



**GLOBAL
ACCELERATOR**

Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions

Asia-Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum:
Meeting the Commitments for Productive
Employment and Universal Social Protection

8-9 April 2025, Phnom Penh

POLICY FORUM REPORT







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Overview

The Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum - Meeting the Commitments for Productive Employment and Universal Social Protection was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on the 8 and 9 April 2025. Co-hosted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MLVT), Cambodia; and in coordination with United Nations (UN) partners, the Policy Forum brought together tripartite constituents, and development stakeholders of the six Global Accelerator Pathfinder Countries of the Asia Pacific.

Over the two-day agenda, senior policymakers and delegates from the pathfinder countries of Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Viet Nam, presented their progress to date in the development and implementation of their respective Global Accelerator National Roadmaps. They engaged through thematic sessions exploring integrated strategies spanning skills, employment, social protection and sustainable financing. These sessions provided lenses focused on promoting just transitions toward inclusive, digitally-enabled and more environmentally sustainable national economies, and accelerating global progress toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions (GA) was launched by the UN Secretary-General to tackle the ongoing structural policy and financing deficits and support the necessary inclusive structural transformations required to accelerate decent job creation, universal social protection and achieve just transitions.

The Policy Forum took place during the ASEAN Year of Skills 2025, and learnings and outcomes from the event will contribute to inputs relating to the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, the Second World Summit for Social Development, both of which will be held in 2025.

Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum in numbers:

- 2 Days
- 9 Sessions
- 10 Countries represented
- 50 Speakers and contributors
- 270 Participants including representatives from at least
 - 20 different Government Ministries
 - 10 different Employers' Representative Organisations
 - 14 different Workers' Representative Organisations
 - 5 Development / Funding Organizations
 - 6 Embassies
 - 10 UN Agencies including 3 UN Resident Coordinators



Background and Objectives

The [Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions \(GA\)](#) is an initiative launched in September 2021 by the UN Secretary-General to help countries address multiple crises—including COVID-19, persistent informality, poverty and inequality, lack of decent jobs, and financing gaps—while preparing them for current and future challenges and opportunities arising from digital, green, and demographic transitions, as well as broader economic transformations.

The initiative aims to support the creation of millions of decent jobs, the extension of social protection to billions of currently excluded people, and the facilitation of just transitions for all. By placing decent work and universal social protection at the heart of recovery efforts, the Global Accelerator seeks to usher in a new era of shared prosperity, sustainable peace, and social justice.

The Global Accelerator is one of the main pillars of the [Global Coalition for Social Justice](#), and responds to the call of the [Singapore Statement](#) to reaffirm tripartite commitments and the key role of social dialogue between government, workers and employers to address the persistent decent work deficits in the Asia-Pacific region. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is coordinating the operationalization of the Global Accelerator, in collaboration with FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, and WFP.

In the Asia Pacific region, the first six pathfinder countries of the Global Accelerator – namely, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Viet Nam have made the high-level commitment to join the Global Accelerator. In doing so, they will engage with partners to actively shape national strategies to expand social protection, strengthen lifelong learning strategies, create decent jobs and facilitate just transitions.

The six pathfinder countries are at different stages in the development and implementation of their National Roadmaps for the Global Accelerator, however, they are each tailoring the approach to meet their own national priorities. These unique National Roadmaps will leverage the GA framework to address key economic challenges, from financing gaps and labour market inequalities to the impact of climate change and digital transformation on employment.

This Asia Pacific GA Policy Forum is the first gathering of pathfinder countries and aimed to support the momentum and visibility of progress at the level of national implementation, while adding value through high-level policy exchange at the regional scale. It recognised that the Global Accelerator calls for something different from ‘business as usual’ approaches and so provided a platform for the sharing of policy innovations that may have application in the wider region.

Objectives of the Asia Pacific GA Policy Forum were:

- To facilitate policy dialogue and knowledge-sharing to highlight the GA’s value in integrating skills, employment policies and social protection within national development strategies.
- To build capacity among constituents on the policy integration across the skills and social protection nexus.
- To capture and share compelling examples of integrated policy approaches through case studies and the voices of beneficiaries.



- To promote the Global Accelerator among potential donors and development banks as a multi-stakeholder initiative, which provides a nationally owned development framework for policy coherence and interministerial coordination for advancing decent jobs and social protection.
- To support the region in reporting tangible progress on GA initiatives in Asia Pacific especially during the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the Second World Summit for Social Development, which both take place during 2025.

Key Takeaways

The Policy Forum successfully engaged tripartite delegations from the six pathfinder countries together with experts from the global development community for an intensive two-day policy exchange. The following are some of the key takeaway messages from the sessions and discussions:

- **Affirming the need for the Global Accelerator**

The sessions of the Forum underscored the GA's transformative potential to fast-track urgently needed progress toward the SDGs. Participants articulated that persistent, deep-rooted and inter-twined social and economic challenges required new thinking and solutions that transcended traditional policy silos and called for a step change in financing and collaboration among development partners.

- **Roadmap Development and Technical Support**

The pathfinder countries, at different stages of their national GA Roadmap development shared a consistent message that the need to engage across multiple ministries, private sector, social partners and development partners was a significant challenge. The ongoing technical support received from ILO and UN systems at the country level was seen as critical for this process.

- **South-South Cooperation**

The Forum affirmed the critical role of South-South cooperation in enabling peer learning among countries navigating similar development challenges. Countries called for increased policy exchange and collaboration—especially in areas such as adaptive social protection, formalization, and inclusive skills strategies responsive to climate and economic shocks.

- **Tripartism and Social Dialogue**

Participants stressed the importance of engaging employers and workers in the design of skilling pathways, social security expansion, and employment transitions.

Roadmap development has created space for social partners to co-create solutions—particularly in skills development and formalization. Social dialogue is essential to ensuring reforms are legitimate, inclusive, and sustainable.



- **Financing for Transformation**

Integrated financing strategies emerged as a cornerstone of GA implementation, but also the area in which participants requested the most technical support.

Countries are exploring ways to align fiscal policies, SDG financing tools, and private sector investments to support skills development and universal social protection, whilst driving formalization and digitization of government services, all of which require significant capacity building and technical assistance. Stronger links between financing strategies (e.g. Integrated National Financing Frameworks) and national Roadmaps was identified as being essential going forward.





Programme and Session Summaries

The programme for the **Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum – Meeting the Commitments for Productive Employment and Universal Social Protection** proceeded as follows:

Day 1: 8 April 2025

- Session 1 - Opening
- Session 2 - High-Level Panel: Advancing our Shared Commitments for Productive Employment, Social Protection and Just Transitions in Asia and the Pacific
- Session 3 – Integrating Skills and Social Protection to Accelerate Decent Work in Asia Pacific
- Session 4 – Pathfinder Countries Presentations and Panel Discussion: Viet Nam, Pakistan, Indonesia
- Session 5 – Pathfinder Countries Presentations and Panel Discussion: Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines

Day 2: 9 April 2025

- Thematic Session 1 – Connecting Skills and Lifelong Learning Interventions with Social Protection and Pro-employment Policy
- Thematic Session 2 – Aligning GA Roadmap Development with Green, Digital and Economic Transitions
- Thematic Session 3 – Voices of Beneficiaries
- Thematic Session 4 – Sustainable Financing for Accelerating Skills Development, Decent Jobs and Social Protection

The following section provides brief summaries of these sessions.

Session 1: Opening

Tuesday 8 April 2025 | 9:00 -10:10

Session overview

The opening session provided an impactful opening for the Policy Forum, welcoming dignitaries and tripartite delegations from the six pathfinder countries of Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines and Viet Nam.

It set the thematic focus of the Forum - *Meeting the Commitments for Productive Employment and Universal Social Protection* - and underscored the scale and urgency of labour market challenges in the Asia Pacific region, in the context of the ongoing global challenges of climate change, demographic shifts, technological disruption and geopolitical and trade tensions.

Speakers emphasised the transformative potential of the Global Accelerator initiative to translate vision into action through multilateral cooperation, social dialogue and integrated policy responses. They commended the pathfinder countries in their political commitment and collaborative efforts toward advancing decent work and universal social protection, in line with the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.



As host, the Royal Government of Cambodia highlighted its progress in addressing decent work deficits, climate vulnerability and socioeconomic uncertainties, and reaffirmed its commitment to the Global Accelerator and to serving as a model for GA implementation in the region.

Speakers

- Welcome Remarks: Ms Mia Seppo, Assistant Director General, Jobs and Social Protection, ILO
- Welcome Remarks: His Excellency Minister Heng Sour, Minister of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia
- Keynote Address: Mr David McLachlan-Karr, Regional Director, UN Development Coordination Office for Asia Pacific
- Keynote Address: His Excellency Dr Aun Pornmoniroth, Deputy Prime Minister for Economy and Finance, Cambodia

Summary of key points

- The Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum is the first event of its kind. It brings together leading policymakers, employers' and workers' representatives from the six pathfinder countries. Each has demonstrated their commitment to promoting decent jobs and social protection for the just transitions of their national context, through innovative policy and coordinated action.
- While the Asia Pacific region is home to some of the most dynamic economies, the region faces deep and persistent labour market challenges including:
 - 60% of workers, or 1.3 billion people in informal employment
 - 296 million workers earning below the poverty line
 - Only around half of the population has access to social protection cash benefits
 - Skills gaps and low productivity hinder economic transformations
 - Vulnerable workers are at high risk from climate and digital transformations
- In the context of elevated geopolitical tensions and uncertainty, the Forum represents a critical and timely opportunity for regional dialogue and platform for knowledge exchange, peer learning and policy innovation.





- Cambodia, as host country outlined its progress and vision for building a vibrant high-income society characterised by equity, resilience and environmental sustainability. Through its synergy with the national vision, the Royal Government welcomed the Global Accelerator initiative and opportunity to host the Policy Forum and encouraged a fruitful exchange of knowledge and policy during the event.

Notable comments

- “The Global Accelerator has transitioned from vision to action, with growing momentum across the Asia Pacific region, where six pathfinder countries are actively implementing integrated policies tailored to national contexts” David McLachlan-Karr
- “The Global Accelerator is a once in a generation opportunity. Multilateralism in action.” David McLachlan-Karr
- “The Forum is not only a milestone, but a launchpad for global influence” David McLachlan-Karr
- “The [Global Accelerator] emerges as a critical multilateral initiative to help countries translate global commitments into national policies aligned with SDGs” Mia Seppo
- “The ambitions of the Global Accelerator cannot be fulfilled through business as usual. We need bold, integrated policies that are backed by investments and sustained through genuine dialogue” Mia Seppo
- “We must promote social dialogue as an essential tool for ensuring that reforms are legitimate, inclusive and sustainable.” Mia Seppo

Session Coordinated by: Mr Phu Huynh, Employment Specialist, ILO.

Session 2 - High-Level Panel: Advancing our Shared Commitments for Productive Employment, Social Protection and Just Transitions in Asia and the Pacific

Tuesday 8 April 2025 | 10:40 – 12:00

Session overview

The high-level session provided context for the two-day policy forum by discussing the broad economic and labour market context of the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on the opportunities and challenges specific to promoting productive employment, universal social protection and skills development. It examined the potential of the Global Accelerator (GA) framework to support responsive policies in the context of digital and green transitions and shifting global trade policies, while underlining the importance of multilateral cooperation, social dialogue and the role of employers’ and workers’ organizations.





Speakers

- Moderator: Mr Jo Scheuer, UN Resident Coordinator, Cambodia
- His Excellency Heng Sour, Minister of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia
- Mr Maliki, ST MSIE PhD, Deputy Minister for Community Empowerment, Population and Employment, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia
- Ms Mia Seppo, Assistant Director General, Jobs and Social Protection, ILO
- Ms Karin Shelzig, Director, Human and Social Development, Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- Mr Kong Athit, President, Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC)
- Mr Lor Sok, Vice President, Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA)

Summary of key points

- At the current rate of progress, the Asia-Pacific region will not achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) until 2062. Collective actions have not been sufficient and there is an urgent need to find solutions that are transformative and large in scale.
- For Cambodia, the GA is seen as a transformative mechanism to integrate existing policies, strengthen institutional coordination, and learn good practices from other countries.
- Indonesia aims to reach high-income status by 2045. To this end, it is critical that foundations are strengthened around poverty alleviation, inclusive growth, and human capital development, underpinned by innovations in research and development. The GA Roadmap is aligned with national priorities and is a mechanism to support intra-government data exchange, address regional disparities and strengthen implementation capacity.
- To address the complex global economic and labour market challenges, there is a need for innovations and collective urgency. The multilateral system can support national GA efforts in areas such as strengthening data collection and analysis, defining the policy mix, maximizing the fiscal space, and helping to move from pilot to scale through deeper partnership.
- It is critical that efforts towards poverty reduction and inclusion are based on a results framework and driven by concrete country evidence that the benefits are sustainable.
- A key objective within the GA should be to integrate informal workers into social protection systems and ensure accessibility and affordability for them.
- Industrial relations are key for a good business environment and to boost productivity. Employers and workers are keen to engage in the GA and help facilitate cross-learning on skills and social protection.
- The GA provides a framework for greater policy alignment and collaboration between national and multilateral actors and should ensure progress is equitable, inclusive and rights-based.

Notable comments

- Indonesia Deputy Minister Maliki: "Resources are not unlimited. We need to coordinate and synchronize our resources."



- ILO Assistant Director General Seppo: “Fuel to accelerate should come from action. We need to reduce competition within the multilateral system and enhance partnerships.”
- ADB Director Karin Schelzig: “GA roadmaps provide harmonization in approach. We need to avoid fragmentation to not derail the agenda.”
- CAMFEBA Vice-President Lor Sok: “For Cambodia, what is predictable is LDC graduation. What is unpredictable is the global uncertainty driven by the international poker game being played with global trade and tariff policies.”



Key takeaways and follow-up

- Efforts should be made to expand the number of GA Pathfinder countries to foster greater partnerships and deepen knowledge exchange.
- The GA should commit to promoting social dialogue, and Roadmap development and implementation at the country level should fully engage employers’ and workers’ organizations.
- The multilateral system should remain committed to support national efforts in the GA process, including in the context of emerging challenges and uncertainty driven by shifting global trade policy.

Session Coordinated by: Ms Mary Kent, Skills and Employment Specialist, ILO.

Session 3 – Integrating Skills and Social Protection to Accelerate Decent Work in Asia Pacific

Tuesday 8 April 2025 | 13:00 – 13:30

Session overview

This session explored the integration of skills development and social protection as mutually reinforcing strategies to support decent work in the Asia-Pacific region. It emphasized how aligning policies across these two domains can address informality, inequality, and exclusion, while enhancing resilience and productivity in the face of transitions driven by demographic shifts, digitalization, and global trade realignments.





Speakers highlighted the importance of investing in human capital—particularly in youth, migrant workers, and informal workers—to build inclusive labour markets and ensure sustainable economic growth. The discussion underscored the need for coordinated action and multilateral support to promote policy coherence, foster innovation in financing, and implement scalable solutions tailored to national contexts.

Speakers emphasized that integrated approaches are not only technically sound but politically urgent, as countries in the region face mounting pressure to equip workers with the skills and protection needed to navigate a rapidly changing world of work, with fast digital, technologic, climate change and demographic transformations. Participants also reflected on the potential of regional initiatives and partnerships, such as the ASEAN Year of Skills, to drive progress at scale.

Speakers

- Moderator: Mr Julien Magnat, Advisor, JSP and Partnerships, ILO
- Mr Srinivas B Reddy, Chief, Skills and Employability Branch, ILO
- Ms Valérie Schmitt, Deputy Director, Universal Social Protection Department, ILO
- Mr Datuk Wira Shahul Dawood, Chief Executive, Human Resources, HRD Corp

Summary of key points

- The mismatch between job opportunities and available skills remains a major obstacle for productive employment. Human capital development must be prioritized, particularly for young people, migrant workers, and those in the informal economy.
- Nearly half of the population in the region lacks social protection. This coverage gap contributes to persistent inequalities, especially for women and children. Integrated strategies, linking social protection, skills, and employment measures are key to facilitating transitions and resilience.
- Skills-based migration, job retention schemes, and targeted TVET programmes are examples of country-level solutions that can be scaled with coordinated policy and financing. ASEAN regional initiatives provide momentum, with strong engagement from the private sector and support from the ILO.
- Multilateral cooperation and innovative financing, combining public and private sources, are essential to ensure sustainable investment in skills and protection. Policy coherence across ministries and actors is also critical for effectiveness and impact.
- Malaysia shared national experience in mobilizing private sector contributions to human capital development. With 24 million individuals having benefited from training schemes, this model demonstrates the power of public-private partnerships for national development.

Notable comments

- “Human capital development is the most important dimension of decent work.” Srinivas B Reddy
- “Social protection is an investment in people and in the economy, particularly in children and youth, by improving access to healthcare, nutrition, and education.” Valérie Schmitt
- “As the future of education becomes more expensive and jobs increasingly uncertain, it is vital for the country to plan ahead to avoid potential economic strain.” Datuk Shahul Dawood
- “The ASEAN Year of Skills aims to bridge skill gaps, promote talent mobility, and strengthen regional collaboration.” Datuk Shahul Dawood



- “Policy coherence and coordination are essential. Countries like Cambodia and Indonesia show how to integrate social protection and skills policies.” Srinivas B Reddy

Key takeaways and follow-up

- Integrating skills development and social protection policies is key to advancing the decent work agenda. Countries should invest in lifelong learning systems, youth inclusion, and policy coherence.
- Public-private partnerships and regional initiatives like ASEAN Year of Skills offer valuable platforms to scale good practices and support national action plans.
- Multilateral actors must strengthen their support to countries in aligning financing, technical assistance, and data systems for integrated policy design and implementation.
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Session Coordinated by: Mr Julien Magnat, Advisor JSP and Partnerships, ILO.

Session 4 – Pathfinder Countries Presentations and Panel Discussion: Viet Nam, Pakistan, Indonesia

Tuesday 8 April 2025 | 13:30-14:50

Session Overview

This session focused on the country-level experience of three pathfinder countries, namely, Indonesia, Pakistan and Viet Nam. The objective of the session was to provide an overview of the GA's goals, its strategic approach, and its anticipated role in advancing the SDGs in each of the Pathfinder countries. The session also aimed to enhance understanding of how the social, economic, and policy landscapes in each country influence the implementation of GA initiatives.

Speakers

- Moderator: Ms Gita Sabharwal UN Resident Coordinator Indonesia
- Ms Chu Thi Lan, Head of Division of Labour and Employment, Institute of State Organizational and Labor Science, Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) Viet Nam
- Ms Kanwal Batool, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Pakistan
- Mrs Tirta Sutedjo, ST, MWRM, Director for Poverty Alleviation and Community Empowerment, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia

Summary of key points:

- In all three countries, governments are working to strengthen social protection systems and upskill the workforce to future-proof their economies and support sustainable growth. Scaling up investments in skills development and social protection will require substantial fiscal resources. To bridge these funding gaps, governments will need to leverage private capital and adopt innovative financing mechanisms, enabling them to unlock the full potential of their dynamic workforce.
- Viet Nam is committed to building a multi-layered social protection system alongside integrated labour market policies. Its roadmap adopts a two-pronged approach. First, it focuses on enhancing human capital, developing the labour market, and creating decent jobs by establishing a responsive skills development system aligned with economic demands. This includes reducing informal employment, promoting labour market



restructuring, and expanding access to decent work through a modern, flexible, and sustainable labour market. Second, it aims to establish an inclusive social security system by developing a multi-tiered, adaptable, and internationally integrated social insurance framework that covers the entire workforce. This involves strengthening social assistance to help individuals cope with economic shocks, disasters, and other risks, while continuing to improve poverty reduction strategies. The next step is to seek government approval to join and implement the GA programme.

- Pakistan faces a significant youth bulge, with 65% of the population below the median age of 20.6, alongside high NEET rates and 72.5% of the workforce employed in the informal sector. These challenges highlight the urgent need to create inclusive, decent, and productive employment, facilitate the transition to a formal economy, promote gender equality, and strengthen social protection systems. In response, the government has adopted a policy framework centred on skills development, innovation, and inclusion. Key initiatives include digital youth programs and entrepreneurship loan schemes, social safety nets such as BISP and WIF to empower women, Labour Market Resource Centres for digital job matching, and efforts to create 10 million skilled jobs. These measures aim to support a just transition and ensure access to robust social protection.

- Indonesia has a population of 278.7 million (2023), including 4.4 million persons with disabilities and 22.1 million elderly. With a poverty rate of 9.03% and extreme poverty at 1.47% (2024), the country aims to eliminate poverty by 2045. The GA supports this goal through



two priorities: expanding inclusive, digitalized social protection systems and empowering a competitive workforce. Aligned with the 2025–2029 Medium-Term Development Plan, the GA focuses on accelerating social transformation to reduce poverty and disparities in accessing social services through enhanced digitalized, transparent, inclusive information and financial system for social protection and accelerating economic, transformation for a competitive labour force and productivity. The GA is guided by a Steering Committee and managed by a Technical Committee, GA activities are supported by ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, and the UNRC.

Notable comments

- Ms Chu Thi Lan, Head of Division of Labour and Employment, Institute of State Organizational and Labor Science, Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) Viet Nam: Viet Nam is on the path of strong and comprehensive transformation and reform, creating a new momentum for development. Three development breakthroughs include institution, infrastructure and HR.



- Ms Kanwal Batool, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Pakistan: In Pakistan, there is a need to: promote inclusive, decent, full, and productive employment for youth; support the transition from the informal to the formal economy; emphasize gender equality and social protection for the workforce; and align education, skills, and employment.
- Mrs Tirta Sutedjo, ST, MWRM, Director for Poverty Alleviation and Community Empowerment, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia: Priorities for GA Entry Points and Strategies for Indonesia: 1-Social protection for all; and 2 -Empowering people.



Key takeaways and follow-up

- Countries in the Global South should strengthen collaboration through exchange programs, enabling the sharing of expertise, particularly in trade and skill development. An adaptive approach to social protection and assistance is crucial, making these systems more responsive to disaster risks and climate change impacts, while supporting vulnerable populations and promoting economic opportunities for women in development.
- The private sector plays a crucial role in driving economic development and creation of decent work opportunities. To encourage private sector participation, the government can promote dialogue and establish compensation mechanisms for employers who bring their workers into the social security system. Collaboration with the private sector should align with national priorities, focusing on data and initiatives that benefit both parties. Additionally, the private sector can contribute to social protection by supporting empowerment programs and capacity-building initiatives that help local governments develop the skills needed for future workforce demands.

Session Coordinated by: Ms Radhicka Kapoor, Senior Employment Specialist, ILO.



Session 5 – Pathfinder Countries Presentations and Panel Discussion: Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines

Tuesday 8 April 2025 | 15:20-16:45

Session Overview

As a continuation to the previous panel session, this session highlighted the country-level experience of the three pathfinder countries - Cambodia, Nepal, and the Philippines.

As with the previous session, the objective was to provide an overview of the GA's goals, its strategic approach, and its anticipated role in advancing the SDGs in each of the Pathfinder countries.



The session also aimed to enhance understanding of how the social, economic, and policy landscapes in each country influence the implementation of GA initiatives.

Speakers:

- Moderator: Ms Hanaa Fikry Ahmed Singer, UN Resident Coordinator, Nepal
- His Excellency Dr. Phan Phalla, Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Cambodia
- Mr Krishna Prasad Sapkota, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission, Nepal
- Mr Patrick P. Patriwirawan, Jr. Director, Department of Labour and Employment – Bureau of Local Employment (DOLE BLE), Philippines

Summary of key points

- Cambodia has already developed the national GA Roadmap which was endorsed by the government. Cambodia highlighted the achievements in peace and stability, reduction of poverty & inequality, education reform, strong economic growth, public health, and development of social protection. The main challenges facing Cambodia include – large informal economy, low social protection coverage, unskilled labour, limited fiscal space, and structural exclusions in labour markets. This was further constrained by limited capacity of involved actors, which could affect timely implementation the GA and related programmes. The priority areas of actions include pro-employment macroeconomic and financing policies, skills and inclusive employment, social protection in particular the achievement of universal health coverage (UHC), formalization and productivity, and inclusive labour market.
- Nepal joined the GA in February 2024. Key next steps include: Introducing the subject matter to the Government of Nepal; developing an evidence-based GA roadmap; integrating the social protection framework. The representative from Nepal shared views on the roles of GA in the national development in particular relating to the graduation



from LDC by 2026. After updating the economy and labour market outlook, key national strategies/policies were presented, notably 16th National Development Plan (2023-2027), and national policies on employment, promotion of small and micro enterprises, national social protection framework, and LDC graduation transition. The country is making efforts to achieve the targets by 2027 –i) reduce unemployment rate from 12% to 5%, ii) extend social protection coverage from 32% to 60%, iii) increase employment in informal sector from 36% to 50%, iv) increase labour force participation from 38% to 50%, v) create 1.5 million jobs. On GA support, Nepal emphasized need to direct the support to strengthen technical capacity of key institutions to translate policy into action, particularly for:

- Piloting LDC graduation actions based on strategy
 - Extension of social security coverage i.e. employment-related schemes, MSMEs, self-employed, workers in informal sectors
 - Skills transformation for digital, platform and green transition
 - Innovation in resource mobilization/utilization
 - Climate change, employment/enterprise and social protection nexus
- Asked about the strategies to achieve the goal of reducing the unemployment rate to 5%, the representative of Nepal responded that policy change is the key. The GA forum and its steering committee provide a platform to discuss and prepare strategies and programmes to promote the GA. These efforts aim to develop a roadmap that engages the business sector in promoting policies supportive of micro and small enterprises. The focus is on changing policies and programmes in priority sectors, with the involvement of the private sector, to stimulate job creation and increase employment opportunities.
- Philippines updated the current development of the national GA roadmap. In the Philippines, construction and transportation sectors are key employment generating sources of job creation, while at the same time a number of challenges and priority actions are identified. The construction and transportation sectors have the cross-cutting issues including green and digital transformation, care and gender equality. In the development of national GA roadmap as a pathfinder country, strong tripartite support has been secured, including a high-level government commitment, collaborative and consultative discussions among construction and transportation industry, and collaboration with development partners and multilateral organizations. Sectoral representation includes the government, employers' organization, trade unions, as well as representatives from the marginalized sector and the informal sector. Trabaho Para Sa Bayan Inter-agency (TPB-IAC) was created and acts as the GA National Steering Committee. The next step will be the GA Consultancy Team to formulate the national GA roadmap and conduct stakeholder consultation and engage with the implementation.



- On the formalization of the informal workers, in Cambodia, the goal is to support the transition of informal workers and businesses into the formal economy. Those who are ready to formalize must register their businesses, which will allow them to access various benefits. Informal workers and enterprises can gain access to formal services, including financing options.



For instance, SMEs can access loans through government banks, which typically offer lower interest rates than commercial banks. Additionally, reskilling and upskilling programmes are essential to equip informal workers with the competencies needed in the formal economy. Understanding their profiles and needs is critical for providing timely support, particularly during emergencies. In the Philippines, there are existing mechanisms that involve various sectors in policy discussions. Representatives from the informal sector are identified and engaged through consultations and capacity-building initiatives aimed at facilitating the transition from informality to formality.

Notable comments

- His Excellency Dr. Phan Phalla, Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Cambodia: Without social protection, we would see more challenges and more poverty. In Cambodia, everything is in place—now it is time to accelerate.
- Mr Krishna Prasad Sapkota, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission, Nepal: GA is a very timely and strategic initiative following social dialogue and aligned with national priorities. Policy change is the key. The forum is a good place to discuss critical evidence-based policy development e.g. on LDC graduation, job growths, social protection.
- Mr Patrick P. Patriwirawan, Jr. Director, Department of Labour and Employment – Bureau of Local Employment (DOLE BLE), Philippines: Multi-stakeholder partnerships enable shared knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial resources, scaling up what works with great coordination and collaboration.

Key takeaways and follow-up

- The session showcased rich experiences to learn from other pathfinder countries. The three presentations from Cambodia, Nepal, and the Philippines were formulated based on each country's specific needs—not all countries need to follow the same social protection pathway. In Cambodia, for example, a large portion of the workforce is in the informal economy, and efforts are being made to formalize this sector. In Nepal, the GA is expected to be integrated into the national development agenda, in particular relating to the graduation from LDC. In the Philippines, the contribution of two key sectors was highlighted with supporting evidence of the need of workers.

Session Coordinated by: Mr Kenichi Hirose, Senior Specialist in Social Protection, ILO.



Recap: by Valerie Schmitt

- To tackle inequality and poverty, transformation is needed for both people and enterprises, as well as for countries graduating from development assistance—especially in the light of current disruptions and economic downturns.
- Social protection, skills development, and the integration of policy and financing are essential, along with collaboration across platforms at the ministerial level.
- The roadmap serves as a meeting point, and policy requires financing. Linking policy and financing is key to initiating or accelerating investment with high returns, as emphasized by all panellists, including H.E. Heng Sour and the representative from Pakistan.
- South-South learning and cooperation occur at different stages of knowledge sharing. There are commonalities—such as digitalization of TVET and social protection, climate change strategies in Indonesia and the Philippines, and the formalization of the informal economy.
- This is a stage to test and try new ideas and to enhance social dialogue for implementing practical solutions, policy reforms, and investments, with the Global Accelerator's capacity to deliver on its promise.

Thematic Session 1 – Connecting Skills and Lifelong Learning Interventions with Social Protection and Pro-employment Policy

Wednesday 9 April 2025 | 08:50-10:15

Session overview

Building on the Day 1 discussion, the purpose of Thematic Session 1 was to further explore the complementary and mutually reinforcing effects of connecting skills and lifelong learning interventions with universal social protection and other active labour market measures to accelerate skills development, social protection extension and promote more inclusive, decent and productive employment.

The session aimed to facilitate sharing of experiences on how to operationalize a coordinated or integrated approach in connecting skills development, social protection and other active labour market measures. This would include challenges, opportunities and different modalities for the coordination and integration, and the strategies and institutional mechanisms needed to align the three initiatives. The session also aimed to identify the role of government and social partners in promoting skills development and social protection and highlight the areas of improvement and the knowledge and capacity building support required to advance national initiatives.





Speakers

- Moderator: Mr Srinivas Reddy, Chief of Skills Branch, ILO
- His Excellency Kuoch Somean, Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Royal Government of Cambodia
- Ms. Girlie Grace Casimiro-Igutiben, Director, National Economic and Development Authority – Social Development Staff (NEDA SDS), Philippines
- Mr Faisal Tjandraatmadja, Deputy General Chairman for Human Resources and Certification, Indonesia Association of Hotel & Restaurants (PHRI), Indonesia
- Mr Asad Memon, Deputy General Secretary, Pakistan United Workers Federation (PUWF), Pakistan

Summary of key points

- Major policy initiatives have been adopted in all four countries – i.e. a national programme to train 1.5 million vulnerable youth in Cambodia; Trabaho Para sa Bayan that supports the 10-year national employment masterplan in the Philippines that provides a policy framework for connecting labour market interventions and social protection; the establishment of Sector Skills Committees with an aim to enhancing industry engagement in skills development in Indonesia; and the national economic transformation plan (Uraan Pakistan) with the 5E Framework in Pakistan.
- Each initiative is at a different stage of implementation, and all four countries are exploring ways to improve and accelerate implementation. For example, Cambodia is accelerating its effort to increase participation in training by more proactively reaching out to communities, offering flexible and mobile training and seeking collaboration with the private sector in the design of training. High informal employment and weak foundation skills among the targeted vulnerable youth, as well as sustainable financing for the programme. remain main challenges. In the Philippines, while the role of the national government remains important, it plans to further increase the capacity of local government for greater integration of different government services at the sub-national level. Local Government Units (LGU) implement cash transfer programmes under the National Employment Insurance while identifying community skills needs to work with TESDA, Public Employment Services and DOLE for skills training, job fairs and job placement support.
- Connecting skills and social protection broadens access to skills training opportunities but connecting them alone may not be sufficient to increase training participation. For this, a combination of different services and additional measures are required, including career guidance, job readiness support and flexible (i.e. shorter, after working hours, mobile) market relevant training or on-the-job training - both providing official certificates. Showcasing how skills training can facilitate career progression and





expansion is important for programmes to be effective. Paid leave for skills training is also an important measure to increase workers' training participation.

- Effective industry engagement (public-private partnerships) is most critical for promoting skills development. Establishment of sector skills bodies, such as Sector Skills Committees (SSCs) in Indonesia, based on a tripartite plus model, can be an effective measure. The example of an SSC for the tourism industry in Indonesia demonstrated how the SSC could bring together previously fragmented efforts by different employers' associations to set and work towards a common goal. Indonesia's experience also offers useful insight regarding what is required for effective operationalization of sector skills bodies. The experience indicated that the establishment of SSCs needs to involve revisiting the role of government and industry in skills development, and that defining a clear mandate and delegation of meaningful roles to SSCs from the government (e.g. skills standards development) is critical for their effective operationalization.
- The role of trade unions in negotiating and advocating for inclusion and promotion of skilling and upskilling opportunities and social protection among the workforce remains critical. The example from Pakistan demonstrated the role of trade unions in ensuring the inclusion of skilling and upskilling programmes as part the national labour strategies. Trade unions also have the right of collective bargaining to negotiate with employers for skilling of the existing workers.

Notable comments

- "Our ambition is to provide our citizens with at least one skill for their lives and their opportunity for their lifelong long learning to continue their learning" (H.E. Somean, Cambodia).
- "The National Programme [that] provides skills training opportunities to 1.5 million vulnerable youth and low-income households...not only equips them with skills but also [income security] when they pursue the training" (H.E. Somean, Cambodia).
- "The success of the initiative [Sector Skills Committee for Tourism] is based on collaboration and coordination right at the centre. I am grateful that the government is doing a job of facilitating these things among all industries" (Mr Faisal, Indonesia).
- "The labour market interventions in the Philippines play a significant role in the social protection framework. They are integral in fostering economic resilience, improving workforce skills and ensuring inclusivity within the labour market as part of the nation's broader social protection strategy and agenda" (Director Girlie, Philippines).
- "Existing workers need to learn new skills, adopt emerging technologies, [and] transition to new jobs to secure sustainable employment opportunities, but they are not necessarily interested in these things. It is thus important to find a way and guide them to face new opportunities and new skills challenges" (Mr Memon, Pakistan).

Session Coordinated by: Ms Akiko Sakamoto, Senior Skills and Employment Specialist, ILO.



Thematic Session 2 – Aligning GA Roadmap Development with Green, Digital and Economic Transitions

Wednesday 9 April 2025 | 10:30-12:00

Session overview

The session provided a dedicated platform for interactive, multi-stakeholder dialogue around the integration of employment, skills, and social protection policies in the context of accelerating green, digital, and economic transitions. Particular emphasis was placed on equipping workers and enterprises with the tools to navigate disruptions and seize opportunities through integrated national strategies, strong social protection systems, and forward-looking skills development.



Through a combination of expert panel discussions and two parallel World Café-style group discussions (Group A: Green Transition and Group B: Digital Transition), the session facilitated the exchange of experiences, policy challenges, and practical solutions among pathfinder countries. Discussions revolved around how best to shape the GA roadmap to respond to structural shifts driven by climate change and technological change, particularly in the context of the LDC graduation process and the pursuit of universal social protection and productive employment.

Summary of Group Discussions

Group A: Green Transition

Discussion #1: Policies and Support Needed for Green Skills and Social Protection

Question: As your countries move toward greener economies and face the effects of climate change, what kinds of policies and support are needed to help people gain green skills and access social protection, while also keeping the economy strong and sustainable?

Participants emphasised the importance of:

- Clearly defining what constitutes a "green economy" and corresponding green skills aligned with net-zero targets.
- Promoting sectoral interventions in climate-smart agriculture, the blue economy (e.g., fisheries), and sustainable infrastructure to create employment opportunities.
- Expanding income security and social protection for vulnerable workers affected by climate-related shocks.
- Embedding green jobs and skills development into national policies and occupational frameworks through social dialogue.
- Incentivising private sector engagement and aligning investment flows with green transition objectives.



- Conducting sector-specific assessments to identify skills gaps and employment potential.
- Simplifying and consolidating labour and social protection legislation to enhance implementation.

Discussion #2: Technical Support and Knowledge Products through the GA

Question: What types of technical support, knowledge products, peer-to-peer learning, and evidence can be provided through the GA to help address the challenges posed by climate change and support countries throughout the transition process?

Key recommendations included:

- Strengthening data collection and analysis on supply chains and SMEs through a sectoral lens.
- Prioritising capacity building to identify transition-related risks, with particular focus on vulnerable groups and national actors.
- Supporting learning exchanges across countries and within national GA governance frameworks.
- Mobilising resources for research and development to anticipate future skill needs.
- Integrating national priorities into broader development plans through the GA roadmap.
- Promoting best practices and action planning that enhance resilience in infrastructure and governance systems.
- Leveraging tools such as ex-ante impact assessments to guide decision-making.
- Supporting private sector readiness and responsiveness to climate and labour transitions.

Group B: Digital Transition

Discussion #3: Challenges in creating decent digital jobs

Question: With digital changes like AI and automation reshaping economies, what are the main challenges policymakers and relevant stakeholders in your country face in creating decent, sustainable jobs, especially for people from marginalized groups?

Participants identified several cross-cutting barriers, including:

- Poor conceptualisation and implementation of digital economy regulations.
- Persistent digital divides, especially affecting women and informal platform workers.
- Inadequate employer obligations and limited capacity of trade unions to organise and protect digital workers.
- Difficulties in extending social protection to gig and informal economy workers.
- The fast-evolving nature of digital skills, with mismatches between education systems and labour market needs.
- Worker displacement in telecommunications, BPOs, and call centres, necessitating proactive protection measures.
- Insufficient capacities among employers and governments to address upskilling challenges for both workers and firms.

Discussion #4: Technical Services and Expertise Needed from the GA

Question: What technical services and expertise could the GA provide to support the design and implementation of integrated employment, skills, and social protection policies that enable a just digital transition; particularly for marginalised groups? (Countries undergoing the LDC graduation process?)



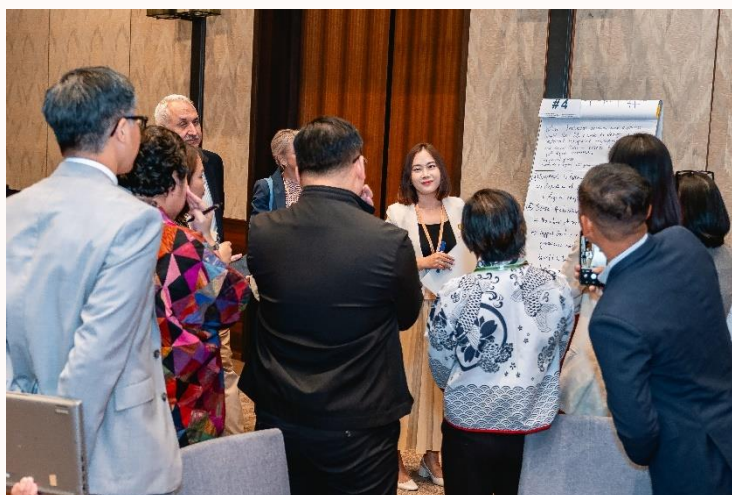
Participants proposed the following priorities for GA engagement:

- Expansion of social protection coverage to informal economy workers, supported by digital registration systems and improved labour management frameworks.
- Support to governments in strengthening governance mechanisms for public investment in social protection.
- Reinforcement of national and regional social dialogue to ensure inclusive digital transition policies.
- Investment in public employment services and technical education systems.
- Government-private sector collaboration in skill development, particularly through funding mechanisms.
- Creation of sectoral skill committees and integration of work-based learning in technical education.
- Enabling MSMEs to adopt digital tools (e.g., AI, digital infrastructure) and promoting guidance for just transitions at the workplace.
- Mapping of industry transformations and digital skill needs at the sectoral level.

Cross-cutting key messages and recommendations for the GA workplan in Asia

Across all four discussions, the following overarching themes emerged:

- **Policy coherence is critical:** A clear need exists for integrated policy approaches that align employment, skills, and social protection with environmental and technological change. This includes embedding just transition principles into national development strategies and sectoral policies.
- **Targeted support for vulnerable groups:** The informal economy, women, youth, platform workers, and MSMEs face systemic disadvantages in both green and digital transitions. GA interventions must be inclusive, rights-based, and tailored to local contexts.
- **Social dialogue and tripartite mechanisms must be central:** Coordinated actions between governments, employers, and workers' organisations are essential to ensure equitable policy design and implementation. Strengthening social dialogue structures at all levels was widely endorsed.
- **Data, skills and finance are cornerstones:** Countries need better data, forward-looking skills systems, and more flexible financing tools to respond to transition challenges. The GA can support countries with tools such as impact assessments, R&D support, digital mapping, and capacity building.
- **Private sector engagement is essential:** Leveraging private sector investments and ensuring employer participation in upskilling initiatives are vital for both green and digital transitions. Incentives and public-private partnerships will be key.





In moving forward, participants called on the GA to prioritise:

- The development of practical, country-owned roadmaps aligned with national and regional contexts;
- Enhanced South-South cooperation and regional exchange platforms;
- Scalable technical assistance, especially in LDCs;
- Stronger integration of climate, labour, and digital policy streams.

Session Coordinated by: Mr Fredy Guayacan,
Senior Specialist on Environment and Decent Work, ILO.

Thematic Session 3 – Voices of Beneficiaries

Wednesday 9 April 2025 | 13:00-14:00

Session Summary

Thematic Session 3 provided an opportunity to share the voices of direct beneficiaries of government policies and programmes from selected countries in the Asia Pacific region. This included hearing from the direct beneficiaries of the cash transfer TVET Programme in Cambodia, and its impact on improving the livelihood prospects for people with disabilities. The session also provided perspectives from the government and social partners on how policies and programmes can take better shape and improve by building in feedback mechanisms for the direct beneficiaries.

Speakers

- Moderator: Dr. Will Parks, UNICEF
- Cambodian beneficiaries: Mr. Thoeurn Sovannroath and Mr. Khun Pov
- Mr. Ahmad MUKARRAM, Senior Joint Secretary, Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Pakistan
- Ms. Sophia Gelig, Advocacy Associate, Employers' Confederation of the Philippines
- Mr Yogendra Kumar Kunwar, President, Nepal Trade Union Congress Representative, General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)



Summary of key points

- The voices of the direct beneficiaries set the tone of the session in terms of difficulties and challenges that they faced in life, which were magnified during COVID-19. Participation in the Cash Transfer TVET Programme opened the paths for productive participation in the economy. While the beneficiaries point out further areas for improvements in the Programme, it clearly paved the way for improved and positive prospects in livelihood.
- From the government perspective, an example of Pakistan's long-standing experience in extending social protection to all through Benazir Income Support Programme was



shared. This Programme has evolved over the years and expanded to the scope of its scheme beyond the initial “income support” goals. Receiving feedback from the beneficiaries is critical in designing policies that remain relevant and effective. Starting from targeted and contained programmes, persistent efforts at improvements, adjustments and expansion can lead to positive outcomes for livelihoods, if a strong mechanism is in place to hear and absorb voices of the beneficiaries are in place.

- Employers’ and workers’ organizations can be considered as both an active partner and a beneficiary of efforts to accelerate integrated approaches to productive employment and universal social protection. An example from the Philippines, in relation to the recent bipartite declaration on just transition, highlighted some of the dynamisms that can be fostered through social dialogue and commitments to making the just transition. An example from Nepal showed that having representation and voice of the workers, particularly for those in the informal economy, is critical. Some challenges remain, however, in extending outreach, accessing and receiving support for skills development and upskilling, and creating an enabling environment for productive participation in the economy that benefits both the workers and the employers.

Session Coordinated by: Ms Makiko Matsumoto, Specialist on Employment and Mr Andre Bongestabs, Specialist on Formalization and Head of Programming, ILO.

Thematic Session 4 – Sustainable Financing for Accelerating Skills Development, Decent Jobs and Social Protection

Wednesday 9 April 2025 | 14:30-16:00

Session overview

This thematic session discussed the financing pillar of the GA. The session started with an overview by UNDP of the status of Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF) in each of the pathfinder countries in the region, highlighting financing interventions relevant to the jobs and social protection agenda.

The GA financing dimensions were then presented by the ILO. It identifies four complementary financing dimensions:

- Enhancing public spending on jobs and social protection;
- Mobilising revenues through progressive taxation, contributory social protection schemes, and employer-based financing mechanisms including through official development assistance (ODA) support;
- Leveraging investments with social impact including public and private, domestic and international investments;
- Aligning macroeconomic and fiscal policies to ensure long-term, sustainable financing for employment and social protection initiatives.





Financing for skills development and social protection is particularly critical, as these two pillars reinforce one another in promoting economic resilience and inclusive labour markets. Within this framework, securing sufficient and well-structured financing for skills development and social protection is central to supporting just transitions and strengthening economic resilience.

Presentations were followed by a panel discussion and reactions from the floor from social partners.

Speakers

- Moderator: Ms Michiko Miyamoto, Director for Decent Work Team South Asia and Country Office, ILO India
- Co-Presenter: Mr Jean-François Klein, Employment Policy Advisor and Head of Unit, ILO Employment Department
- Co-Presenter: Ms Enkhzul Dambajantsan, Policy Specialist, SDG Finance, UNDP Sustainable Finance Hub
- Panellist: Mr Setyo Budiantoro, Economic Development Pillar Manager of SDGs National Coordination Secretariat, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia
- Panellist: Ms Abila Safir, Senior Economist, World Bank Group, Cambodia
- Panellist: Mr Rony Ambrose Gobilee, Chief Strategy Officer, Human Resources Development Corporation (HRD Corp), Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia

Social partner comments were provided by:

- Ms Anne Colina, Federation of Free Workers (FFW) Philippines
- Mr Quang Minh Le, Official of International Department, Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL)
- Mr Hari Paudel, Deputy Director, Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI)
- Mr Tep Sophoan, Executive Director, Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA)

Summary of key points

- Countries across the world are increasingly moving towards SDG-aligned public finance, with integrated approaches to outcomes across tax, debt and spending policies. Private Finance reforms aim at unlocking SDG-aligned investment and embedding sustainability into the architecture of financial markets.



- The six pathfinder countries of the region are in various stages of Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF) development. Indonesia has finalised it, while Cambodia and Nepal have drafts. Philippines is at early stage and Pakistan has developed a provincial strategy for Punjab. Social Protection, employment and skills development are integrated at various levels, for instance, through supporting MSMEs and rural



development, SDG investor maps, thematic bonds issuance, the strengthening PPP and public finance.

- None of the participants in the room have been involved in the development of the financing strategies, highlighting the critical need to link and coordinate integrated policies with financing strategies.
- **Indonesia** has an estimated US\$1.7 trillion financing needs to be mobilized for SDGs – public, private, impact/angel investors, and philanthropy sources were identified. The country is looking at making investments in skills and social protection attractive to private investors.
- **World Bank** highlighted that Asia Pacific has a lower revenue mobilization compared to other regions. Cash transfer programs have helped cushion fuel subsidies reforms. Within Social Protection there are more opportunities for efficiency gains. Investments in these areas tend to generate benefits although there are market failures. There is a need to strike a balance between public and private financing.
- **Malaysia** HRD Corp reached 98k employers & 4.7 million employees via 11 initiatives focusing on digital skills. It has produced strong evidence on the benefits of training – 3% productivity increased, compared with the national annual average of 2.5%. Continued adjustments and research.
- **Philippines (Unions):** Funding should be prioritized by the needs of the workers. 15 engendered labour point agenda were proposed by unions, thanks to ILO support. Social protection and decent work outcomes are critical in the dialogue among social partners. TUs should be equal partners that offer critical insights into the labour markets and increased alignment between agendas.
- **Viet Nam (Unions):** Insurance schemes (unemployment, health, and social) by low governmental budget.
- **Nepal (Employers):** Private sectors generate most employment in the country, government accounts for just 16%. Aligning skill development with industries' needs. CSR has been prioritised as measure to promote skill/human development.
- **Cambodia (Employers):** Involved in governance and financial management in social security and training development. Social Security Fund to invest in areas characterized by low risk and high return on investment. Limited capacities to catch up with development agenda thus requires more capacity development for social partners, exploring cost-efficient approach/model to skill and productivity development.

Notable comments

- "Human capital development is a marathon, not a sprint" (HRD Corp Malaysia)

Key takeaways and follow-up

- The GA offers an integrated financing strategy that provides a structured approach to mobilising, aligning, and optimising financial resources to achieve the ambitions of the national GA Roadmaps
- Financing mechanisms often operate in silos, with skills funding and social protection investments failing to align with broader employment and development strategies.



Addressing these challenges requires a shift towards sustainable, coordinated financing approaches.

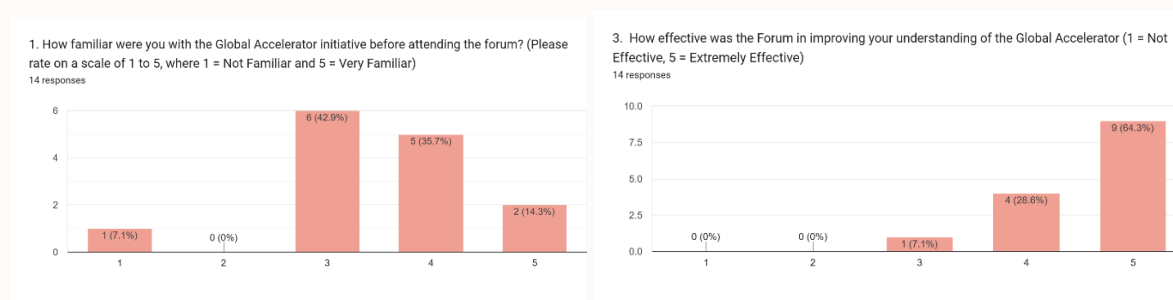
- Not Connecting the dots and ensuring coordination between Ministries of Finance leading the development of INFFs and the priorities identified in the roadmaps is critical. Lead agencies supporting INFFs processes such as UNDP can also support this coordination as relevant.
- The involvement of social partners and the development of financing options through social dialogue is essential to guarantee long-term sustainability.
- The Technical Support Facility (TSF) will support pathfinder countries in developing dedicated financing strategies and initiatives to support the implementation of the roadmaps.



Session Coordinated by: Mr Jean-Francois Kleine, Employment Policy Advisor and Head of Unit, Employment Department, ILO.

Participant Feedback

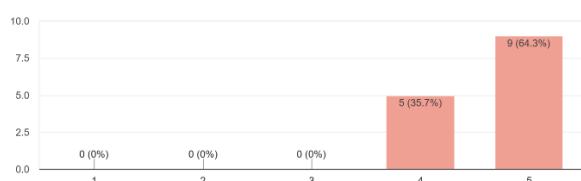
All participants were invited to provide feedback on the Asia Pacific Policy Forum. Of the respondents, there was a wide variation in prior understanding of the GA concept and a consensus that the Policy Forum had improved participants' understanding.



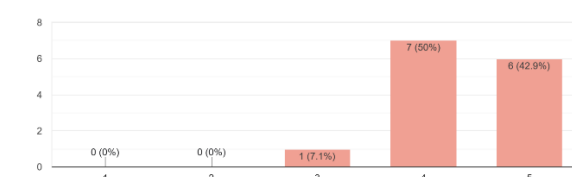
All respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall organization and facilitation of the policy forum, with the majority of participants agreeing that the forum was effective or extremely effective in facilitating knowledge exchange and social dialogue.



2. How satisfied were you with the overall organization and facilitation of the Policy Forum? (Please rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Very Dissatisfied and 5 = Very Satisfied)
14 responses



4. How effective was the forum in facilitating knowledge-sharing and social dialogue between policymakers, social partners and technical experts? (1 = Not Effective, 5 = Extremely Effective)
14 responses

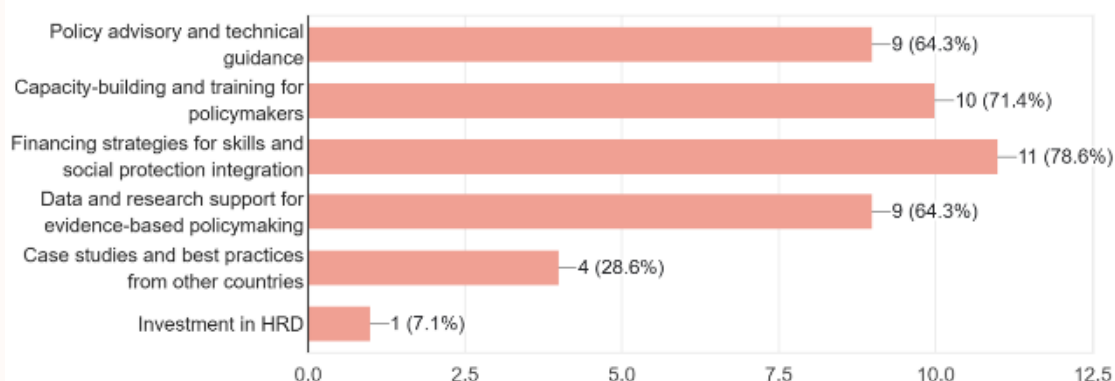


As a follow up to the forum, participants' expressed their priorities for receiving further technical support are as follows :

- Financing strategies for skills and social protection integration
- Capacity-building and training for policymakers
- Policy advisory and technical guidance
- Data and research support for evidence-based policymaking

8. What types of technical support would be most useful to your country following this forum?
(Select all that apply)

14 responses





Key Takeaways

The Asia-Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum successfully brought together tripartite delegations from six pathfinder countries—Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Viet Nam—for an intensive two-day exchange. Participants shared early progress and priorities in the development of their national GA Roadmaps, engaged in thematic discussions across employment, skills, and social protection, and interacted with regional UN entities and global institutions such as the ADB and World Bank. These exchanges reinforced the Forum’s role as a vital platform for regional dialogue, shared learning, and policy innovation.

Some of the key themes arising from the forum can be summarised as follows:

Affirming the need for the GA

The sessions of the Forum underscored the GA’s transformative potential to fast-track urgently needed progress toward the SDGs. Forum discussions brought to light some the critical challenges of the region in terms of high informality (60% of workers), widespread working poverty (296 million people below the poverty line), and limited access to social protection (only 50% covered). The Forum participation helped to demonstrate that persistent, deep-rooted and inter-twined social and economic challenges required new thinking and solutions that transcended traditional policy silos and called for a step change in financing and collaboration among development partners.

Roadmap Development and Technical Support

As pathfinder countries at different stages of roadmap development shared their progress, there was an emergent theme that this in itself could be a challenging process requiring political will and the combined resolve of the partners involved. The need to engage across multiple ministries, private sector, social partners and development partners; establish and agree governance protocols; and reach consensus on priorities, can be considered a development journey for the pathfinder countries involved, many of whom were still working through this process.

The ongoing technical support received from ILO and UN systems at the country level was seen as critical for this process.

South-South Cooperation

The Forum affirmed the critical role of South-South cooperation in enabling peer learning among countries navigating similar development challenges. Countries called for increased policy exchange and collaboration—especially in areas such as adaptive social protection, formalization, and inclusive skills strategies responsive to climate and economic shocks.

Tripartism and Social Dialogue

The GA framework recognizes the importance of the private sector in economic development and therefore the need to engage with employers’ and workers’ representatives in strategic planning. The tripartite voices of the Forum helped to acknowledge the multi-layered nature of economic and social challenges, and the importance of creating a policy space where social partners can



play greater roles in formalization and skills development, for example by bringing workers into social security systems and by advocating for inclusive focused upskilling programs for workers.

The Forum highlighted how Roadmap development has created space for social partners to co-create solutions—particularly in skills development and formalization. Social dialogue, as stressed by Mia Seppo, is essential to ensuring reforms are legitimate, inclusive, and sustainable.

Participants stressed the importance of engaging employers and workers in the design of skilling pathways, social security expansion, and employment transitions.

Financing for Transformation

Integrated financing strategies emerged as a cornerstone of GA implementation, but also an area in which participants requested the most technical support.

Countries are exploring ways to align fiscal policies, SDG financing tools, and private sector investments to support skills development and universal social protection. Informality was identified as a priority for financing innovation—requiring better data to distinguish between those ready for formalization and those needing targeted support. Stronger links between financing strategies (e.g., INFFs) and national Roadmaps was identified as being essential going forward.

Follow up actions

The following key follow-up actions will be supported by the GA:

- To support structured engagement with pathfinder countries to maintain and foster knowledge exchanges and south-south collaboration on the GA in the region.
- To increase the number of partners and countries supporting the GA, through joint advocacy and messaging on the value addition of the initiative.
- To ensure the participation of social partners and civil society and support their capacity to engage in policy dialogue, in recognition that social dialogue is a cornerstone of the GA.
- To further document and invest in knowledge and research on the multiplier effects and socio-economic dividends of policies and programmes which integrate skills development and social protection, especially in the informal economy.
- To ensure that policy measures and programmes identified in national roadmaps are clearly reflected in, and supported by, national financing strategies.

To break silos between policy makers and financiers and involve more partners to support technically and financially the implementation of national roadmaps and agreed acceleration points whether these are policy oriented, sectoral, or focusing on specific groups.



Conclusion

The Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum successfully provided a platform for dialogue and policy exchange for the tripartite delegations of the six pathfinder countries over the extensive agenda of the two days, as well as the many side meetings that took place in the margins of the forum.

The agenda facilitated constituents in sharing the priorities and early progress of their Roadmaps and gave opportunities to reflect and develop policy approaches and perspectives through thematic discussions. At the same time, the event brought together colleagues from across the United Nations in the region and attracted expert speakers, including those from ADB, UN Sustainable Finance Hub and the World Bank, who could complement GA experiences with practice and insights from the wider international community.

The Forum represented an important milestone for the pathfinder countries of the Asia Pacific and has supported the captured progress and insights ahead of the Fourth International Financing for Development and the Second World Summit for Social Development.

Acknowledgements

The Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum organisers would like to recognise and thank collaborators and donors to the global initiative including The Republic of Korea, World Bank Group, in addition to the governments of Germany, Belgium, Ireland and Spain.

Organisers would also like to recognise the following projects for their collaboration and support to host the Policy Forum event:

- Accelerating the Achievement of Universal Social Protection to Leave No One Behind (Irish Aid)
- Better Livelihoods and Human Capital through Improved Service Delivery in Social Protection and Skills, Cambodia (M-GA Joint Programme)
- Decent Employment for Youth in Cambodia Phase III (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation)
- Decent Jobs and Social Protection Expansion for Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth in Cambodia (UN Joint Programme)
- Delivering on national commitments: Korea's support to the implementation of the Global Accelerator (Ministry of Employment and Labor, Republic of Korea)
- Modern and adaptive social protection and skills development systems for transforming Indonesia (UN Joint Programme)
- Operationalizing the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions in Viet Nam (UN Joint Programme)
- Promoting the Global Development Initiative with a Focus on South-South Cooperation in Employment in ASEAN (MOHRSS, China)
- Strengthening Skills Development in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar through South-South and triangular cooperation (MOHRSS, China)



Annex 1: Agenda

Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum

Meeting the Commitments for Productive Employment and Universal Social Protection

8 - 9 April 2025 | Hyatt Regency Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

AGENDA

DAY 1: 8 APRIL 2025

09:00

Session 1: Opening

Announcement by MC

Video

- Introduction to the Asia Pacific Global Accelerator Policy Forum

Welcome Remarks

1. Ms Mia Seppo, Assistant Director General, Jobs and Social Protection, ILO
2. His Excellency Minister Heng Sour, Minister of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia

Opening Remarks

- Mr David McLachlan-Karr, Regional Director, UN Development Coordination Office for Asia Pacific

Keynote Address

- His Excellency Dr Aun Pornmoniroth, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economy and Finance, Cambodia

10:10

Photo & Break



10:40	<p>Session 2: High-Level Panel: Advancing our Shared Commitments for Productive Employment, Social Protection and Just Transitions in Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>Moderator: Mr Jo Scheuer, UN Resident Coordinator Cambodia</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. His Excellency Minister Heng Sour, Minister of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia 2. Mr Maliki, ST, MSIE, PhD, Deputy Minister for Community Empowerment, Population and Employment, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia 3. Ms Mia Seppo, Assistant Director General, Jobs and Social Protection, ILO 4. Ms Karin Schelzig, Director, Human and Social Development, Asian Development Bank 5. Mr Kong Athit, President, Cambodia Labour Confederation (CLC) 6. Mr Lor Sok, Vice President, Cambodia Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA)
12:00	Networking Lunch
13:00	<p>Session 3: Integrating skills and social protection to accelerate decent work in Asia Pacific</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Srinivas B Reddy, Chief of Skills and Employability Branch, ILO 2. Ms Valérie Schmitt, Deputy Director, Universal Social Protection Department, ILO <p>Guest: Datuk Wira Shahul Dawood, Chief Executive, Human Resources Development Corporation (HRD Corp), Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia</p>
13:40	<p>Session 4: Pathfinder Countries Presentations and Panel Discussion (Part 1)</p> <p>Moderator: Ms Gita Sabharwal. UN Resident Coordinator Indonesia</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms Chu Thi Lan, Head of Division of Labour and Employment, Institute of State Organizational and Labor Science, Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) Viet Nam 2. Ms Kanwal Batool, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Government of Pakistan 3. Mrs Tirta Sutedjo, ST, MWRM, Director for Poverty Alleviation and Community Empowerment, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia
15:00	Break & Networking



15:20	<p>Session 5: Pathfinder Countries Presentations and Panel Discussion (Part 2)</p> <p>Moderator: Ms Hanaa Fikry Ahmed Singer, UN Resident Coordinator Nepal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. His Excellency Dr Phan Phalla, Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Cambodia2. Mr Krishna Prasad Sapkota, Joint Secretary, National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal3. Mr Patrick P. Patriwirawan, Jr, Director, Department of Labour and Employment – Bureau of Local Employment (DOLE BLE), Philippines
16.45 - 17.00	<p>Recap of First Day and Close</p> <p>Ms Valérie Schmitt, Deputy Director, Universal Social Protection Department, ILO</p>
18:30 – 20:30	<p>Reception and Networking Dinner (by invitation)</p> <p>Welcome:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ms Mia Seppo, Assistant Director General, Jobs and Social Protection, ILO2. His Excellency Minister Heng Sour, Minister of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia



DAY 2: 9 APRIL 2025

08:30	<p>Welcome and Introduction to the Global Accelerator Technical Support Facility</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Julien Magnat, Advisor, JSP and Partnerships, ILO 2. Mr Jean-Francois Klein, Employment Policy Advisor and Head of Unit, Employment Department, ILO
08:50	<p>Thematic Session 1: Connecting skills and lifelong learning interventions with social protection and pro-employment policy</p> <p>Moderator: Mr Srinivas B Reddy, Chief of Skills Employability Branch, Employment Department, ILO</p> <p>Panel Discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. His Excellency Kuoch Somean, Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia 2. Ms Girlie Grace Casimiro-Igtiben, Director, National Economic and Development Authority – Social Development Staff (NEDA SDS), Philippines 3. Mr Faisal Tjandraatmadja, Deputy General Chairman for Human Resources and Certification, Indonesia Association of Hotel & Restaurants (PHRI) 4. Mr Asad Memon, Deputy General Secretary, Pakistan United Workers Federation (PUWF) <p>Participant Q&A</p>
10:15	Break & Networking
10:30	<p>Thematic Session 2: Aligning GA Roadmap development with green, digital and economic transitions</p> <p>Moderator: Mr Shakeel Ahmad, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Cambodia</p> <p>Introductory Panel followed by World Café Discussions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Bipin Rajbhandari, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Nepal 2. Mr Malik Tahir Javaid, President, Employers Federation of Pakistan (EFP) 3. Mr Do Minh Tu, Program Officer, Bureau for Employers' Activities, Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) 4. Ms Elly Rosita Silaban, President, KSBSI, Indonesia
12:00	Networking Lunch
13:00	Thematic Session 3:



Voices of Beneficiaries

Moderator: Dr Will Parks, UNICEF Representative in Cambodia

1. 'Voices of Beneficiaries' video
2. Mr. Mukaram Ahmed, Senior Joint Secretary, Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Pakistan
3. Mr Thoeurn Sovannroath, Beneficiary of TVET Cash Transfer Program, Cambodia
4. Mr Khun Pov, Beneficiary of TVET Cash Transfer Program, Cambodia
5. Mr Yogendra Kumar Kunwar, President, Nepal Trade Union Congress
6. Ms Sophia Gelig, Advocacy Association, Employers' Organization of the Philippines (ECOP)

14:00	Networking & Break
14:30	<p>Thematic Session 4: Sustainable financing for accelerating skills development, decent jobs and social protection</p> <p>Moderator: Ms Michiko Miyamoto, Director for Decent Work Team South Asia and Country Office, ILO India</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Jean-Francois Klein, Employment Policy Advisor and Head of Unit Employment Department, ILO 2. Ms Enkhzul Dambajantsan, Policy Specialist, SDG Finance, UNDP Sustainable Finance Hub <p>Panel Discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Setyo Budiantoro, Economic Development Pillar Management of SDGs National Coordination Secretariat, Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), Indonesia 2. Ms Abila Safir, Senior Economist, World Bank 3. Dr Rony Ambrose Gobilee, Chief Strategy Officer, Human Resources Development Corporation (HRD Corp), Ministry of Human Resources 4. <p>Invitation of comments from Social Partners</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Ms Anne Colina, Federation of Free Workers (FFW) Philippines and Mr Quang Minh Le, Official of International Department, Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) 6. Mr Hari Paudel, Deputy Director, Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and Mr Tep Sophoan, Executive Director, Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA) <p>Participant Q&A</p>
16:00	<p>Summary of the key messages of the Forum, reflections and next steps</p> <p>Mr Jean-Francois Klein, Employment Policy Advisor and Head of Unit, Employment Department, ILO</p>



16:30

Closing Remarks

- 1. Ms Xiaoyan Qian, Director for Decent Work Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific and Country office for Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR, ILO**
- 2. Her Excellency Sovann Vannaroeth, Permanent Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia**



Annex 2 Asia-Pacific Global Accelerator Country Profiles

The Asia-Pacific region is playing a pivotal role in advancing the objectives of the GA on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions (GA), with six pathfinder countries—Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Viet Nam—actively shaping national strategies to expand social protection, create decent jobs, and facilitate just transitions. Each country is tailoring the GA approach to its national priorities, leveraging existing governance structures and multi-stakeholder engagement to drive systemic change.

Across the region, countries are leveraging the GA framework to address key economic and social challenges, from financing and social policy gaps, poverty, and labour market inequalities to the impact of climate change and digital transformation on decent employment and society. The GA is helping to strengthen institutional coordination, improve financing strategies, and align national employment and social protection policies with broader development and transformation goals. This collective effort highlights the Asia-Pacific region's commitment to achieving universal social protection and building resilient, inclusive, and future-ready labour markets that ensure decent work opportunities for all.

The following sections highlight progress in the six Asian pathfinder countries, showcasing key priorities and the role of the ongoing joint UN and World Bank programmes in integrating decent work, social protection, and just transitions.



Cambodia

Cambodia joined the GA as a pathfinder country in July 2023, scaling up policy, financing, and institutional reforms to drive inclusive economic growth, workforce formalization, and universal social protection. Led by the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, the Cambodia GA Roadmap was developed with UN support to guide the country's ambition to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by 2029 and achieve high-income status by 2050, in line with the Pentagonal Strategy and Cambodia Vision 2050.

The Cambodia GA Roadmap is structured around five interconnected priority areas forming the foundation for transformative change:

- Pro-employment macroeconomic and financing policies to strengthen public finance management and increase investments in jobs, social protection, and Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
- Workforce development and skills enhancement by expanding TVET to 1.5 million youth from poor and at-risk households, strengthening skills in priority sectors, and ensuring gender-responsive employment opportunities.
- Social protection expansion through mandatory health insurance for self-employed workers, strengthening the Family Package for vulnerable households, and implementing Graduation-Based Social Protection (GBSP) to transition recipients toward sustainable livelihoods.
- Formalization of informal workers and enterprises through the National Strategy for Informal Economy Development (NSIED), improving social security access for MSMEs, and expanding labour law coverage.
- An enabling environment for inclusive labour markets through stronger public-private partnerships, digitalized social security services, and enhanced gender equality and labour rights.

The High-Impact Track (HIT) – implemented by UNDP, ILO, and UNICEF – and the M-GA (UNICEF, ILO, and the WB) joint programmes support the roadmap by addressing different priority areas. The HIT focuses on expanding social protection for informal economy workers, MSMEs, and the self-employed, while supporting MSME formalization through social security and employment benefits, enhancing skills development and employment services for vulnerable workers, and developing sustainable financing for Universal Health Care. The M-GA complements this by investing in human capital, improving the Family Package, aligning TVET with labour market needs, strengthening employment-social protection linkages, and ensuring coherence across social and labour market policies.

Reinforced by the HIT and M-GA, the GA Roadmap lays the foundation for Cambodia's graduation from LDC status and transition toward a higher-income, socially inclusive economy—ensuring no one is left behind.



Indonesia

Indonesia became a pathfinder country of the GA in June 2023, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive economic transformation and social protection expansion. Led by the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), the GA roadmap aligns with Indonesia's Long-Term National Development Plan 2025–2045 (RPJPN) and Medium-Term Plan 2025–2029 (RPJMN), with a vision to achieve high-income status by 2045, eliminate extreme poverty by 2030, and strengthen universal social protection and skills development.

Indonesia's roadmap is built on two core transformation areas, with integrated policies that foster economic growth, social inclusion, and workforce resilience.

- Social Transformation focuses on expanding universal social protection, integrating labour market policies, and strengthening the socioeconomic registry (Regsosek) to enhance the targeting and delivery of assistance. It also emphasizes adaptive social protection, ensuring vulnerable populations—including those affected by climate change, disasters, and energy transitions—receive responsive and inclusive support. Additionally, it prioritizes the formalization of informal workers and enterprises, strengthening social security access, increasing compliance, and improving labour protections.
- Economic Transformation prioritizes skills development and workforce modernization through sectoral skills councils, improved apprenticeship systems, and targeted reskilling initiatives. It also focuses on green and digital transformation, ensuring economic growth is driven by digitalization, green jobs, and enhanced labour market access for youth, women, and marginalized groups.

The HIT joint programme (implemented by ILO, UNICEF, UNDP) strengthens adaptive social protection by expanding coverage for informal and self-employed workers, improving the efficiency of social security systems, and integrating labour market policies with social protection schemes. It also supports the modernization of human resource development via targeted support for sectoral skills committees, quality apprenticeships and innovative financing options for skills development. The M-GA programme, implemented by ILO, UNICEF and the WB, complements this by enhancing job-matching mechanisms, expanding skills training for workers in transition, and promoting employment opportunities for underrepresented groups, including persons with disabilities and women in non-traditional sectors.

Through targeted investments in skills, adaptive social protection, and employment formalization, Indonesia is fostering an economy that not only drives sustainable growth but also ensures that workers, particularly the vulnerable ones, can thrive in a rapidly evolving labour market.



Nepal made a high-level commitment to expanding social protection and decent job creation in February 2024, officially becoming a Pathfinder Country under the GA. The country is currently developing a national roadmap to drive policy, financing, and institutional reforms aimed at fostering employment generation and social protection expansion. Led by the National Planning Commission (NPC), in coordination with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies Nepal is undertaking a process to define priority actions and investment strategies that will accelerate economic transformation, enhance workforce productivity, and strengthen social protection systems.

Nepal's planned GA priorities reflect national development goals and the broader effort to ensure a smooth and irreversible graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by 2026. These include:

- Strengthening policy coherence and institutional coordination for employment and social protection, ensuring that fragmented efforts are integrated into a unified national framework.
- Expanding access to social protection, with a focus on informal workers, women, youth, and vulnerable groups who remain underserved by existing schemes.
- Boosting workforce skills and productivity through targeted interventions in enterprise development, workplace-based training, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- Enhancing financing strategies for social protection and employment initiatives, ensuring sustainability and long-term impact.
- Addressing climate change impacts on employment and economic opportunities, supporting just transitions and adaptation strategies.

The GA Seed Funding Programme, implemented by ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, and UN Women, is providing technical and facilitation support to develop Nepal's GA roadmap. It is helping generate evidence, foster policy dialogue, and engage key stakeholders to define priority sectors for job-rich growth, map social protection schemes, and develop financing strategies. The programme also integrates a strong gender and inclusion focus, ensuring that the roadmap reflects the needs of women, youth, and marginalized groups. The M-GA Joint Programme, co-led by the ILO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, builds on these efforts by enhancing institutional capacity, policy coherence, and programmatic integration. It strengthens government-led strategic programmes—such as on-the-job training (OJT), microenterprise development (MEDPA), and the Prime Minister Employment Programme (PMEP)—to align with the GA's objectives. Additionally, it supports the formalization of employment and enterprises while expanding social security coverage.



Pakistan

Pakistan formally joined the GA as a Pathfinder Country in July 2024, recognizing the urgent need to address high informality, economic vulnerabilities, and fragmented social protection systems. The initiative is being led by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD) and overseen by a National Steering Committee, which brings together key ministries, provincial governments, workers' and employers' organisations, and civil society. The government has also established a National Technical Committee to guide the development of Pakistan's GA roadmap, ensuring alignment with Vision 2025, the Economic Transformation Agenda, and national social protection policies.

Pakistan, a country that recently joined the GA as a pathfinder, is starting the GA roadmap development process with a strong emphasis on integrating jobs and social protection strategies to create sustainable employment opportunities and extend coverage to excluded populations. Potential entry points identified through policy mapping and analysis exercises are currently being discussed with stakeholders. The potential entry points include:

- Formalization of the informal economy, which currently accounts for over 72 percent of total employment and poses a challenge to social security expansion.
- Sectoral development for job creation, particularly in agrifood and textiles, fosters economic growth and increases employment opportunities.
- Enhancing youth employment and skills development, recognizing that 1 million young people enter the labour force annually, but over 32 percent of youth remain outside education, employment, or training (NEET).
- Women's economic empowerment addressing the low female labour force participation rate (21.4 percent) by improving access to decent work, strengthening social protection, and integrating gender-responsive policies.
- Strengthening and financing social protection towards building universal coverage by addressing gaps in the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), extension of contributory schemes, and provincial social assistance programmes.

While Pakistan has yet to secure funding for GA-related projects in the upcoming funding round, it is laying the groundwork for future investments through its multi-tiered governance structure. The National Steering Committee, chaired by the Secretary of MOPHRD, will be coordinating a participatory and consultative process for the prioritization of the potential entry points and the development of the roadmap.



Philippines

The Philippines formally joined the GA as a pathfinder country in March 2024. The process is led by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), coordinated by the Trabaho Para sa Bayan (TPB) Inter-Agency Council, which oversees the development and implementation of the GA roadmap. The Philippines' GA priorities align with the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028, the Philippine Labour and Employment Plan (PLEP) 2023–2028, and the Social Protection Plan 2023–2028, reinforcing efforts to build an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient labour market.

The Philippines has identified construction and transportation as key sectors for its GA roadmap, reflecting national priorities for economic transformation and decent job creation. The roadmap aims to:

- Expand access to social protection by strengthening policies ensuring income security, occupational safety and health, pensions, and unemployment protection for workers in construction and transportation
- Create decent jobs and improve working conditions, particularly in high-growth sectors, while supporting the transition to formal employment
- Enhance workforce skills and employability by integrating TVET and sector-based training programmes, ensuring workers are equipped for sustainable, future-oriented employment
- Improve financing strategies and policy coherence through an integrated approach to funding social protection and employment initiatives
- Support just transitions in key employment-generating sectors by integrating climate resilience and green jobs strategies into labour market policies

The GA Seed Funding Programme, led by the ILO, UNDP, and UNICEF, is driving roadmap development through policy research, stakeholder consultations, and institutional capacity-building. It contributes to reforms in employment and social protection—particularly in construction and transportation—by identifying and evaluating pathways for increased government financing, developing sector-specific skills programmes, reviewing the unemployment protection system, analysing social protection extension to gig and platform workers, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation.

The M-GA Joint Programme, co-led by the ILO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, with technical support from UNDP, complements these efforts by enhancing institutional capacity, employment policies, and social assistance schemes. It focuses on improving job-matching services, integrating social protection with employment programmes, generating evidence for increased social climate finance, and ensuring vulnerable workers—including persons with disabilities and women in male-dominated industries—have access to sustainable livelihoods.



Viet Nam

In Viet Nam, Party Resolution No 42-NQ/TW (2023) issued by the Central Executive Committee of the Viet Nam Communist Party formalized the goal for Viet Nam to become a pathfinder country of the GA. The resolution emphasized the importance of social investments to improve decent work opportunities and social protection, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. This commitment comes at a time of economic transformation and in the context of persisting challenges and gender inequalities in expanding decent and productive employment and reducing informal employment, while establishing a more accessible, inclusive, coherent, rights-based and gender- and shock-responsive social protection system that caters for the specific needs of all, across their life cycle. In May 2024, the Government promulgated the Government's Action Program ([Govt resolution # 68/NQ-CP](#) dated 09 May 2024) to implement Resolution No. 42-NQ/TW of the Central Committee on continuing to innovate and improve the quality of social policies to meet the requirements of national development and defence in the new period.

In response, the UN System in Viet Nam aims to strengthen the foundations of the GA by providing technical assistance to the Government and national stakeholders in the development of a national roadmap and preparation for its implementation and financing, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Viet Nam (2022-2026). In this context, a UN Joint Programme on Operationalizing the GA is implemented by the ILO, UNDP and UN Women in collaboration with FAO, IOM and UNICEF and under the overall guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator Office. The joint programme aims at supporting (i) to contribute knowledge and technical assistance for integrated gender-responsive policies and financing in support of SDG transition on decent jobs and social protection for just transitions, (ii) to enhance national dialogues and capacities among government, employers' and workers' organizations and other stakeholders to develop a national GA roadmap in Viet Nam, and (iii) to support the operationalization of the GA through a roadmap, results measurement, partnerships and financing options.

The M-GA Joint Programme, co-led by the ILO, UNDP and the World Bank aims to support through enhancement of the gender-responsiveness of labour market measures for green transition and of social protection systems through assessing occupations and skills needs for renewable energy, developing a gender-responsive career development tool on transitions to green jobs, assessing impacts of key policy reforms on coverage expansion and contribution behaviour, analysing policy options to support workers and discourage lump-sum social insurance withdrawals, and assessing how to strengthen the social protection system to integrate climate considerations.



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- Decent Employment for Youth in Cambodia Phase III (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation)
- Decent Jobs and Social Protection Expansion for Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth in Cambodia (UN Joint Programme)
- Delivering on national commitments: Korea's support to the implementation of the Global Accelerator (Ministry of Employment and Labor, Republic of Korea)
- Modern and adaptive social protection and skills development systems for transforming Indonesia (UN Joint Programme)
- Operationalizing the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions in Viet Nam (UN Joint Programme)
- Promoting the Global Development Initiative with a Focus on South-South Cooperation in Employment in ASEAN (MOHRSS, China)
- Strengthening Skills Development in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar through South-South and triangular cooperation (MOHRSS, China)



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