



## World Social Protection Report: ILO

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### Why in News

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Recently, a **International Labour Organization** report titled ‘**World Social Protection Report 2020–22**’ has revealed that, **globally 4.1 billion people are living without any social safety net of any kind.**

- The report highlighted that the pandemic response was uneven and insufficient. Thereby, Covid-19 has further underscored the critical importance of achieving **universal social protection.**
- ILO is a **specialized agency of the United Nations.** It is the only tripartite UN agency. It brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

### Key Points

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- **Social Security (Concept):**
  - It is a **comprehensive approach** designed to prevent deprivation, **give assurance to the individual of a basic minimum income for himself and his dependents** and to protect the individual from any uncertainties.
  - Social protection **includes** access to health care and income security measures related especially to old age, unemployment, sickness, disability, work injury, maternity or the loss of the main breadwinner in a family, as well as extra support for families with children.

- **Highlights of the Report:**

- **Global Population with Social Protection:** In 2020, **only 46.9% of the global population benefitted from at least one protection** under the ambit of social security.

- **Challenges Put Forward by Covid-19 Pandemic:** Pervasive challenges such as high levels of economic insecurity, persistent poverty, rising inequality, extensive informality and a fragile social contract have been exacerbated by Covid-19.

- **Persisting Inequalities:** There are significant regional inequalities in social protection, with **Europe and Central Asia having the highest rates of coverage** - 84% of people are covered by at least one benefit.

The Americas are also above the global average, with 64.3%, while Asia and the Pacific (44%), the Arab States (40%), and Africa (17.4%) have marked coverage gaps.

- **Disparity in Social Security Expenditure:** Countries spend on average 12.9% of their GDP on social protection (excluding health), but this figure masks staggering variations.

High-income countries spend on average 16.4%, upper-middle-income countries 8%, lower-middle income countries 2.5%, and low-income countries 1.1%.

- **Limited Protection to Women, Children And Disabled Peoples:** Globally, the vast majority of children still have no effective social protection coverage – only one in four children (26.4%) receives a social protection benefit.

- Just 45% of women with newborns receive a cash maternity benefit.

- Only one in three people with severe disabilities (33.5%) worldwide receive a disability benefit.

- **Limited Unemployment Protection:** A mere 18.6% of unemployed workers worldwide have effective coverage for unemployment and thus actually receive unemployment benefits.

This remains the least developed branch of social protection.

- **Barriers to Accessing Healthcare:** Significant progress has been made in increasing population coverage. However, barriers to accessing healthcare remain in the form of:

Out-of-pocket payments on health services, Physical distance, Quality and acceptability of health services, Long waiting times, Opportunity costs such as lost working time, etc.

- **Steps Taken by Indian Government to Provide Social Security Benefits:**
  - Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana (PM-JAY)
  - National Health Policy 2017
  - Social Security Code 2020
  - Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM)
  - Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan
  - PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY)
  - One Nation One Ration Card
  - Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana
  - Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

## Way Forward

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- There is a need to recognize that effective and comprehensive social protection is not just essential for social justice and decent work but for creating a sustainable and resilient future too.
- Establishing universal social protection and realizing the human right to social security for all is the cornerstone of a human-centred approach to obtaining social justice.
- Collective financing, broad risk-pooling and rights-based entitlements are key conditions for supporting effective access to healthcare for all in a shock-responsive manner.
- Stronger linkages and better coordination between mechanisms for accessing medical care and income security are needed to address key determinants of health more effectively.

**Source: TH**