**Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights**

**Question 1 - Added value of the Global Fund for Social Protection (GFSP)**

The GFSP is intended to contribute to four objectives, namely:

(a) improving the coordination of efforts towards the establishment of social protection floors worldwide, both at multilateral / inter-agency level and at country level;

(b) capacity-building and improving international cooperation in order to strengthen the ability for LICs to mobilize domestic resources;

(c) increasing levels of financial support to low-income countries; and

(d) providing risk insurance for LICs with poorly diversified economies and those that are particularly vulnerable to shocks.

**1.1. Taking into account these objectives, what do you see as the added value of the GFSP?**

With the Covid-19 crisis, fiscal revenues are anticipated to diminish in view of the economic slowdown and this is likely going to impact negatively on the already overstretched social programmes and services. Furthermore, with the ageing population and the repercussions of the pandemic worldwide, the demand for social protection will increase whilst at the same time the limited fiscal space will hinder the coverage expansion.

The GFSP will address the whole issue of social protection in a global and holistic manner whilst also considering the attainment of the objectives set by SDGs especially in developing countries or low-income countries. It will therefore ensure that appropriate investments in social protection are made to guarantee its sustainability and affordability.

**1.2. Do you see one or more of these objectives as a priority?**

Given that the context of countries (LICs) are not the same, all the four objectives set are equally important. However accrued consideration may be given to “Providing risk insurance for Least Income Economies with poorly diversified economies and those that are particularly vulnerable to shocks”.

**Question 2 - Synergies with existing initiatives**

**2.1. How to ensure that the initiative for a Global Fund for Social Protection builds on, and ensures appropriate synergies with, existing initiatives in this area, in particular the coordination achieved through SPIAC-B (Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board), USP2030 (Universal Social Protection 2030 Partnership), and the ILO Flagship Programme on "Building Social Protection for All"?**

Investment by the Global Fund will alleviate the financial burden of Government thus freeing resources to be devoted to other key drivers of development outcomes (SDGI). Moreover, investment by the Global Fund for social protection will be used by countries to build system that will ensure healthy lives and promotes wellbeing for all ages (SDg3).

The GFSP should be a financing platform, providing support to countries in the response to the right to social security and access to health care. It should be seen as a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and people in need of social security and health care. The fund should aim at mobilising resources and investing to support programs run by countries and communities mostly in need.

A proper coordination mechanism should be in placed to ensure judicious use of resources by the GFSP and other such initiatives with similar objectives.

Moreover, the GFSP should strive for maximum impact of the investment by expanding innovative financing approaches assisting countries to leverage domestic resources and bringing new private sector donors to the fight as well as addressing challenges effectively.

**2.2**. **How to ensure that the GFSP complements, and does not compete with, other existing multilateral funds, in particular the funds placed under the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (**[**MPTF Office**](http://mptf.undp.org/overview/office)**)?**

There should be a country GFSP mechanism to coordinate the development of the national request for funding, to oversee the implementation of approved funds and ensure linkages and consistency between GFSP funds and other national health and development programs.

**Question 3 - Strengthening international coordination**

**3.1. How can objective (b) (capacity-building and improved international cooperation in order to strengthen the ability for LICs to mobilize domestic resources) be most effectively achieved?**

The objectives will be most effectively achieved through properly established Programmes, proper reporting, monitoring, transparency and accountability as well as effective mobilisation of domestic resources, as well as multi-sectoral responses communication and coordination.

 **3.2. Could the GFSP lead to improved international coordination against tax evasion and tax avoidance, including base erosion and profit shifting by transnational corporations, and, if so, how?**

The GFSP could lead to an improved international coordination against tax evasion by the implementation of an overall monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism whereby all transactions, activities and accounts would be published at national, regional and international levels.

**Question4 - Provision of financial support**

**4.1. How can objective (c) (increased levels of financial support to low-income countries) be most effectively achieved?**

Specific criteria should be set up for Low- income countries. They should be guided by Sustainable Development Goals and aim at achieving good governance at the following levels:

* Democracy and Political governance
* Economic governance and Management
* Corporate Governance
* Socio Economic Development
* Sound Policies and Strong Insititutions

Moreover, a resilient and sustainable system relies on data. Data is what allows Government to design and deliver the right services to the right people at the right time. Data allows resources to be spent in the most efficient and effective way.

**4.2. If the GFSP provides financial support for the establishment of social protection floors, should this be in the form of grants or in the form of loans?**

The Financial Support should be preferably in the form of grants as it will cater for basic social security guarantees and rights. The Global Fund is the largest multilateral investor in grants for health system to build resilience and sustainable system and there should be no departure from this objective.

**4.3. Should financial support be made conditional upon recipient countries increasing their own budgetary efforts towards social protection (e.g. through matching funds)?**

Financial support should be made on the basis of conditions and performance indicators which are agreed upon at the time of the request and based on engagement with the concerned country. There may include grant policies, legal compliance, management of grant and reporting.

**4.4. Should other conditions be imposed on recipient countries and, if so, which ones and why?**

Recipient countries should be compliant with all international human rights law including the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the obligations under the various Human Rights Treaties to which they are party. However, the degree of adherence should be captured within agreed and well-established indexes with acceptable thresholds.

Protection of intellectual property derived out of the grant and its commercialisation should be governed and conditions imposed accordingly.

**4.5. How could the imposition of conditions be reconciled with the principle of national ownership?**

Good governance should be an overarching principle through the whole process. The imposed conditions should be seen as an added value in the chain of good governance and provide opportunity for the country to use same at national level for efficiency.

With regards to Intellectual property there should be consent and Revenue and Equity Sharing Policy.

**Question 5 - Innovative sources of financing**

**5.1. Should the GFSP develop into a forum for the discussion of innovative sources of financing, such as a worldwide tax on digital companies (the "GAFAM"), a carbon tax on air or maritime transport, a tax on financial transactions, or other?**

Further consultations should be held aiming at promoting sustainable finance and identifying innovative sources of financing including a total wealth tax and/or social responsibility levy, be it through regional or international platforms.

**Question 6 - The informal economy**

**6.1. Should the GFSP play a role in encouraging the extension of social protection to workers in the informal economy, in line with**[**ILO Recommendation No. 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy**](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:R204)**(2015), and, if so, how would it do so?**

Prevailing income inequality may be accentuated due to slow-down in economic activities (loss of employment, lack of opportunities in the domestic market etc). Loss of jobs especially low-skilled jobs in the informal sector is likely to hamper income security of families.

The proposed GFSP should be able to allow for extension of social protection to workers in the informal sector. This will contribute to objectives of reducing income inequalities, addressing poverty issues, providing risks insurance in period of shocks and uncertainties and also to be consistent with the international human rights legislations.

The creation of a data base covering those involved in the informal sector or informal economy is fundamental. There should be a *“leave no one behind”* strategy. Social protection to workers in the informal sector is more than necessary in this new era and the GFSP could play a significant role. However, any disbursement should follow fundamental conditions.

**Question 7 - Role of the private sector**

**7.1. Should the private insurance sector play a role in the organisation of the reinsurance branch of the GFSP and, if so, how do you envision such a role?**

The private sector remains a key partner in providing risk insurance for LICs with poorly diversified economies and those that are particularly vulnerable to shocks.

Their work will depend heavily on relevant laws and regulations with respect to policy on social protection as may be appropriately devised by the State, the compliance to same and the accompanying risks arising through funds disbursed by the GFSP.

**Question 8 - Governance**

**8.1. What governance structure should the GFSP have?**

The governance structure should be at four major levels:

* Democracy and Political governance
* Economic governance and Management
* Corporate Governance
* Socio Economic Development

**8.2. What roles do you envision for governments, for international agencies (such as, in particular, the ILO, the World Bank, or the UNDP), or for social partners?**

International agencies, Governments and Social partners should act as arbitrators’ vis-à-vis their respective recipient based on good governance core underlying principles such as integrity, honesty, transparency, flow of information, accountability, participation and engagement of all stakeholders. Their roles would be to respond to the new exigencies for good governance and sound management.

**8.3. What lessons can be drawn, in particular, from the**[**Global Fund**](https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/)**on AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria?**

There should be more dissemination of information and reach-out to vulnerable groups.

**Question 9 - Next steps**

**9.1. If a mandate were to be given to certain organisations to develop operational proposals for the establishment of the GFSP, what approach would you recommend?**

A systematic approach may be considered with appropriate plan, controls and operational standards. They may proceed as follows:

(i) make an audit of all social security guarantees,

(ii) list down all the emerging challenges in the new global environment,

(iii) establish a social observatory platform with all stakeholders, and

(iv) create a National Social Protection Fund.

**9.2. Should SPIAC-B be tasked with this mandate? Or USP2030? Or should another approach be followed, for instance requesting that the OECD and the ILO develop operational proposals for the GFSP?**

A holistic approach with all relevant economic and social partners should be developed. We should ensure that there are no duplication of resources and necessary framework put in place to complement each other.

**Additional Comments**

As stated, the GFSP aims mostly at providing support to the low-income countries with respect to strengthening the social protection floors.

Despite Mauritius being a high income economy, the vulnerability of the country as SIDS cannot be under rated.SIDS face special social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities due to the geographical and resource limitations. The UN has recognized SIDS as a distinct group of developing countries which require special support from the international community.

The international community should help small island developing states (SIDS) pursue comprehensive development and efforts should be made to establish, develop and deepen partnerships with SIDS and to establish mechanisms so as to further open up markets to SIDS in support of their participation in global economy and international economic and technical cooperation.

SIDS in particular are highly reliant on their tourism and hospitality industry and thus are adversely impacted and prone to economic shocks. The after effects of the global pandemic of Covid-19 cannot be underestimated. With its significant reliance on external trade, the Mauritian economy is facing unprecedented negative effects. The hospitality industry is already taking a big hit with the travel restrictions. Investment is also expected to go down with an increase in unemployment rate.

The mobilization of funding is indispensable for Mauritius as a SIDS to cope with the economic shocks and trade imbalances as well as adaptation and mitigation challenges imposed by climate change.

In addition, efforts should also be made from the international community to explore innovative means of funding and to strengthen infrastructure development and promote the common development of SIDS.