



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

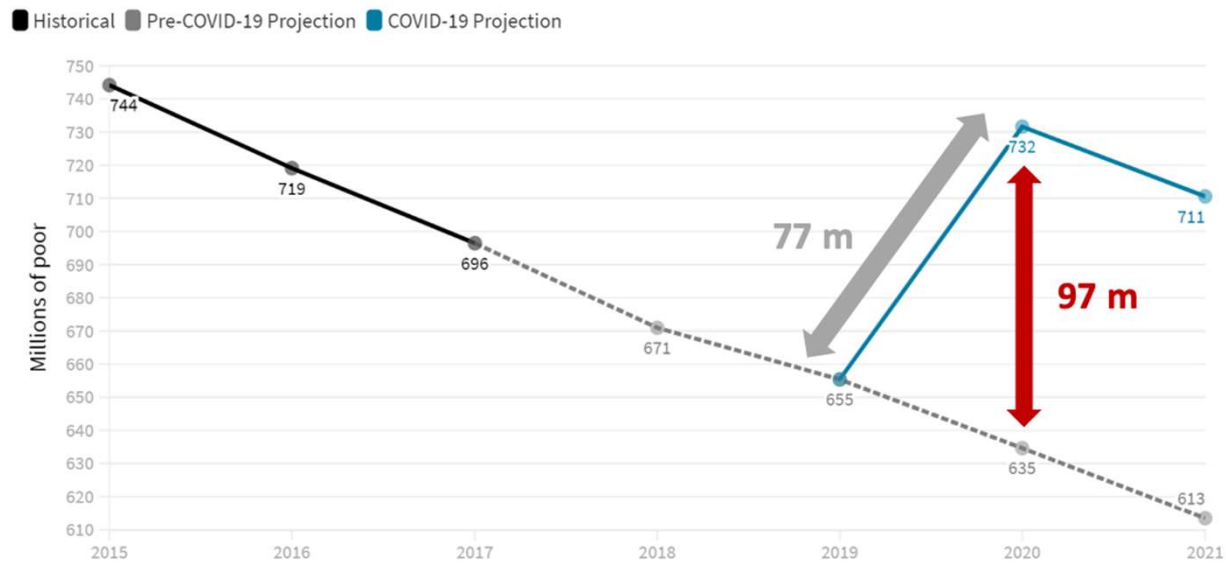
The role of social protection in mitigating COVID-19 and ensuring an inclusive and resilient recovery

**Informal preparatory meeting for the 60th Session of
the Commission for Social Development**

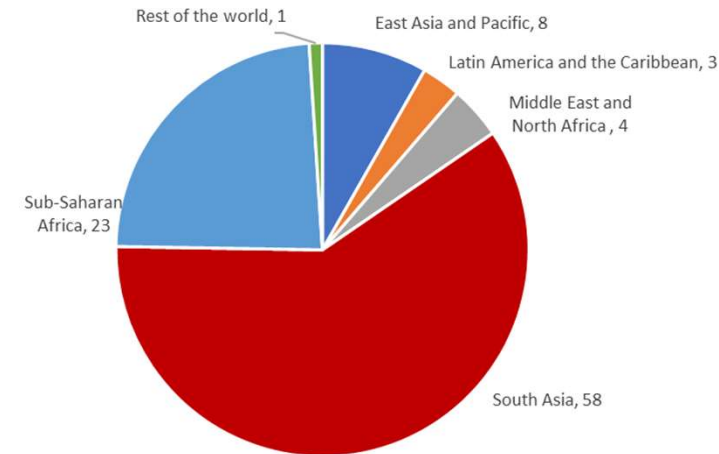
9 December 2021

An increase in extreme poverty

Extreme poverty in the world, 2015-2021



COVID-19-induced new poor by region, 2020



Note: Extreme poverty is measured as the number of people living on less than \$1.90 per day. 2017 is the last year with official global poverty estimates.

Source: Gerszon, D. et al. June 2021.

COVID-19 has accentuated rural vulnerabilities

Low access to public services

- Less likely to have formal ID documents and/or

when rural populations were already operating under severe constraints

- Low human capital
- Basic technologies
- Limited modern inputs
- Limited livestock
- ...

High proportion of informal jobs & self-employment

- Loss of livelihoods due to disruptions in food value chain

and non-farm products

Heavy dependence on movement for livelihoods

- Loss of remittances

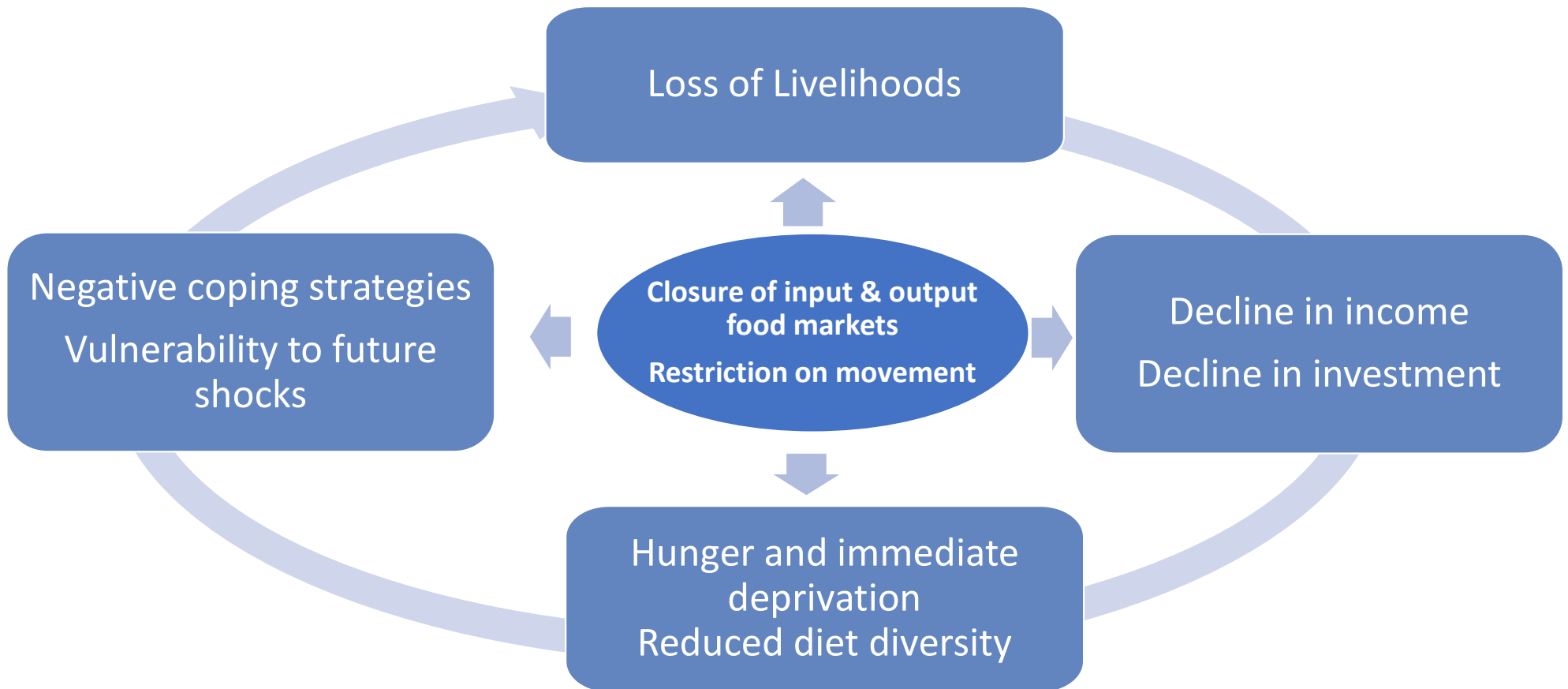
- Limited access to land
- No access to credit and insurance
- Social exclusion
- Climate-related risks
-

Burden-of-care disproportionately borne by women

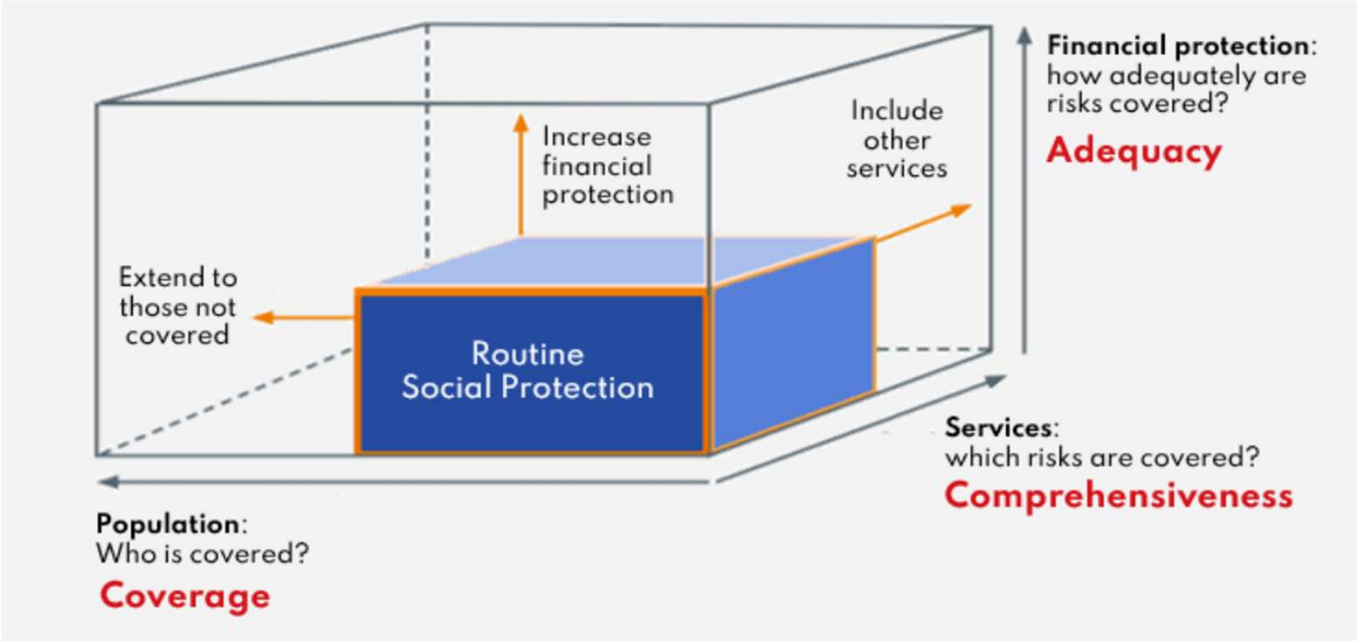
- Most rural community health workers are women

- Out-of-school children and the sick
- Reduction in reproductive & health services

... reinforcing the cycle of rural poverty and food insecurity



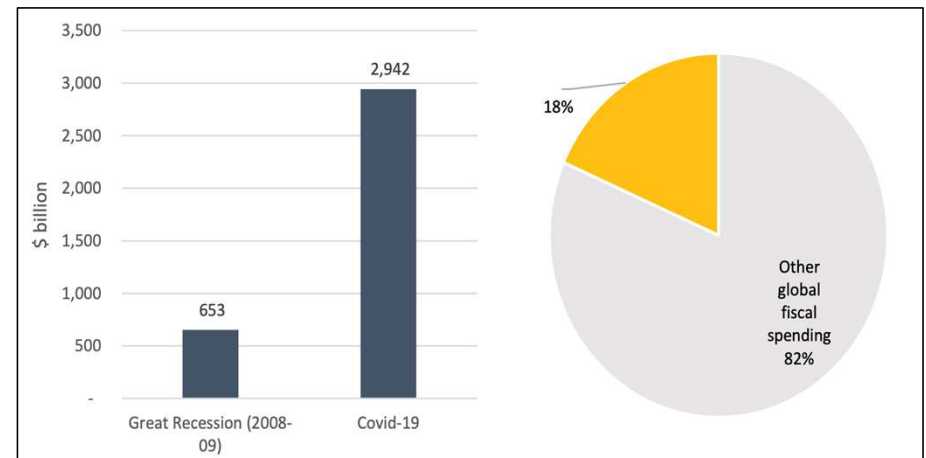
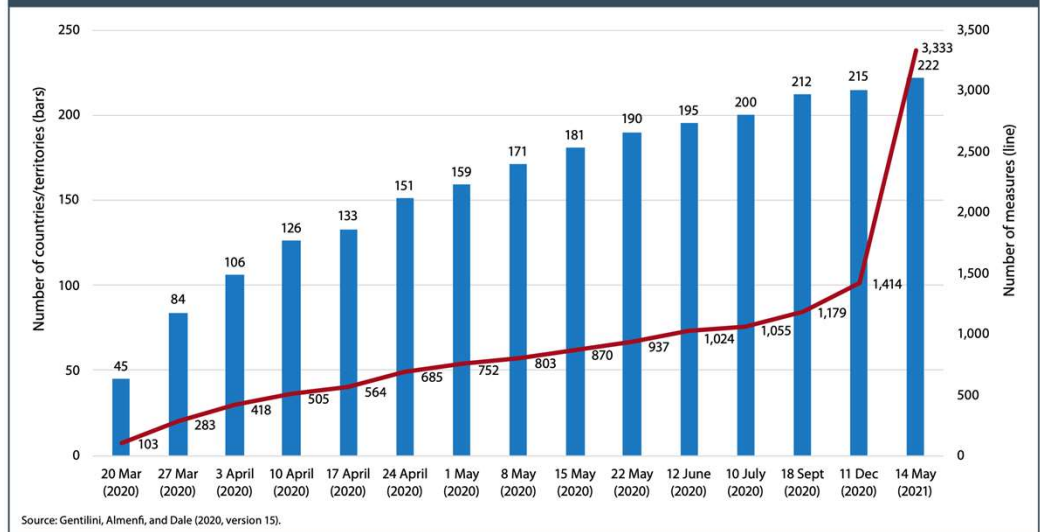
Challenges of responding to COVID-19



Social protection response to COVID-19

- More than 3,300 social protection measures in 200+ countries
- About 17% of world's population covered by at least one CT payment between 2020-2021
- Total spending estimated at 3% of global GDP – 4.5 times higher than during the 2008-2009 crisis
- But disparities across countries

FIGURE 8.3—TRENDS IN NUMBER OF SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES AND NUMBER OF IMPLEMENTING COUNTRIES/TERRITORIES, MARCH 2020–MAY 2021



Adapting SP to pandemic has taken many forms

Expansion of SP coverage

- Expanding eligibility criteria
- Leveraging existing registration systems from within and outside the SP sector
- Challenges: Low ID coverage (high informality), lack of adequate MIS

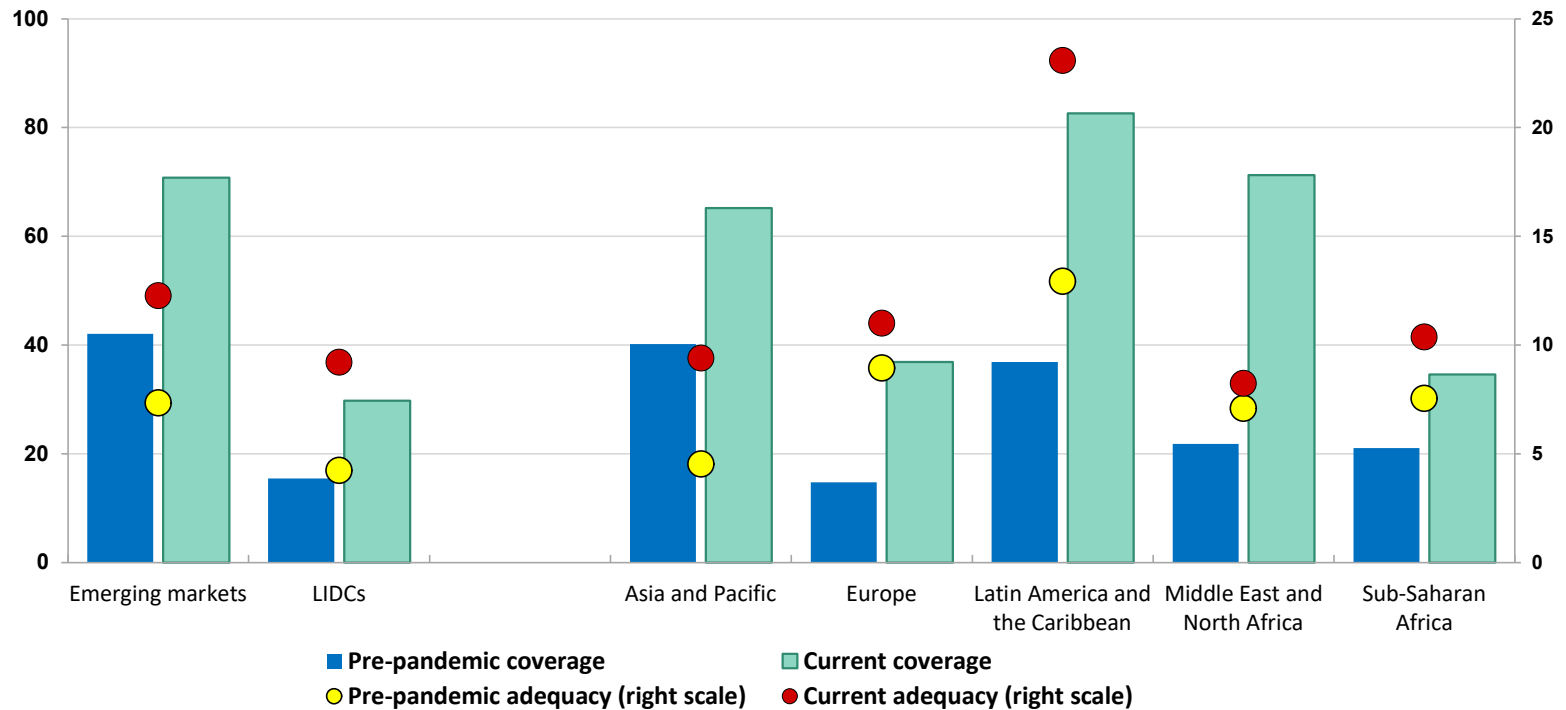
Adequacy & timeliness of payments & services

- Frontloading and increasing the size of payments
- Adopting digital payments
Challenge: rural areas have lower connectivity, fewer cellphone accounts
- Removal of conditionalities that require work or access to school & health services

Collaboration with other departments & organizations

- Pairing SP with support to smallholders/producer organizations in accessing input and output markets
- Building capacity for shock responsive social protection
- Challenges: Weak coordination mechanisms between stakeholders, lack of harmonization

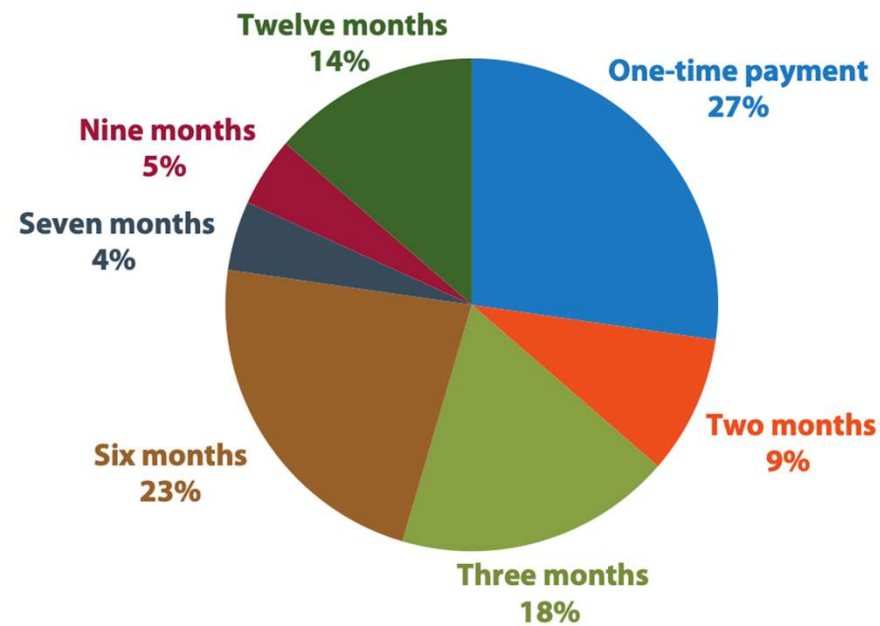
Coverage and adequacy of SP measures has increased in response to Covid-19



Source: IMF 2021. Fiscal Monitor: A Fair Shot.

Though duration is limited

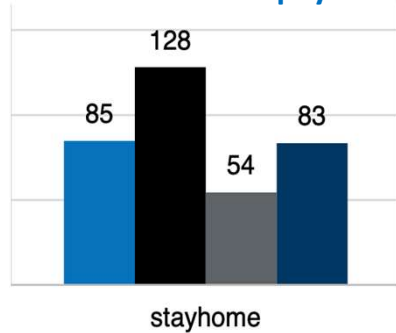
FIGURE 8.7—DURATION OF CASH-BASED TRANSFERS IN SSA IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19



Source: Own calculation based on Gentilini, Almenfi, and Dale (2020, version 14) and Barba, van Regenmortel, and Ehmke (2020).

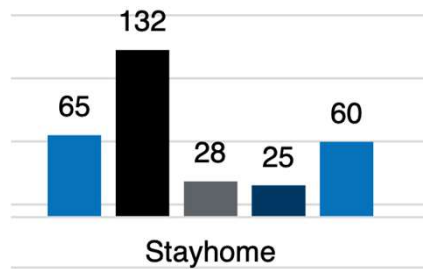
Strong systems key to timely and large-scale response

Average number of days between stay-home order and 1st payment



■ New programme ■ Horizontal expansion ■ Vertical expansion ■ Overall

Average number of days between stay-home order and 1st payment, by region

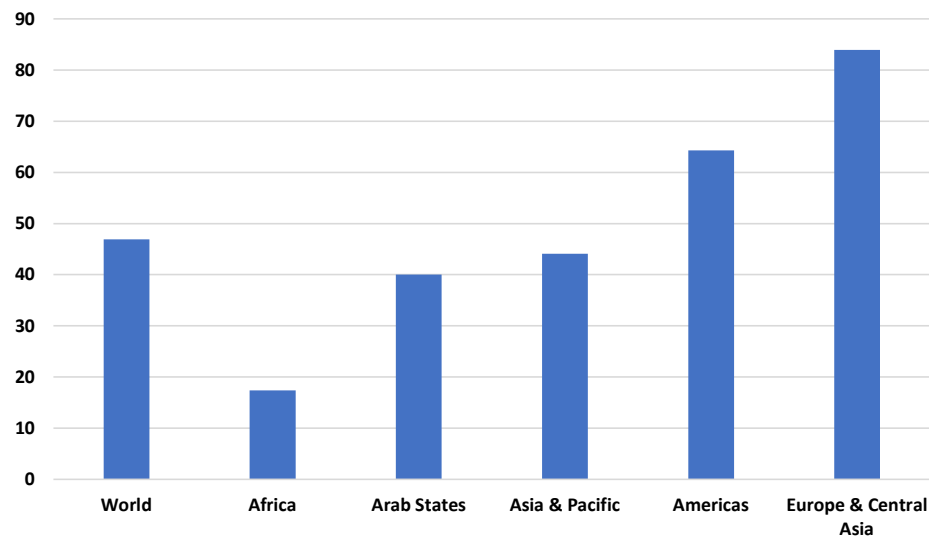


■ S.Asia ■ SSA ■ MENA ■ EAP ■ LAC

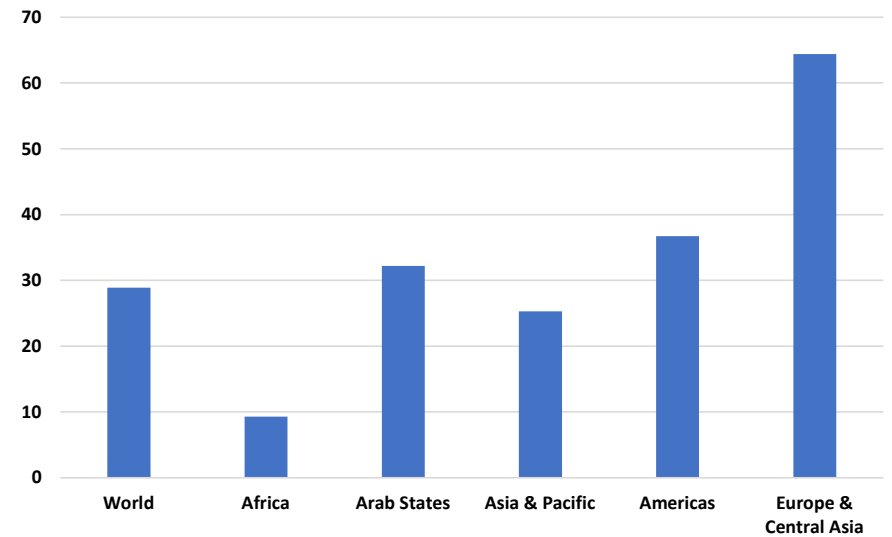


Despite Covid-19 response, huge social protection deficits persist

Population effectively covered by at least one social protection benefit

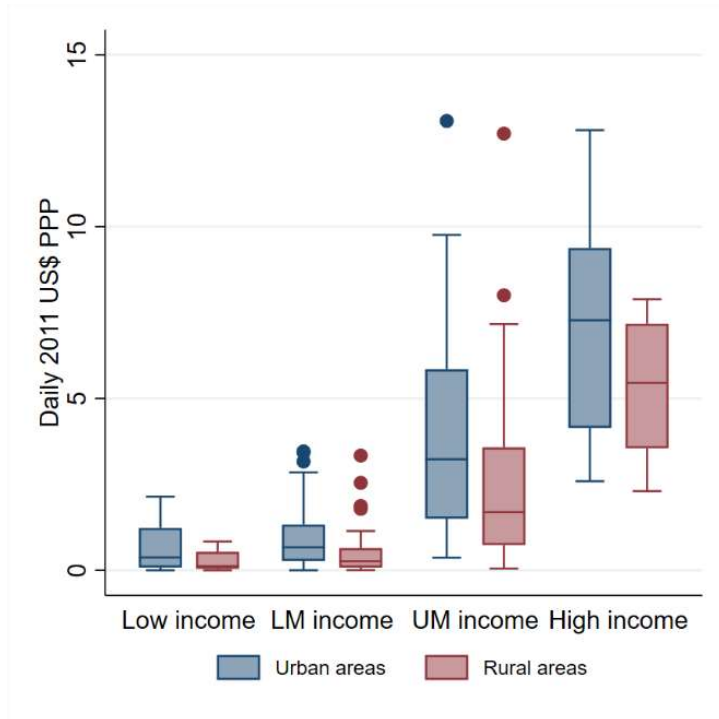


Percentage of vulnerable persons receiving social assistance cash benefits

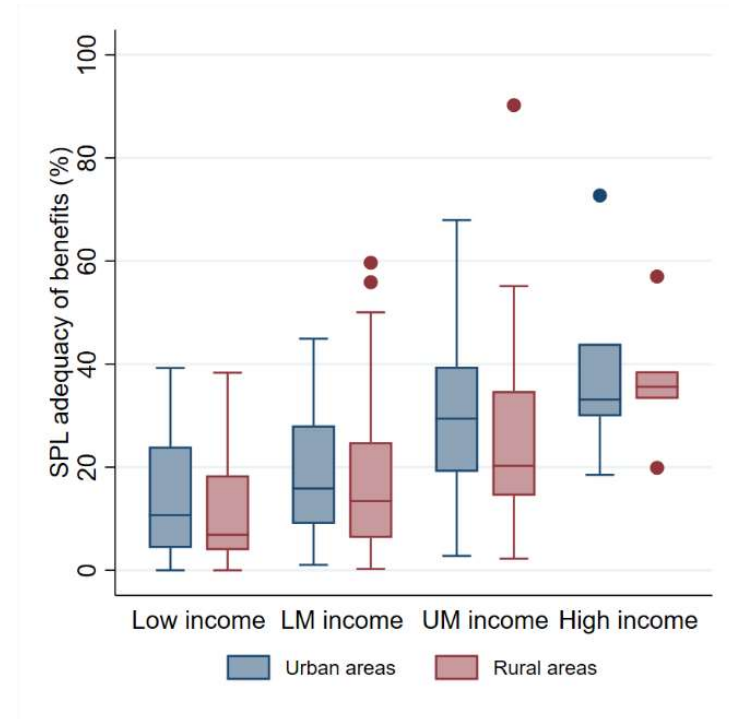


... generally disadvantaging rural areas

Average per-capita transfer by income group, 2009-2019



Adequacy of social protection benefits by income group, 2009-19



Social protection will play a key role in the recovery

	Protective	Preventive	Promotive	Transformative
Social Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relief from immediate deprivation and food insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevent negative coping strategies & persistent poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen rural livelihoods• Reduce barriers to access services (social, productive, financial, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inclusive growth by enhancing economic capacity of even the poorest• Empower excluded groups
Agriculture / Forestry / Fisheries / Livestock / Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep rural economy & food value chain moving• Ensure continuity of seasonal farm operations• Facilitate adapted marketing channels and links to end-consumers		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extension services• Vocational training• Agri-business services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build resilient, sustainable, inclusive food systems

Pathways for strengthening household resilience

Reducing **vulnerability** and reliance on **negative coping** strategies

Enabling **investments in productive ventures** and **diversifying livelihoods**

Addressing the barriers to adopt **climate-resilient practices**

