Report: Global Disability Summit: Committed to inclusion](#)

The DAAD is committed to the rights of people with disabilities. It is also taking part in the Global Disability Summit in Berlin. A report from four participants.

Around 1.3 billion people across the globe live with a disability, 80 percent of them in the Global South. To promote equal participation in all areas of life, Germany, Jordan and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) are hosting the third Global Disability Summit (GDS) in Berlin on 2 and 3 April. The event will bring together some 3,000 stakeholders who are committed to the rights of people with disabilities and to development cooperation. The DAAD is also taking part due to its ongoing campaign to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For example, DAAD scholarship holders can apply to have any additional costs they face on account of a disability or chronic illness reimbursed. As part of the summit, the DAAD has organised a fireside chat on "Bridging the Inclusion Gap in International Mobility and Academic Exchange". We present four DAAD alumni who are taking part in the summit and report on their international experiences, achievements and challenges.

**[Event Presentation: Combating inequalities: what role for universal social protection?](#)**

Publisher: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), World Health Organization (WHO), International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO)

This webinar fostered a discussion regarding the role of universal social protection and its financing on the reduction of inequalities. The negotiations of the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development have reaffirmed the commitment to combating inequality within and among countries, emphasizing the need for policies that reverse current trends on rising inequalities.

**[Event Video: Realizing the Right to Social Security: Ensuring the Sustainable and Equitable Financing of Universal Social Protection](#)**

Side Event at the 63rd Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD63)

With only five years left to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this event will provide an opportunity to discuss the key role of realizing the human right to social security in addressing emerging issues related to social resilience and development, with a special emphasis on the sustainable and equitable financing of social protection systems. The event will provide an opportunity to unpack related challenges and opportunities and identify possible avenues towards strengthening sustainable and equitable financing mechanisms for universal social protection at the national and international level.

**[Event Video: Towards the World Summit for Social Development: Economy of Wellbeing Approach and Social Justice as Investments for Future Generations](#)**

Side Event at the 63rd Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD63)

Policies aimed at achieving social justice and wellbeing are not just moral imperatives but strategic investments that generate long-term social, economic and environmental benefits for future generations. As the world grapples with rising inequalities, economic instability and climate crises, the need for integrated, people-centred policies that prioritize human and planetary wellbeing has never been more urgent. The World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) 2025 presents a critical opportunity to renew the global social contract, embedding equity, inclusion and sustainability into economic and governance frameworks to ensure that societies prosper and thrive within planetary boundaries.