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A photograph of a construction site. In the foreground, a woman wearing a red hard hat and a white button-down shirt is looking at a set of architectural blueprints. Next to her, a man wearing a blue button-down shirt and a wide-brimmed hat is also looking at the blueprints, with his hand pointing to a specific area. The background shows a dirt construction site with rebar structures and trees under a clear sky.

▶ Aligning Skills Development and National Social Protection Systems

Discussion Paper
Social Protection Department /
Skills Development Branch

▶ **Aligning Skills
Development and
National Social
Protection Systems**

Discussion Paper

Social Protection Department /
Skills Development Branch

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First published 2023



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ISBN : 9789220391174 (web PDF)

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► Acknowledgements

This discussion paper was jointly commissioned by the Skills & Employability Branch (SKILLS) and the Social Protection Department (SOCPRO) of the ILO.

The paper was developed by consultants Sandra Rothboeck and Anne Richmond with the support of Paul Comyn, Patrick Daru and Pedro Moreno da Fonseca (SKILLS), and Victoria Giroud-Castiella, Karuna Pal and Christina Behrendt (SOCPRO). Christina Dankmeyer (SOCPRO) and Christine Hofmann (SKILLS) have made valuable contributions and comments.

It directly contributes to the development of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, by informing more effective integrated development social protection, employment and skills policies, for a Just Transition and more resilient societies. This paper has been developed to stimulate discussion and exchange within the ILO providing a basis for reflection on the development of global, regional and national methodologies, tools and actions.

► **A message from the Assistant Director General for Jobs and Social Protection**

Ms Mia Seppo

Many countries currently face the challenge of leading a human-centred economic recovery, alongside structural reforms needed to achieve SDG targets and meeting the mounting challenges brought forth by structural changes and compounding crises. Strategic investments in social protection need to exist to effectively articulate linkages between measures that promote sustainable growth, poverty eradication as well as full and productive employment, particularly for women and young people.

To support and highlight both individual and collective initiatives to address social justice deficits the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) has taken the initiative of forming the Global Coalition for Social Justice. The Coalition is a network of multilateral actors to advance social justice and promote decent work globally, that works in close coordination with UN Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions.

The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, an initiative of the UN Secretary-General, led by the ILO, aims at bringing together member States, international financial institutions, social partners, civil society and the private sector to create 400 million decent jobs in strategic sectors, including in the green, digital and care economies, as well as extending social protection coverage to workers who are currently excluded. One of the dimensions of the Global Accelerator is to secure the investment of workers and learners in skills that allow them to remain employable and securely navigate current transitions, striving for income security, decent work and better careers.

I welcome this working paper which has been developed to stimulate discussion and exchange, providing a basis for reflection on the development of global, regional and national methodologies, tools and actions. I hope the ILO teams will use it to reflect on how to align work across priority areas such as social protection and skills interventions for better delivery of services and greater impact.

Mia Seppo

Assistant Director-General

► Foreword

Coordination between social protection, employment and skills policies is a hallmark of systems that successfully empower individuals to deal with important work and life transitions. The pervasiveness of social protection measures across life stages, contexts and public support systems positions them as critical interventions that can help youth transition into the labour market, workers make transitions into formality, as well as increase individual resilience and autonomy through critical life changes.

Appropriate coordination with skills measures allows for more successful response to skills needs in the labour market, including the ones resulting from the transition to a digitally rich and more environmentally sustainable economy. It also allows for a stronger consideration of individual aspirations in the design of interventions, potentially leading to better and more fulfilling career outcomes. Due to the direct impact skills development has in raising labour market opportunities, income and job security, it enhances social protection's measures in curbing socioeconomic inequalities.

This paper discusses experiences and opportunities to better align social protection measures with skills interventions across several policy areas. It particularly highlights social protection outcomes of skills interventions, considering their protective, preventive, promotive and transformative roles. Three levels of alignment between skills and social protection programmes are considered taking into account the eligibility of beneficiaries, delivery of services and financing mechanisms.

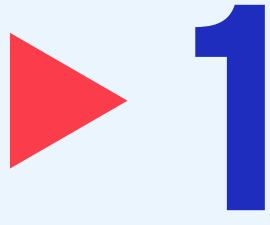
We trust that this paper will constitute an important element in furthering the discussion on how to better coordinate these two important and complementary areas, promoting additional research and discussion towards the development of more effective policies and operational models.

Shahrashoub Razavi

Director of the Social Protection Department

Srinivas B. Reddy

Chief of the Skills and Employability Branch





**Introduction
and context**

The financial crisis in 2008 and the COVID-19 pandemic created major global economic and social disruptions. These shocks and other transformative changes in technology, economy and society have highlighted the need for more coordination and improved alignment between skills development, active labour market measures and social protection with the dual goal of providing comprehensive protection for all in normal times as well as during crises, both as a buffer to immediate shocks and an enabler to face more structural challenges, and empowering individuals with the required capabilities for successful transitions in new labour markets. This provides the basis for individuals, communities and economies to be able to adapt and recover faster, thus ensuring long-term resilience and sustainability (ILO 2014, 2021a).

The ILO's perspective on better alignment between skills development, active labour market measures and social protection is based on its normative standards. These include standards on social protection.

- [Social Security \(Minimum Standards\) Convention, 1952 \(No. 102\)](#)
- [Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 \(No. 202\)](#)
- [Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 \(No. 142\)](#)
- [Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 \(No. 195\)](#)

The [Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 \(No. 168\)](#) and the related [Recommendation \(No. 176\)](#) address both employment and social protection aspects in an integrated way. An integrated approach is also key for formalization processes, as set out in the [Transitions from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 \(No. 204\)](#).

Recommendation No. 202 calls for the establishment of nationally-defined social protection floors that guarantee at least a basic level of social security for all (comprising access to health care and income security) and for progressively reaching higher levels of protection and persons covered in line with national circumstances and priorities. To ensure effective extension strategies, it calls for the coherence of social protection policies with social, economic and employment policies (Para. 3(l)). Paragraph 14 of the Recommendation specifically notes that when developing strategies for extension, Member States should “complement social security with

active labour market policies, including vocational training or other measures, as appropriate”.

In this context, this paper provides initial information and examples on how social protection, primarily for those in “active life” (i.e. working age) can be complemented by skills interventions to achieve better and more lasting outcomes in terms of decent work and a decent life. In 2019, the [ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work \(2019a\)](#) reinforced these perspectives by calling for strengthening the capacities of all people to benefit from the opportunities of a changing world of work through:

- i) the effective realization of gender equality in opportunities and treatment;
- ii) effective lifelong learning and quality education for all;
- iii) universal access to comprehensive and sustainable social protection; and
- iv) effective measures to support people through the transitions they will face throughout their working lives.

This is further echoed in the [Resolution concerning the second recurrent discussion on social protection \(social security\)](#), unanimously adopted by the International Labour Conference (ILC) at its 109th Session in June 2021. The Resolution calls for building universal social protection systems which include coordination of policies, “complement[ing] social protection, including unemployment protection, with active inclusion and labour market policies, including high quality public employment and social services, as well as lifelong learning, skills development and vocational training and incentives for enterprises to facilitate work transitions and build more inclusive labour markets and social protection systems ...” (ILO 2021b, 6).

The same ILC in 2021 adopted the [Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient](#), which stresses the need for universal social protection, including “access to unemployment protection to ensure support for workers who have lost their jobs and livelihoods due to the pandemic and to facilitate transitions” (ILO 2021c, 8).

The [Resolution concerning skills and lifelong learning](#) adopted at the ILC 109th Session, 2021, also called for “the integration of skills development with social protection, including for the unemployed

and those with reduced working capacity in case of sickness and disability, so that opportunities for formal, non-formal and informal lifelong learning are accessible to all” (ILO 2021d, 2021g).

As a further reflection of the growing importance of policy integration, in September 2021, the UN Secretary-General called for accelerated action on jobs and social protection (UN 2021a, 2021b). The UN and the ILO established a [Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions](#)¹ to ensure global financing for the creation of 400 million jobs and to extend social protection to four billion people. Taken together, a clear normative framework exists to progress the further integration of social protection, active labour market measures and skills development.

This paper builds on existing work and an understanding of the links between social protection, active labour market measures² and skills development. In doing so, it recognizes that aligned approaches can take various forms and are already key elements of labour market policies and labour market institutions in emerging and developing countries across the world (ILO 2012; Peyron Bista and Carter 2017).

Middle- and high-income countries increasingly offer a combination of income, employment protection and activation measures to meet a broader set of individual needs, including skills development and enterprise development initiatives. These integrated packages are aimed not only at recipients of unemployment benefits, but also at beneficiaries of other types of social protection programmes, most notably social assistance (in cash or in kind), to bring them under a common umbrella of activation policies.

Although many developing countries have not yet established unemployment protection schemes enshrined in national legislation, integrated approaches do play a role there too. Such approaches include employment guarantee schemes or other public employment programmes that provide income support, or social assistance schemes (in cash or in kind) that

incorporate active labour market policy (ALMP) components (ILO 2019c, 2021a). The joint provision of income support and ALMPs can be beneficial in promoting employment and protecting income and employment, but the effectiveness of such an approach depends on how they are integrated. Working within these premises, this paper seeks to develop a more systematic understanding of how social protection and skills development, including ALMPs, can reinforce each other to support long-term employability, resilience and capacity for transition, provided that they are carefully designed and take into account the specific social and individual needs, as well as focusing on effectively enhancing labour market integration (ILO 2014, 2021a).

This paper builds on the understanding that social protection for all and skills development not only contribute to increase productivity but that it also contributes to investment in people for greater resilience, capacity to perform transitions and a human-centred future of work.³ The paper provides a brief overview on social protection and skills development, and proposes a matrix for an aligned understanding of the two. The application of the matrix is further illustrated with a series of country examples, a number of which are further elaborated in Section 3.4 and Annex 1. Finally, the paper draws conclusions on how and to what extent social protection and skills systems complement each other and provides recommendations with a view to achieving better alignment.

As an initial exploration into considering skills, active labour market measures and social protection in a more integrated way, this paper does not address questions of financing social protection or skills development. These are extensively covered in other publications (see for example ILO 2020a, 2021a, 2021g, 2021h; Ortiz et al. 2019). Subsequent research could consider this issue. The paper however does note the need for sustainable, equitable, diversified and innovative financing mechanisms, particularly in countries where fiscal space remains small.

1 Agencies collaborating on the Global Accelerator include FAO, ILO, IOM, ITC, ITU, The Development Coordination Office, The Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General, The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, UN DESA, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. More information on the thematic roadmaps of the Global Accelerator is available at: <https://www.unglobalaccelerator.org/themes-0> and on the implementation strategy is at: https://www.unglobalaccelerator.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/High-Level%20Summary_June%202023.pdf

2 For the purpose of this paper, active labour market measures refer to the interventions that help people find sustainable jobs, promoting directly or indirectly the creation of productive jobs, improving qualifications and productivity of people and guaranteeing links between those looking for jobs and employers.

3 For more information on the ILO and the Global Commission on the Future of Work, see ILO 2019b.

▶ 2





**Background to social
protection and skills
development**

► 2.1 Social protection

Social protection, or social security, is a human right and is defined as the set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion throughout the life cycle. The ILO promotes universal social protection systems that aim at realizing the human right to social security “by progressively building and maintaining nationally appropriate social protection systems, so that everyone has access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable protection over the life cycle, in line with ILO standards” (ILO 2021b, 2).

Social protection includes nine main policy areas:

- **child and family benefits**
- **maternity protection**
- **unemployment support**
- **employment injury benefits**
- **sickness benefits**
- **health protection (medical care)**
- **old-age benefits**
- **invalidity/disability benefits**
- **survivors' benefits**

Social protection systems address all nine policy areas through a mix of contributory schemes (social insurance) and non-contributory tax-financed benefits (including social assistance) (ILO 2021a). Social protection promotes equal opportunity, gender and racial equality, and enables people to adjust to changes in the economy and in the labour market.

As such, social protection is key for supporting women and men, including those of working age, in better navigating life and work transitions. This includes: i) ensuring successful transitions from school to work or from job to job within a changing economy; ii) facilitating the transition of workers

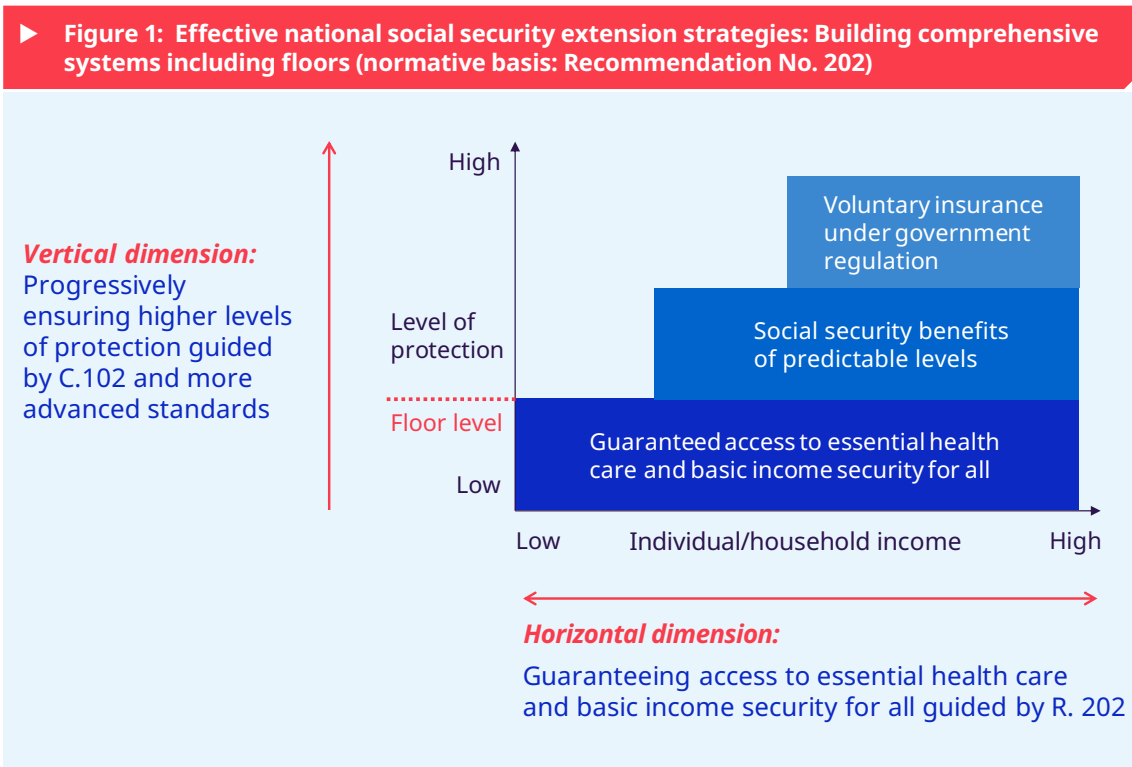
from the informal to the formal economy; and iii), maintaining autonomy through changes over the course of people’s lives, such as childbearing, and temporary or permanent disability. Social protection also facilitates the overall transition to greener, environmentally sustainable economies and societies, in particular as this impacts people’s livelihoods, incomes, jobs and behaviours.

Recommendation No. 202 sets out that Member States should establish and maintain national social protection floors as a fundamental element of their social protection systems. Such nationally-defined floors consist of a set of basic social security guarantees which aim to prevent or alleviate poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. These guarantees should ensure, at a minimum, that over the life cycle all those in need have access to essential health care and basic income security. These together ensure effective access to essential goods and services defined as necessary at the national level (ILO 2012). Recommendation No. 202 also highlights the need for coordinated policies including between social protection and employment policies to ensure income security for those of working age. In this context, employment support and public employment schemes and services can play an important role.

Recommendation No. 202 provides guidance for Member States to achieve two objectives:

- establish and maintain social protection floors as a fundamental element of their national social security systems; and
- continue to extend social security with progressively higher levels of social security to as many people as possible.

Figure 1 shows the two-dimensional strategy for the extension of social security.



Source: ILO 2021h.

Underlying the discussions of social protection systems and floors, as well as its extension, is an understanding that social protection measures cover the life cycle and support the improvement of individuals' lives and social-economic conditions. This has been discussed in the literature, for example, in Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler's work (2004, 14–25) identifying four main functions or categories:

1. **Protective:** with the specific objective of guaranteeing basic levels of protection from poverty and deprivation (i.e., economic or physical harm and distress) to the extent that promotional and preventive measures have failed to do so;
2. **Preventive:** to avert deprivation, e.g. through social insurance, informal mechanisms or strategies of risk diversification;
3. **Promotive:** to support economic opportunities with the aim to enhance real incomes and capabilities for income stabilization, e.g., through livelihood-enhancing measures, and achieving social and economic adequacy; and

4. **Transformative:** with the goal of empowering individuals as social-economic actors, and address social equity and exclusion, e.g., through changes to the regulatory framework, including protection from discrimination and abuse and the sensitization and transformation of public attitudes and behaviour.

In this logic, different social protection benefits may contribute to more than one function. For example, income support can prevent immediate need and distress (protective and preventive), provide income replacement and address horizontal and vertical inequalities (promotive), and enable an individual to pursue high-level professional training and qualification (transformative).

► 2.2 Skills development and active labour market measures

Both the Social Protection Floors Recommendation No. 202 and the Human Resources Development Recommendation No. 195 see poverty eradication as a core goal of skills development. By shifting the focus from economic growth towards a more human-centred growth and development path, the ILO Centenary Declaration places people and the work they do at the centre of economic and social policy and business practice. Investing in people's capabilities and supporting them through the various transitions they face over their life course will enable individuals to thrive in a carbon-neutral, digital age and reduce their overall vulnerability (ILO 2019a).

The ILO Centenary Declaration highlights that there are additional social benefits that can be realized through "promoting the acquisition of


skills, competencies and qualifications for all workers throughout their working lives" and "effective lifelong learning and quality education for all" – irrespective of age and employment status. Enabling all people to become and remain engaged in the community and society, and valuing all types of paid and unpaid work, contributes to the well-being of communities and people. To achieve this, active labour market measures and employment services need to provide tailored and needs-based services to women and men at all stages of the life cycle, including access to information, technical and soft skills training, placement and enterprise support. Table 1 highlights the variety of skills and active labour market measures relevant to different life cycle stages.

► **Table 1: Life stages and Skills/ALMP perspectives**

Personal characteristic/life cycle stage ⁴	Factors limiting employability	What can be done from a Skills/ALMP perspective
Young adult/transition to workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Lack of basic functional skills (literacy numeracy) ► Lack of core skills for life and work ► Lack of workplace related experience ► Lack of information and understanding of the labour market (including when, where and in which sectors workers will be needed) ► Lack of formal employment opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ► Skills development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-formal/remedial education (literacy and numeracy) - Pre-vocational training - Core skills for life and work - Career management skills development - Competency-based technical and vocational education and training - Apprenticeships and work-based learning - Internships and work experience ► Access to information on the labour market, careers and education and vocational training options ► Labour market insertion support: professional orientation, career and vocational guidance and counselling, job matching, job search assistance ► Support to self-employment/ entrepreneurship

⁴ At every stage and for every circumstance in the table mentioned above there is an opportunity to raise awareness and provide information or referrals to social protection services.

<p>Working age adult: Loss of job</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Current/relevance of existing skill set ▶ Limited professional networks ▶ Lack of core skills for life and work ▶ Recognition of skills acquired in previous employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Access to labour market information ▶ Career guidance and counselling ▶ Digital skills ▶ Recognition of prior learning/certification ▶ Linking to upskilling and reskilling programmes ▶ Job search assistance ▶ Support to self-employment and entrepreneurship
<p>Working age adult: Major organizational, technological/industry change/eliminating former occupation</p>	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i> Lack of knowledge of occupations/industries where existing skills are relevant</p>	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ On-the-job learning or reskilling and upskilling programmes ▶ Return to full-time education, technical vocational and educational (TVET) training courses ▶ Work placement
<p>Working age adult: Temporary absence for the workforce due to family/parental responsibilities</p>	<p><i>In addition to "loss of job":</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Lack of knowledge of alternative occupations suitable for return to work ▶ Potential loss of currency of skills 	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Referral to childcare/dependent care options and services ▶ Flexible access to skills refresher/upskilling or retraining
<p>Working age adult: Person with disabilities, person with a work injury that precludes return to previous employment</p>	<p><i>In addition to "loss of job":</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Need for adapted work environment (incl. flexibility to adjust to requirements of person such as timing, breaks, etc.) ▶ Hesitancy from potential employers 	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Training and awareness raising for current/potential employers ▶ Specialized labour market services ▶ Work environment assessment and expert assistance for adaptation ▶ Assistance with costs of workplace adaptation
<p>Working age adult: Informal and non-standard employment</p>	<p><i>In addition to "loss of job":</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Lack of formal skills recognition/credential to negotiate terms of employment or enter formal skills training ▶ Lack of formal employment record 	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Recognition of prior learning (RPL) and credentialing ▶ Upskilling combined with RPL ▶ Labour market services aimed at supporting transition to formalization
<p>Old age people: Near, at or beyond pensionable age</p>	<p><i>In addition, as above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Non-formal, marginal or unpaid family worker history precluding access to employment-based pensions ▶ Lack of awareness of potential decent supplementary work options providing income support 	<p><i>In addition to the above:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Transition support services ▶ Information and orientation support ▶ Linking to training and education ▶ Support to redeployment in new functions ▶ Linking and matching support for voluntary and community programmes



It is also possible to characterize skills development, delivered through active labour market measures, in terms of their intended protective, preventive, promotive or transformative social protection outcomes as per the framework in Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004):

Protective

Skills measures focus on individuals developing their employability to ensure a smooth transition into the world of work or further education and that children below working age are able to remain in education or training.

Skills required at this basic level include:

- ▶ functional literacy
- ▶ numeracy in a language of employment
- ▶ core employability skills
- ▶ basic career management skills
- ▶ work experience, in line with legal working age

Interventions/services include:

- ▶ access to labour market information
- ▶ access by all to education
- ▶ bridging classes
- ▶ pre-vocational training, including functional literacy and numeracy
- ▶ career education
- ▶ career guidance and counselling
- ▶ work placement/ experience programmes
- ▶ entry level training for low-skilled occupations

Preventive

Skills measures focus on risk diversification, such as skills and/or income diversification and adaptability. Most preventive mechanisms could be argued to have promotive effects as well, in the sense that risk reduction enables people to take advantage of opportunities that they would otherwise have been unable to do.

Skills required at this level include:

- ▶ portable skills
- ▶ core work skills
- ▶ basic and intermediate levels in career management skills

Interventions/services include:

- ▶ core work skills training
 - ▶ soft skills training
 - ▶ access to labour market information
 - ▶ job search assistance
 - ▶ career guidance and counselling
 - ▶ labour market services aimed at supporting transition to formality
 - ▶ support to self-employment / entrepreneurship
 - ▶ flexible access to refresher course, upskilling or retraining on digital skills
 - ▶ information and knowledge regarding social protection rights and entitlements
-

A core accessibility issue for skills and active labour market measures in many countries is the lack of adequate financing, whether public, private or mixed. This reduces both the scope of services offered and the number of people, at any life cycle stage, who can access them. Seeing a link between the right to social protection and the same right to lifelong learning can help improve access and outcomes for all, on both fronts.

Promotive

This focuses on capacity to sustain productive employment or self-employment, maintain a regular income, and the ability to successfully transition between and within occupations, industries and types of employment.

Skills required at this level include:

- ▶ occupational and job-specific skills
- ▶ a high degree of core employability skills
- ▶ high awareness of career opportunities
- ▶ personal/life management skills
- ▶ understanding how to use labour market services

Interventions/services include:

- ▶ promoting autonomy in access to labour market and job relevant information
- ▶ regularly scheduled institution-based skills training that responds to market needs
- ▶ adapted and specialized training or certification support to meet particular skills needs (market and population driven) that is articulated within a broader education/training framework to ensure recognition and transferability
- ▶ support to access entry level apprenticeships and certified work-based learning
- ▶ employer awareness raising for skills development of vulnerable groups
- ▶ labour market services that meet the needs of individuals and employers
- ▶ professional networking
- ▶ specialized training and adaptive support for persons with disabilities
- ▶ equity initiatives to ensure access to a full range of occupations for historically under-represented groups (women, minorities, etc.)
- ▶ access to training for migrant workers
- ▶ training and services for non-formal and small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) workers

Transformative

These outcomes focus on individuals, especially those with social vulnerabilities, but who already have a good degree of personal agency, and with a good likelihood of economic security through employment and entrepreneurship.

Skills required at this level include:


- ▶ advanced technical and professional skills and
- ▶ high levels of personal/life management skills, including empowerment to take action and contribute to societal transformation
- ▶ advanced knowledge of labour market information and services, that take into account their aspirations and provide access to professional networks
- ▶ high levels of career management skills

Interventions/services include:

- ▶ support for high-level technical and professional training, certification and licensing
 - ▶ counselling and financial instruments to assist in business start-up and expansion
 - ▶ career guidance
 - ▶ work environment assessment and expert assistance for adaptation and assistance with costs of workplace adaptation (e.g., for people with disabilities, injuries or who have been exposed to violence, exclusion or persecution, etc.).
 - ▶ Training and awareness raising for current/potential employers, as well as specialized labour market services.
-

▶ 3



A photograph of a building under construction, showing a large section of the facade covered in scaffolding. The scaffolding is made of dark metal poles and cross-braces. The building's exterior is light-colored, possibly concrete or plaster, with some text visible, including "Roam", "free", "osits.", "ise at 98400", and "ITED Cal". A large blue triangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, pointing towards the right. At the bottom center of the blue triangle, there is a small red triangle pointing downwards.

**Coordinating skills
and active labour
market programming
with social protection**

► 3.1 Towards a framework to align social protection and skills

Consistent with the human-centred development agenda of the ILO Centenary Declaration (2019a), and in light of the stark challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis on enterprises, workers, families, and communities, there is recognition that social protection and skills development need to go hand-in-hand to widen people's choices and improve their well-being (ILO 2019a and 2021e; UN 2021a; OECD 2021).

A closer alignment of universal entitlements to social protection, lifelong learning and transition support can smooth life and work transitions and support labour market mobility. This is of particular importance to ensure a just transition into an environmentally sustainable economy as it addresses misalignments that may occur in the labour market:

- **Educational misalignments** — New jobs not matching available skills;
- **Sectoral misalignments** — Job losses and gains affect different sectors of the economy, with further skills implications;
- **Spatial misalignments** — Job losses and gains may not necessarily cluster in the same countries, regions or communities; and
- **Temporal misalignments** — Job creation and job loss or elimination (not necessarily taking place at the same time).

Better alignment of social protection, lifelong learning and transition support can also contribute to better bridging these misalignments in the labour market for it to function effectively, thereby fostering productivity gains and the creation of decent jobs and more equity (ILO 2021a). Social protection can also ensure that resources are used efficiently for skills development during periods between jobs. A just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies therefore calls for strengthened social protection systems, including unemployment protection, complemented by active inclusion and labour market policies, comprising high quality

public employment and social services, as well as support for lifelong learning, skills development, vocational training, and incentives for enterprises (ILO 2021b).

The ILO Centenary Declaration (2019a) explicitly acknowledges the importance of combining income support and activation measures which include skills development and entrepreneurship support, in order to ensure that both income protection and employability are effectively addressed in a coordinated and complementary way (see also UN 2021a). A better integration between social protection and skills development can help to address the needs of specific groups, such as women with interrupted careers, young people, and people with vulnerabilities⁵ (ILO 2021a, 2021g).

Comprehensive social protection empowered by adequate skills interventions can ease labour market segmentation and inequalities by providing better opportunities for self-employment, skills upgrading or new skills to switch occupations. Better pooling of resources, alignment of methodologies and tools will allow, for example, to better assess skills needs, correspondingly adjust training offerings and support transitions (e.g. unemployment to work, informal to formal economy) in a way that secures stable income and careers. In this regard, active labour market policies, are particularly strategic nexus for alignment, due to their positioning at the cross roads of labour markets, skills and social protection and have an extensive service network.

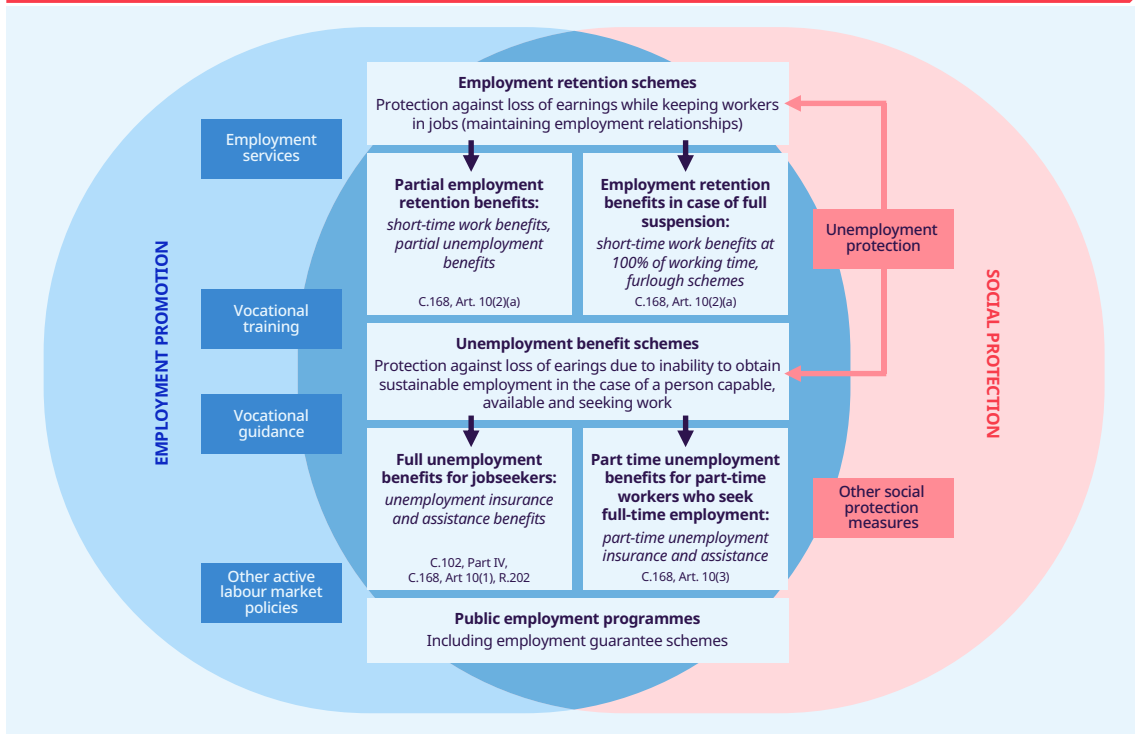
A growing number of countries have over the last years extended the scope of protection offered under unemployment benefit schemes by including skills development and employment services as part of the package, in combination with cash unemployment benefits (see figure 2). Linking employment and social protection policies can be carried out, for example, by combining cash transfers with skills development, public employment programmes (employment guarantee schemes), and/or support for entrepreneurship.

⁵ For example, these vulnerabilities can be related to individuals that are living with physical disabilities, those with injuries or poor health conditions, low-skilled workers or people working below the poverty line, and particularly those in the informal economy.

This offers new possibilities for providing income security to unemployed and underemployed workers, including in countries with high levels of informality (ILO 2021a, 29). This approach has also

shown to be particularly effective for extending COVID-19 responses to adults most affected by the crisis (ILO 2020a and 2021e).

► **Figure 2: Unemployment protection: A close articulation between social protection and employment promotion**



Source: ILO 2021a.

Adequate social protection for workers in all forms of employment is essential for ensuring a human-centred future of work. Most countries achieve this objective through a combination of social insurance and tax-financed benefits.

Drawing on examples from across the world, Peyron Bista and Carter (2017) illustrate that an integrated strategy should rest on three distinct, yet complementary pillars:

1. protecting working-age individuals and their households from falling into poverty during periods of unemployment (i.e. by providing income security);
2. promoting a speedy return to quality work through employment support; and
3. upgrading skills and capabilities to ensure better adaptation to a changing labour market.

In addition, effective access to health-care needs to be ensured throughout people's lives, as well as childcare and long-term care services, that are essential in facilitating labour market participation of workers with family responsibilities (ILO 2021a).

Recommendation No. 202 provides guidance to Member States, including the following key points relevant to skills:

- The promotion of productive economic activity and formal employment through the consideration of policies that include public procurement, government credit provisions, labour inspection, labour market policies and tax incentives, and that promote education, vocational training, productive skills and employability (Paragraph 10(b)),
- The coordination with other policies that enhance formal employment, income generation, education, literacy, vocational

training, skills and employability, that reduce precariousness, and that promote secure work, entrepreneurship and sustainable enterprises within a decent work framework (Paragraph 10(c)).

Concretizing principles set out in human rights instruments and international labour standards, Recommendation No. 202 sets principles for extending social protection that apply equally to skills and ALMPs (see table 2). These principles are also consistent with the ones laid down by the Human Resources Recommendation No. 195.

► **Table 2: Principles applying to the extension of social protection, skills development and ALMPs**

Principle	Social protection	Skills/ALMP
Human right	Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for ensuring dignity and the free development of personality – through national effort and international cooperation, and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State.	Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages, and shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
Universality	Every human being has effective access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection throughout the life cycle.	Skills and labour market services are available and suited to the needs of all individuals of working age, as well as to support young people entering the labour market and those who are in full or partial retirement.
Adequacy	The range, level and quality of social protection benefits and services are such that they prevent poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion and allow people to lead dignified lives.	Training meets the demands of the market and provides individuals with the capacity for further learning and development.
Transferability	Social security rights and entitlements are maintained across borders and independently of the occupational context.	Skills training includes elements which are transferable to other competences and areas of learning.
Portability		Skills are recognized across multiple educational and employment systems, however they were attained.
Transparency	Social protection systems are embedded in national legislation that defines rights and corresponding obligations, which are communicated in a transparent way to protected persons, employers and other stakeholders.	The content and process for obtaining skills development and certifications are clear and merit-based.
Gender Equality	Universal social protection contributes to gender equality by empowering both women and men to expand their capabilities, seize economic opportunities and nurture their capacity.	Women and men are equally able to pursue training and employment in any subject and field, and that training is accessible and adapted to meet specific needs.
Participation	Social protection systems are designed and implemented based on tripartite social dialogue as well as consultations with other relevant and representative organizations of persons concerned.	Training systems are developed and operated with input and participation by government, employers' and workers' organizations.

► 3.2 A range of potential degrees of alignment

In order for social protection, skills development and labour market services to work together effectively, they need to be developed in line with national objectives, and in response to the characteristics and needs of beneficiary groups. As pointed out earlier, every country will have a unique profile of how its social protection and skills institutions and delivery mechanisms are aligned and operate, and of the types of

benefits and services provided and to whom. In order to develop a robust and transferable analytical approach, this paper proposes three levels of alignment of skills and social protection programmes: integration, coordination and cooperation, each of which is then defined according to three functions (eligibility, delivery and financing) (see table 3).

► **Table 3: Degrees of alignment between social protection and skills development**

Degrees of alignment	Functions		
	Eligibility	Delivery	Financing
Integration	Eligibility to specific social protection benefits comes with eligibility for skills and training	Integrated or seamless from the beneficiary's perspective (this could include delivery through Single Window Service, one-stop shops)	Integrated financing
Coordination	Mechanisms for ensuring eligibility according to criteria (sound management information systems to facilitate referrals)	Separate but potential for coordination/co-location or delegation (through clear referral pathways, delivery in same location or delegation)	Mechanisms available for combining or aligning use of public and/or private funds with coordination at policy levels
Cooperation	Common or shared data that enables coordinated analysis of outcomes	Generally done separately though there is potential for specific areas of cooperation, such as location, timeframe, or population group, etc.)	Possible reviews/reports on financing, system use, etc.

This analytical framework does not necessarily suggest that integration would be “superior” to coordination or cooperation, rather it emphasizes the rich potential for the areas to be considered and developed in conscious association and alignment with each other. At a minimum, for example, providing information on and promoting access to social protection is an important role for skills delivery bodies; and promoting engagement with skills development and labour market services is a critical element of social protection. Indeed, it can be argued that coordination could be the most potentially agile and responsive approach, as it allows for dedicated/specialized institutions and organizations serving different functions within a global framework.

At a more detailed level, this framework could prompt further investigation and development of more effective ways of aligning existing mechanisms that operate in the skills or social protection systems of particular countries. For example, national and sector training funds that exist in some countries are generally not aligned with training provided within social protection schemes. Such issues of integration would emerge when considering the intersection of cooperation and financing as reflected in table 3 above.

► 3.3 Alignment analysis matrix

Analysis of the functions and degrees of alignment outlined in table 3 has been further developed in the alignment analysis matrix presented in table 4 below. The matrix has been developed to guide ILO Decent Work Teams and their social protection and skills specialists in their work with national institutions and social partners to assess the strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the integration of social protection and skills development. Such analysis will form a basis for developing plans for improvement towards strengthening the overall system.

Eventually this matrix could be further developed as a self-assessment/diagnostic tool for constituents and validated through workshops in selected pilot countries to refine and develop the alignment criteria and analytical approach. There are three dimensions to the alignment matrix presented below.

1. The horizontal axis represents three levels of social protection/skills objectives, summarized as:
 - Protective
 - Preventive
 - Promotive
 - Transformative

2. The vertical axis represents three possible degrees of alignment between the two:
 - Integration
 - Coordination
 - Cooperation
3. Life cycle and beneficiary characteristics form the third dimension reflecting:⁶
 - a. Children (prevention of child labour)
 - b. Youth transition to employment (facilitation of school-to-work transition for working age youth)
 - c. Vulnerable working age population
 - d. Old age population (those at or near statutory retirement age)

More specific population groups can also be defined for analytical purposes, for example, informal workers, migrant workers, women/persons with family responsibilities, women with interrupted careers, the working poor and low-skilled workers, etc.

Using the matrix

The matrix is intended to be used as a diagnostic tool. By looking in-depth at the degree of alignment between existing social protection, skills development and ALMP schemes for different target groups, an overall picture emerges that can enable governments and social partners to determine their priorities for further action. A suggested way to use the table is to identify groups of the population that do not have access to comprehensive and adequate social protection and/or who do not have access to skill development opportunities. The matrix can then guide the identification of coordination opportunities for expanded services with higher impact and reduced delivery costs, as a result of greater levels of alignment. Such analysis could also then inform future ILO interventions.

Over time each area of the matrix could be enriched with a relevant library of examples with the objective of developing a practical resource centre. Further refinement of the matrix as a self-assessment tool linked to this library will help both national governments and social partners to identify goals and proposed strategies for achieving them.

Each cell of the matrix gives suggestions on the type of alignment between social protection and skills development. Note that the matrix is intended to provide an analytical lens, it is not expected that the actual country examples fit precisely into one cell or another. In many cases the functions may overlap.

⁶ Life cycle and beneficiary characteristics were not presented in table 4 to avoid over-complexity.

► **Table 4: Alignment Analysis Matrix**

		Desired impact on individuals			
		Protective	Preventive	Promotive	Transformative
		Social protection ensures basic levels of income security and health protection, including maternity protection, with core work skills and labour market transition support	Social protection prevents people from falling into (deeper) poverty in the case of shocks (e.g., job loss/ elimination, extreme events) and prepares people for such instances.	Social protection provides protection and support to enter/ remain in the labour market and access to skills and ALMP services for economic inclusion and seamless transitions.	Social protection ensures protection and individuals' empowerment to control their livelihoods, skills and ALMP services for seamless professionalization, entrepreneurship, etc.
Type of alignment between social protection and skills systems	Integration: Common system for financing and delivering services, seamless from a beneficiary perspective.	Individuals qualify for and receive income support and basic skills and labour market services through a unified service delivery (one-stop shop access points for seeking basic social protection services along with labour market services and skills training).	Individuals who may be affected by disruptive processes or events, qualify for and receive a package of on-the-job training, re- or upskilling, career support and continuity of social insurance (also transition support, severance, etc.).	Individuals may seek or be offered income support or benefits to remain connected to employment, such as unemployment benefits; paid training leave; cash transfers combined with complementary programmes; access to training; and labour market services through the same system.	Individuals may access or be offered income support for higher level training and/or education and labour market services and accessing emerging jobs and finances for entrepreneurship opportunities (including vulnerability-specific support) through the same system.
	Coordination: Systems and institutions may be separate but may also coordinate or delegate access and provision to beneficiaries.	Individuals are referred from one service to other appropriate service providers.	Vulnerable individuals are identified for support on the basis of social protection or insurance beneficiary lists and are able to access labour market services and skills training services based on forward looking information.	Income support, economic inclusion and retraining services are provided at the same time, in the same area and reach the same specific workforce.	Higher level training and entrepreneurship support services inform and facilitate vulnerable individuals' links to social protection. Social protection is adapted for access by those entering new forms of work or taking up self-employment.
	Cooperation: Limited cooperation in planning and delivery with the beneficiary being the main contact.	Systems and institutions share information and data. This helps focus and eventually pool resources where needed. Stimulating informal cooperation between practitioners is important and leads to inter-agency processes.			

► 3.4 Country examples

Table 5 presents a number of actual country examples in relation to the type of alignment between social protection and skills systems. It should be noted, however, that these are necessarily “fuzzy” as the matrix is intended

only to indicate a number of potential types of alignment, not to create hard categories. Where noted, some country examples have been developed further as short case studies in Annex 1.

► Table 5: Examples of integration, coordination and cooperation in social protection and skills systems

Integration examples

EUTF Project: Madad Fund

€59 million — 2020–2023

Supports vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees to access the national social protection system and decent jobs

This joint programme strengthens the social protection and labour market system to deliver integrated income and training support services so that vulnerable Jordanians and refugees can develop self-reliance. Through cash assistance (protection) linked to skills development and relevant employment services, vulnerable men and women can access opportunities to transition from protection to more sustainable livelihood prospects. The aim is to strengthen the social protection system for both Jordanians and refugees – including reinforcing links between social protection and employment.

Financing skills development through the National Training Fund in Cambodia

US\$3.13 million — 1997–2003

The National Social Protection Strategy for the Poor and Vulnerable in Cambodia (Cambodia 2011) supported people dealing with economic and social risks by combining social security services with vocational training and upskilling and retraining initiatives. A National Training Fund supported government and non-governmental training institutions, enterprises and the private sector to upgrade and expand their training programmes. It also provided microcredit loan facilities for small entrepreneurs in urban and rural areas. Linking social protection, skills development and microcredit facilities increased employability and return to work. The impact on the poor was direct, concrete and substantial. It also provided opportunities for training graduates to apply their acquired skills in self-employment. The National Training Fund facilitated access to the training of 13,084 beneficiaries from 24 provinces/cities in 53 skill areas at a cost of US\$1.9 million, or an average of US\$147 per trainee. The average employment rate among graduates of the Fund's training programmes was 66 per cent (75 per cent among women, 59 per cent among men). The employment rate was 55 per cent among school leavers and 100 per cent among demobilized soldiers. It is estimated that 80 per cent of those who took up employment did so in the informal sector (Johanson 2009).

Providing an integrated package of services and support to poor families through the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) initiatives

ongoing — 2014

The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is a targeted initiative to support underprivileged and vulnerable families in Pakistan to move out of poverty. It is the largest direct cash transfer scheme in the country and is implemented across Pakistan with special attention accorded to remote areas. BISP includes four specific initiatives: i) provision of small loans to women for entrepreneurial ventures; ii) vocational training up to a year; iii) financial assistance for basic health care; and iv) a conditional cash transfer programme for primary school enrolment of children. For the conditional cash transfer initiative, co-responsibilities of beneficiary households include admitting the children to primary schools and maintaining at least 70 per cent quarterly attendance. A compliance monitoring mechanism is in place and in case of two consecutive non-compliances, the benefits are suspended. BISP also provides cash payments for emergency relief to families affected by terrorism, war and natural disasters. BISP was launched in July 2008 and distributed around Rs. 90 billion (US\$ 900 billion) to 5.4 million beneficiaries in 2016. As of 2016, BISP distributes Rs.19,338 (approx. US\$195) per year. While it has been criticized for poor targeting and conditionalities, as of 2020, BISP has become the largest social welfare programme in Pakistan (see also Gul 2021).

Philippines integrated response to the COVID-19 pandemic

US\$23.5 million — 2020–2023

The Social Security System in the Philippines mobilized PHP 1.2 billion (US\$23.5 million) to cover unemployment benefits for approximately 60,000 displaced workers at risk of unemployment. The Philippines Department of Labour and Employment encouraged enterprises to adopt flexible work arrangements. Part of this incentive is the Government provision of a one-time cash assistance of PHP5,000 (US\$97.6) per worker in private establishments where flexible working arrangements were introduced. Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) scholarship programmes support affected and temporarily displaced workers through upskilling and reskilling and includes free courses for all who would like to acquire new skills from the convenience of their own homes, mobile phones and computers through the TESDA Online Program.⁷ (See also ILO 2020c).

Social Protection and Skills Development Project in São Tomé and Príncipe

US\$10 million — 2018–2024

A national cash transfer system for poor households and labour market relevant skills development programmes ensure: i) building permanent delivery systems to implement social protection programmes and strengthening governance and institutional capacity in the skills development sector; ii) a Conditional Cash Transfer plan to increase income and consumption of poor households participating in the Vulnerable Families Programme through regular cash transfers and accompanying measures including a public employment programme and skills training opportunities in the framework of the project; iii) employability of technical and vocational education and training graduates and youth; and iv) supporting the development and delivery of quality training programmes and developing entrepreneurial skills in the tourism sector. In 2019 and 2020, 2,500 poor households benefited from inclusive and labour market relevant skills development programmes. (More information on this project is available from the World Bank at: <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P163088?lang=en>.)

A socially responsible approach to support the transition to a green economy with vocational training and active labour market measures: The case of the Ruhr region in Germany

(the case study in Annex 1 provides further detail)

A comprehensive reform policy package in the coal mining industry, closely implemented with trade unions and composed of four key policy areas ensured that workers and communities were not left behind in the structural transformation process of the mid-1980s. The package contributed to the local ecosystem being a well-diversified innovation hub for environmental technology research and development, energy supply and waste disposal. The four policy areas listed below were coordinated with national, regional and local policies supported by social dialogue:

1. Compensations for income loss and wage subsidies for reintegration of the unemployed and those at risk of unemployment
2. Labour market policy support for enterprise development
3. Combined promotion of employment and infrastructure development
4. Integrated development of problematic urban areas

Social protection combined with active labour market measures included: early retirement, unemployment benefits, subsidies for the reintegration of the unemployed and a proactive plan to accompany workers into new jobs through the provision of job placement services covering employability skills and reskilling. This involved different schemes and providers and not all were integrated in line with the matrix presented in this study.

Canada Health Care Access Programme

Sept 2020 - ongoing

(the case study in Annex 1 provides further details)

This is an income protection programme for specific sectors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (hospitality sector worker). Canadian government funds support provinces to finance the cost of a new “Health Care Access Program” which integrates skills training and certification with income and training cost support. The Programme provides initial training, paid work and upgrading to become qualified health-care assistants.

⁷ A range of Philippine Government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic are available on ILO’s Country policy responses website: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/regional-country/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#PH>.

Coordination examples**Social protection and employability promotion to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 in Antigua, Barbuda, British Virgin Islands**

Multi-donor project
(ILO/UNICEF/WFP)

US\$ 700 million — 2020–2022

It sought to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable families and persons, particularly women, through cash transfers via scaled-up social protection systems, as well as strengthening existing social protection systems to respond to future shocks. The project provided technical advisory support which was complemented by the provision of soft skills and core work skills training to optimize the reintegration of individuals back to work and to avoid prolonged unemployment and skills mismatch. In the British Virgin Islands, cash transfer assistance was made available to people from households eligible for the Income Support Programme to expand the number of beneficiaries.

Portugal recovery plan to build back better

The Government included financial support to employee training in its overall support package of COVID-19 measures. Under different Government schemes, private firms can request funding so that their workers can use their free time for reskilling and upskilling purposes, and by taking part in training measures, thus promote lifelong learning. Different financing schemes are available both for firms that have announced layoffs and also for those that have not.

In some cases, plans for reskilling workers who lost their jobs as a consequence of the pandemic have been in place or are in development. (More information is available on ILO's Country policy responses website: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/regional-country/country-responses/lang--en/index.htm#PT>.)

Australia higher education COVID-19 relief package

2020–ongoing

The Australian Government's higher education relief package provides funding certainty to higher education providers and supports workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic who are looking to upskill or retrain. The package includes online courses that last up to six months that aim to help workers develop new skills to prepare for the economy after the pandemic. Courses are available in the high-demand areas of nursing, teaching, health, information and communication technology, and science. Payment discounts and deferrals are available for certain population groups, such as students. The initiative supported 20,000 students. (More information on the relief package is available at: <https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education-provider-updates/fact-sheets/2020-jul-higher-ed-updates>.)

Indonesia training voucher system Kartu Prakerja

2019–2021

(the case study in Annex 1 provides further detail)

In Indonesia, Kartu Prakerja is an innovative active labour market policy, consisting of a training vouchers and cash incentives aimed to increase workforce productivity by incentivizing skills development. In 2020, the programme helped an estimated 5.6 million recipients enrich their skills while at the same time accessing a cash incentive. According to the World Bank (Carranza et al. 2020), the Indonesia National Police will have a programme similar to Kartu Prakerja, called the Safety Programme, specifically targeting bus, truck and taxi drivers, covering an estimated 197,000 beneficiaries.

Currently, there are more than 1,000 training titles offered by Kartu Prakerja. Roughly, half of them were bought by the 2020 Prakerja beneficiaries.

Cooperation examples**Providing end-to-end solutions for workers in the informal economy through the LabourNet initiative in India**

The social initiative LabourNet provides a one-stop platform for workers in the informal economy to access services which are available for the formal economy. It offers end-to-end solutions for the unskilled or low-skilled workforce through their 4E model of "Empowerment through Education, Employability and Employment". LabourNet provides skills assessment and training, followed by certification. It facilitates work linkages between employers and jobseekers and helps unorganized workers access health and accident insurance and social security schemes. It also assists unorganized workers to open bank accounts, with the aim of empowering beneficiaries and enabling them to contribute to their own well-being.

LabourNet provides training and facilitates employment for many economic sectors including health services, the beauty industry, construction (electricians and carpenters), and customer services and sales. An assessment is conducted to give each beneficiary a trade skill rating. The vocational training courses are based on industry requirements and bestow a certification on successful completion. Training is done onsite or at livelihood centres. LabourNet helps jobseekers connect to employers for internships, apprenticeships or contracts, and also provides assistance for enterprise building.



▶ 4





Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of social and economic policy (in general) and social protection (in particular to this study) is not only to reduce existing risks, but also to strengthen capabilities of individuals and promote opportunities for them to live a self-defined life in dignity.

Supporting life and work transitions, including the transition to an environmentally sustainable economy and society, requires the effective alignment of social protection with skills development policies and ALMPs, developed with the participation of governments and social partners. Greater coherence between social, educational and economic policies will create synergies and help to maximize impact.

To achieve this goal, social protection measures for the working age population — such as income transfers that complement training and employment services — can offer workers the time, resources and opportunities needed to acquire competencies that enable access to decent employment. A minimum income can thus be guaranteed for individuals participating in ALMPs. Of particular significance is the alignment of unemployment protection schemes with ALMPs that can guarantee income security in cases of job loss or difficulty in finding a job, while at the same time facilitating job search and retraining. Such an integrated approach facilitates access to decent, productive and freely chosen employment, not least in the context of labour market transformations arising from technological, climate-related or other changes (ILO 2018, 2019c, 2021a).

A typology for assessing the alignment of social protection with active labour market measures and skill development has been introduced in this paper and further developed through an analytical matrix as a first step towards the development of a tool to assess the alignment of programmes in different national contexts.

As a recommended next step, the effectiveness of the typology/analytical matrix should be assessed and tested by reviewing different target group specific programmes, including those that face particular labour market and integration challenges, such as persons with disabilities. This can form the basis for further exploration and elaboration by ILO officials in headquarters and the field, as a means of improving the quality and relevance of services provided to Member States and constituents in the areas of building integrated, inclusive and sustainable social protection and skills systems.

Work should also be expanded, in cooperation with ILO skills and social protection specialists, to further identify the effectiveness and documented outcomes of projects where coordination of social protection and skills has been a key factor. While this discussion paper takes first steps in this direction, further research and analysis is necessary.

Another recommended next step is to move from the elaboration of which measures could be integrated and offered in coordination or cooperation along these objectives, to developing options for how such joint packages of support could be offered and delivered in practice – and systematically, at scale. This requires that the qualitative aspects of the methodology be developed further. Qualitative aspects could include: i) the adequacy of skills development; ii) the type of skills supported jointly by social protection; iii) the duration of support; iv) the transaction costs to be avoided or reduced; v) if labour market (re)integration is based on or builds existing skills; and vi) how all of this impacts career continuity.

Based on this preliminary study and the authors' experience of developing the typology and analytical matrix, a number of reflections are presented here to inform further development and validation of these tools. These include:

- the need to run a preliminary socio-economic diagnostic to identify challenges and needs;
- the importance of in-depth policy analysis of national gaps, needs and priorities in the area of social protection and skills to map out the context where programme alignment will need to be assessed;
- the acknowledgement that modest alignment goals will still deliver results;
- the importance of adopting a beneficiary point of view during the alignment exercise;
- the importance of building on existing cooperation dynamics as experience shows that radical innovation hardly works when coordinating already existing services;
- the need to consider the capacity of partner institutions;
- the importance of transparency and data exchange; and
- the value of multi-stakeholder engagement in the alignment process.

It is important to ensure that the formulation and implementation of any policy recommendation to improve alignment between social protection, skills development and ALMPs should be based on social dialogue and social participation.

There are many examples of effective integration, coordination and cooperation between social protection and skills programmes. Making these readily available and presented in a consistent and easily understood format will increase the likelihood of replication, adaptation and improved integration. To assist national actors and ILO specialists to develop more targeted strategies to support constituents, coordinated next steps should draw from these effective examples, develop a self-assessment or diagnostic tool, and provide information and guidance on the “how to” of establishing further integration, coordination and cooperation.

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Annex 1





Case Studies

Drawing on the summary examples given in table 5, a number of case studies have been detailed here to provide a more complete understanding of how the different programme elements were combined.

Cases focusing on integration

► **Case Study 1: British Columbia Canada: Health care access and retraining programme for laid off employees in the hospitality industry**

This programme was launched in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Canada saw a major increase in demand for health-care workers, particularly for seniors' residences and care homes. At the same time, income protection was introduced through a special income support programme for workers (particularly those in the hospitality sector) whose livelihoods were affected. Under a federal-provincial workforce development agreement, the federal government transferred funds to the province to support part of the cost of a new "Health Career Access Programme" which integrates skills training and certification with income and training cost support for the unemployed. The programme includes basic training/upgrading (including language training) for initial employment as a health-care support worker, and then training to become a fully qualified health-care assistant. Participants receive a combination of wages paid by their employers for work time and a stipend for in-class training. Employers and trade unions support the programme; employers by providing employment, on-the-job training, supervision and release time, and unions through a signed Memorandum of Agreement at the provincial level setting out responsibilities and protection for members.

Employment is in public and private care homes. Training is provided by public training institutions, professional associations and private trainers, following a common curriculum. This programme combines income support with workforce development strategies and represents an integrated approach to address the specific needs of unemployed people with potentially transferable skills and an expanded workforce demand.

(More information available here: <https://www.choose2care.ca/hcap/>)

► **Case Study 2: A socially responsible transition to a green economy by integrating social protection, reskilling and active labour market measures: The case of the Ruhr region in Germany**

The Ruhr region in Germany has progressively transitioned from a carbon-intensive economy, heavily reliant on the coal industry, to a diversified economy based on environmental technology research and development, energy supply and waste disposal. A comprehensive package with four policy areas ensured that workers and communities were not left behind in the structural transformation process of the mid-1980s:

- compensations for income loss and wage subsidies for the reintegration of the unemployed and those threatened by unemployment;
- labour market policy support for enterprise development;
- combined promotion of employment and infrastructure development; and
- integrated development of problematic urban areas.

These diversification and structural changes were implemented through social dialogue and coordinated national, regional and local policies (Sheldon et al. 2018). From 1957 to 2013, the total number of workers in the mining industry in the Ruhr region plummeted from 473,000 to 11,448 (Galgóczy 2014). The measures put in place through the comprehensive package to address the effects of the transition included early retirement plans, unemployment benefits, subsidies for the reintegration of the unemployed and a proactive plan to accompany workers into new jobs through job placement services and active skilling and reskilling (ETUC 2018).

The Ruhr Coal Vocational Training Society was in charge of managing labour market transitions in the mining industry. Each affected worker benefited from an individual re-employment strategy developed in cooperation with the regional governments, private sector representatives, works councils and social partners. Vocational training centres in the Ruhr reached a placement rate of 80 per cent (ILO 2018). After a long and complex process to transition away from the coal sector, the Ruhr region is now a hub of environmental technology research and has developed a comparative advantage in energy supplies and waste disposal (ETUC 2018).

► **Case Study 3: Kudumbashree, Kerala India: Active citizenship and participatory planning leading to integrated approaches and effective poverty alleviation**

Kudumbashree, was initiated in 1997 by the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM) of the Government of Kerala. It is globally acknowledged for its impact to eradicate poverty, empower women at grass roots level with the gender, environment and democratic process components intersecting with each other successfully. The spirit of self-help is the guiding principle in this process, with a focus on housing; safe drinking water and sanitation; family well-being; health insurance; child and continuing education for all; thrift and credit; soft, life and leadership skills; and vocational training and entrepreneurship development.

In 2019, Kudumbashree had a three-tier structure for its women's community network, with 294,436 Neighbourhood Groups at the lowest level, 19,489 Area Development Societies at the middle level, and 1064 Community Development Societies at the local government level reaching out to over 4,585,677 women and their families. Kudumbashree is arguably one of the largest women's networks in the world and closely collaborates with India's national, rural and urban development programmes, including income generation and vocational training schemes. Kudumbashree's network has over the years continuously expanded the portfolio for education and vocational training for livelihoods in multiple ways including: inclusive and accessible non-formal education; bridging classes; and pre-vocational training and vocational education for poor children, dropouts or people with disabilities. This is combined with provision of food, lodging and health services (BUD Schools). To respond to the flood-related livelihood crisis in October 2018, and to address skill gaps identified in Kerala, the vocational initiative Acquiring Resilience and Identity through Sustainable Employment (ARISE) was launched through a campaign between 15 December 2018 and 31 March 2019. The aim of this programme was to provide skills training to 50,000 men and women in areas related to housekeeping, laundry and ironing, plumbing, electronic repair, electrical work, childcare, agriculture labour, sales, and data entry.

In 2019, the National Urban Livelihood Mission supported Kudumbashree to offer skills training to 12,000 youths in the State, across 93 urban centres. Kudumbashree facilitated training for 12,000 youths with minimum qualification in school class VIII, of which about 5,300 were trained through the residential model, wherein they will be given free food and lodging. Courses included information technology, telecommunications, automotive technology, tourism, accounting, electronics, Ayurveda, leading to a certification issued by the National Skill Development Corporation. Since September 2020, a disability inclusion initiative provided vocational training in production and manufacturing skills to 3,000 men and women (The Hindu). Kudumbashree is currently facilitating a skill training and placement programme for selected rural youth (school 12th Standard pass) to enter into a three-year long paid apprenticeship cum placement programme in hospitality, health care and construction. In addition, paid apprenticeships are offered in Germany after an eight-month language training course. The programme is of mutual benefit, as it both addresses a severe shortage of skilled workers in Germany, and offers employment opportunities to unemployed youth in rural Kerala.

Sources for Case Study 3:

<https://www.kudumbashree.org/>

<https://oxfamapps.org/fp2p/how-a-womens-organization-became-chief-architects-of-the-covid-19-response-in-southern-india/>

<https://www.hrkatha.com/skill-india/thousands-of-youths-to-receive-skill-training-from-kudumbashree-in-kerala/>

<http://lsgkerala.gov.in/en/kudumbashree>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233289943_Performing_Participatory_Citizenship_-_Politics_and_Power_in_Kerala's_Kudumbashree_Programme

https://financedocbox.com/Retirement_Planning/78175376-Kudumbashree-project-an-overview.html

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/kudumbashree-offers-job-oriented-training/article35264441.ece>

Case focusing on coordination

► Case Study 4: Addressing transformation and skills and productivity gaps with ALMPs and reskilling through a voucher system in Indonesia

The programme was announced in 2019 in Kartu Prakerja as an innovative active labour market policy, consisting of a training voucher and cash incentives, aimed to increase workforce productivity and address challenges resulting from technological transformation by incentivizing skills development. The Government is clearly committed to more inclusive and geographically distributed growth, which is based on higher productivity and skills needs for industry 4.0 manufacturing. With the aim to support workers affected by layoffs and recent graduates (including informal workers and small and micro-enterprises) the programme has introduced pre-employment cards to facilitate youth employment, doubling its scope in light of the COVID-19 pandemic (ILO 2020a). In 2020, the programme helped almost 5.6 million recipients enrich their skills while at the same time access a cash incentive. According to the World Bank (Carranza et al. 2020), the Indonesia National Police will have a programme similar to Kartu Prakerja, called the Safety Programme, specifically targeting bus, truck and taxi drivers, covering an estimated 197,000 beneficiaries.

There are more than 1,000 training titles offered in the Kartu Prakerja ecosystem of which half were bought by the 2020 Prakerja beneficiaries. Prakerja's beneficiaries are required to complete at least one training programme to receive the cash benefit. Meanwhile, finding, comparing and selecting training programmes is challenging for beneficiaries as these are displayed in seven digital platforms. Due to the technology literacy gap, many beneficiaries could not find the proper training that suited their needs. It was assumed that many beneficiaries selected any available training. More consolidation efforts are required so that the repository can be effectively used and lead to improved skill acquisition to further lift worker productivity. These include that local skills and labour market services are strengthened to tackle the prevalent disparities in employment outcomes across segments of the population and provinces in Indonesia. Effective labour market services can connect people to good jobs but should be complemented by efforts to improve skills outcomes and foster skills development opportunities, to ensure that workers and students develop the skills needed in local labour markets.

(More information on this is available from: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1f8c39b2-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/1f8c39b2-en>.)



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ilo.org/wages

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