**Introduction**

Social protection systems, including floors, are essential to ensure that no one is left behind. They are fundamental to prevent and reduce poverty across the life cycle, including cash transfers for children, mothers with newborns, for persons with disabilities, for those poor or without jobs, and for older persons. This brief will describe ILO contributions to SDG 1.3 and progress in implementation in terms of (i) monitoring SDG 1.3 through the ILO World Social Protection Database, (ii) rolling-out One-UN work and partnerships for SDG 1.3, and (iii) trends and recommendations.

Global trends in social protection show significant progress over time. Contrary to the situation that existed several decades ago, today there is practically no country where at least basic measures of social protection have not been implemented. But the current situation is far from optimal. The ILO monitoring system on social protection, based on the ILO World Social Protection Database (ILO/WSPDB), indicates that approximately 55 per cent of the world's population does not have access to at least one social protection cash transfer.

Social protection systems and floors ensure protection through contributory social insurance, tax-funded social assistance and other schemes providing basic income security.

For decades since the 1950s, the ILO has developed extensive experience collecting information on the configuration and development of social protection systems in the world. The Social Security Inquiry (SSI) is the ILO tool for collecting administrative information on social protection at country level, which feeds into the World Social Protection Database. This is a comprehensive database on social protection systems, which includes national data on programs, coverage, beneficiaries, poverty and spending on social protection. It also maintains a summary of indicators on the major recent progress at the global level in extending social protection. Main gaps in coverage are also identified.

**Aggregate coverage of total population:** Preliminary data show that, in 2016, only 45 per cent of the world’s population were covered by at least one social protection cash benefit and that the proportion varied widely across countries and regions. Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest coverage, with about 13 per cent of its population covered by at least one social protection benefit, versus 86 per cent of the population in Northern America and Europe.

**Social protection for children.** Social protection is a human right, further supported by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, and yet many children do not receive the essential cash transfers that could make a real difference to their chances of realizing their full potential in terms of nutrition, health, education and care services. Social protection also has a key role in preventing child labour. Despite a large expansion of social protection schemes covering children, preliminary data from the ILO indicate that in 2016 only 35 percent of children worldwide were receiving cash benefits

**Maternity protection:** Effective maternity protection ensures income security for pregnant women and mothers of newborns children and their families, and ensures effective access to quality maternal health care. As a result of the ineffective enforcement and implementation of laws in some regions (Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and Africa, in particular), effective coverage of maternity protection is still low. According to the ILO World Social Protection Database, worldwide only 41 per cent of women between 15 and 49 years old are effectively protected through maternity cash benefits.

**Unemployment protection:** Where they exist, unemployment benefit schemes play a key role in providing income security to workers and their families in the event of temporary unemployment, thereby contributing to poverty prevention. Data from ILO World Social Protection Database shows that in 2016 only 22 per cent of the unemployed received unemployment benefits

**Social protection for persons with disabilities:** The situation of people with severe disabilities, in terms of their access to social protection, is also challenging. The ILO estimates that, worldwide, 28 per cent of persons with severe disabilities received disability benefits in 2016. This seems rather positive, but coverage of people living with severe disabilities varies enormously between regions and countries.**Old-age pensions:** The right to income security in old age, as grounded in human rights instruments and international labour standards, includes the right to an adequate pension. At the global level, 68 per cent of people above retirement age received a pension, either contributory or non-contributory. This means that nearly 32 per cent of all people over retirement age do not receive a pension. For many of those who receive a pension benefit, pension levels are not adequate. As a result, the majority of the world’s older women and men have no income security, have no right to retire and have to continue working as long as they can – often badly paid and in precarious conditions.

The objective of creating and extending national social protection floors can only be achieved through the joint efforts of the United Nations agencies, at different levels. “Working as One” to promote social protection floors is an important priority for the UNDG and the ILO, and mobilizes the collective support of UN agencies and development partners through “One UN” SPF-I teams in order to design and implement social protection systems and floors though broad-based national dialogue