

Invitation to Discuss Challenges and Opportunities in Leveraging Partnerships to Accelerate the Achievement of Decent Jobs and Universal Social Protection for Just Transitions

08 May 2025, 3.30 pm CET/9.30 am EST (Duration: 100 minutes)

International Labour Organisation, 4 Route des Morillons, 1211 Geneva, Room SWZ-10-033 Himalayas

Online: MS Teams, Meeting ID: 332 056 609 100 8, Passcode: By7rz9Nw

Concept Note

Objective

Investing in social protection and decent and productive employment is crucial, especially for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), as it helps alleviate poverty, reduces informality, fosters inclusive economic growth, enhances people's resilience and facilitates just transitions in the context of structural changes, climate change, demographic shifts, digitalization, and other challenges/transformations. Global commitments, such as SDG 1.3 and 8, the G7's pledge to extend coverage to an additional one billion people by 2025, the ILO's and USP's call for an annual increase of social protection coverage by two percentage points, the World Bank's goal to reach 500 million more individuals with social protection and labor programs by 2030, the Global Accelerator's call for universal social protection, decent jobs and just transitions and the FICS support to social investments for just transitions¹, set ambitious targets. However, the pace of closing gaps in social protection coverage and adequacy, as well as creating decent jobs, is insufficient, and substantial financing gaps persist.

The year 2025 presents opportunities, with South Africa's G20 and Canada's G7 Presidency, COP30 in Brazil, FfD4, and the World Summit for Social Development, all providing momentum for action. Beyond political commitment, achieving these goals requires coherent and integrated policy solutions, increased financing and aligned investments, enhanced multilateral cooperation based on robust partnerships, and bold solutions. The 'Multistakeholder Engagement for the Global Accelerator and World Bank Compass (M-GA)' exemplifies this approach, aligning global efforts and partnerships to amplify impact.

The objective of the meeting is to discuss the challenges we face and engage stakeholders in joining or intensifying their support for the M-GA initiative. The meeting will demonstrate to current and potential new donors the importance and relevance of the UN-World Bank partnership through the M-GA in accelerating progress towards achieving the international goals of universal social protection and creating decent and productive jobs. It will highlight what has been achieved, outline upcoming next steps, and present various ways in which current and new donors can support the initiative. The meeting will include testimonies from countries and UNRCs/ World Bank country representatives currently receiving support, as well as from donors already part of the multistakeholder initiative.

¹ Finance In Common Summit 2025 Declaration: <https://financeincommon.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/FiCS%202025%20Final%20Communique%CC%81.pdf>

Target Audience

- M-GA and potential new donors: Belgium, Germany, UK, France, Ireland, Korea, Norway, Spain, European Commission; Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Luxemburg, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Novonordisk, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland (SECO).
- Management team of the M-GA: ILO, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, UN WOMEN, FAO and WFP
- UN Joint SDG Fund Secretariat

Agenda

3.30 pm/ 9.30am	Opening remarks – Current challenges and the need for partnerships • Iffath Sharif, Global Director, Social Protection and Labor Global Practice, World Bank • Mia Seppo, Assistant Director-General for Jobs and Social Protection, ILO • Ariane Hildebrandt, Director General, Global health, equality of opportunity, digital technologies, food security, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany • Lisa Kurbiel, Head of Secretariat, Joint SDG Fund
3.50 pm/ 9.50 am	The Multistakeholder Initiative (M-GA) – objectives and achievements • Valérie Schmitt, Deputy Director, Universal Social Protection Department, ILO, Member of the M-GA Management Team • Country examples: ○ Jo Scheuer, UN Resident Coordinator, Cambodia ○ Marina Novikova, Senior Social Protection Specialist, Task Team Lead M-GA project Uzbekistan, World Bank • Emily Weedon, Program Manager and Global Lead for Social Protection Partnerships, World Bank, Member of the M-GA Management Team
4.30 pm/ 10.30 am	Discussion • Paula Nolan, Social Protection Policy Lead, Policy Unit, Development Cooperation Division, Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland
4.55 pm/ 10.55 am	Closing and next steps • Iffath Sharif, Global Director, Social Protection and Labor Global Practice, World Bank • Shahra Razavi, Director, Universal Social Protection Department, ILO