ODI Series Ep. 6 | Covid-19 crisis: opportunities and risks for extending social protection to informal workers

Jo Sharpe: Hello, you’re listening to the Social Protection Podcast.

Welcome to the next episode in our special six part series brought to you by ODI and GIZ in partnership with socialprotection.org. I’m delighted again, to welcome Francesca Bastagli from ODI as guest host for this series. We’ll be back with a regular episode in August.

Francesca Bastagli: Hello and welcome to the Social Protection Podcast special series.

I am your host, Francesca Bastagli. This episode is part of a six-episode series based on an ODI/GIZ funded project on Social Protection Response to COVID-19 and Beyond: Lessons Learned for Adaptive Social Protection. Over these six episodes we’ll be asking: could COVID-19 mark a turning point for social protection?

Our ODI/GIZ study covers six thematic areas each with an accompanying paper. Each week of this podcast special series, I’ll be joined by the lead author of one of the papers along with an expert discussant. In this episode, we’ll be talking about informal workers and social protection. The informal workforce faces lack of social protection and healthcare, insecure earnings, and often precarious work conditions, making it especially exposed to the health and socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19.

Without adequate social protection, the negative impacts of the crisis on informal workers are expected to be long-lasting, particularly for women, as a result of the low savings and limited access to loans and other resources to cope with the shock. A high number of social protection measures taken since the onset of the crisis in countries across the world aim to extend provision to informal workers. Today, we'll be exploring these issues.

What are these measures and policy adjustments been? And based on the experience so far since the onset of the crisis, how well have they worked in providing support to informal workers? What are the implications for the longer term? What are the trade-offs, risks and opportunities that this crisis and policy adjustments made to date present for extending social protection to informal workers on a more permanent basis? Here to discuss these questions with me today are Laura Alfers and Gautam Bhan.

Laura Alfers is Director of the Social Protection Programme at Wiego, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, based in South Africa. She's authored together with myself of the paper Extending Social Protection to Informal Workers: Emerging Lessons from COVID-19 Crisis Response. Gautam Bhan is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Human Settlements in Bangalore, India, and AXA Research Fund Awardee for his work on Delivering Social Protection to Informal Workers, Lessons Learned from COVID-19 Relief Measures in India.
Laura and Gautam, welcome to the Social Protection Podcast.

**Laura Alfers:** Thanks Francesca. It's good to be here.

**Gautam Bhan:** It's a pleasure. Thank you for having me.

**Francesca Bastagli:** Laura, what do we know about the impact of COVID-19 on informal workers and how different are these impacts for different groups of workers?

**Laura Alfers:** I think we saw, at the beginning of 2020, some of the large international organizations, like the ILO, predicting that informal workers were going to be badly hit by this crisis in particular.

So we saw the ILO predicting that 76% of informal workers were going to be significantly impacted by the crisis and that seems to have been born out. Again, we are seeing from some of the large surveys, the World Bank surveys, findings that informal workers had suffered the largest declines of employment, but we also see large declines, not only in employment, but earnings, particularly amongst the self-employed. So WIEGO’s 12 city COVID-19 impact survey found that 70% of the informal workers surveyed reported earning zero income through April and May 2020. It’s an important point because there’s this idea that the informal economy has this natural capacity to expand during crisis and absorb all the people who’ve lost jobs in the formal economy. But we’ve actually seen the limits to that in this crisis where we’ve actually seen greater losses of jobs and losses of income in the informal economy in many countries.

But as you say, not all informal workers are the same, not all informal workers operate in the same context, and we’re going to see differential impacts according to the sector in which they operate, the status of employment, whether they self-employed, waged-employed, their age, gender, migrant status, and the policy context in which they were situated. We saw, for example, increasing evidence that women who had increased care responsibilities over the crisis, their incomes were hit harder and they’ve taken longer to recover.

But we also saw that specific sectors in the informal economy were hit harder than others. For the WIEGO evidence, it was clear that homeworkers, particularly those in global clothing supply chains, had been hit hardest of all the sectors who we’d looked at. So I think it’s important to understand these sort of intersecting differences and not to see the informal economy as a sort of homogenous lump.

I think probably what’s most worrying as we move into 2021 and we see a resurrect of economic recovery every way, but we're not seeing recovery of pre-crisis incomes in the informal economy. It's still not happening. Lower demand for products, broken market relationships, lack of startup capital, continued restrictions in some places, we are hearing second and third waves in Asia and continued violence and harassment against informal workers.
Francesca Bastagli: The informal workers fall into what is commonly referred to as a missing middle in social protection, with few schemes providing limited coverage for this group of workers. Gautam, what are your views on whether and how we need to think differently when providing social protection coverage to this group specifically?

Gautam Bhan: Building on what Laura was saying, the term that I often keep going back to is that when I think of social protection and informality, it feels like a patchwork. The missing middle I think is a very interesting metaphor. And I think patchwork and missing middle together show you different ways in which you have these absences, these gaps.

So informal workers like Laura was saying, the differences between sectors is enormous. In India, for example, home-based workers, domestic workers have no statutory recognition that they can draw upon at a time of crisis even in the everyday. Construction workers and street vendors are better off in that way.

So there is such a differential recognition of people as workers in the first place, which to me, without that you can't even get on a kind of ladder to think about adequate social protection, when you're even first thinking about recognition itself. Even where recognition exists, that okay these workers must be recognized as workers, they have got specific vulnerabilities that must be recognized, so now let's respond.

One of the things I think over that shown us is that the delivery mechanisms to reach social protection entitlements to these workers is confounded precisely by the lack of recognition that defines the informality of their status.

So in some ways, this informal work status complicates delivery. I think there's invisibility in many of these cases, there is a differential recognition. Then there are confounded delivery pathways and all of them sort of play out at the same time in order to make it not easy to take traditional or sort of social protection paradigms that draw from history of social security, with full employment or of industrial employment. Those paradigms don't work in largely informal economies in life.

Laura Alfers: Just to build on Gautam's points. In our paper, we kept a relatively traditional definition of social protection, but we did try to look at both to contributory and non-contributory schemes that covered or tried to cover different groups of informal workers during the crisis.

There is a big difference between how you can extend social protection to informal wage workers versus where and how you can extend social protection to informal self-employed workers. And I think that it an important difference to keep in mind and I think a lot of the COVID response was very focused on the sort of building of social assistance schemes, non-contributory schemes and for good reason because that's where most informal workers have any chance of accessing relief measures.

But it's important not to forget that there are groups of informal workers who may be covered by other parts of the social protection system and to try and look at that whole is important.
**Gautam Bhan:** I also think that what's useful is that I've always been very taken by the idea of social protection not just being protective or preventive, not just the net, but also possibly transformative and allows you to get to the next stage of development, of assets, of security.

And I think that a lot of what happens also for informal workers is that even when safety nets work in this patchwork missing-middle way, it's very hard to imagine systems that can allow, and this goes back to Laura's point about recovery not taking place the same way, it's very hard to imagine transformative social protection that can route itself the same way without changing the paradigm and making things that are specific to conditions for informal work.

**Francesca Bastagli:** You started to mention the responses or measures that have been taken since the onset of the pandemic.

We know that there's been a high number of measures adopted and many of these very explicitly aiming to step up support for informal workers that are typically excluded. Laura, can you tell us more about what efforts have been implemented and to what extent would we know about how effective they've been so far?

**Laura Alfers:** I'll divide this into the efforts that built off social assistance and the efforts that built off social insurance or contributory schemes, because I think the issues were quite different. So via relief efforts that build to social assistance, we saw increases in the value of cash transfers to existing beneficiaries and, in some cases, existing beneficiaries are also informal workers. They may not have been directly targeted by the measures, but were included. So we saw in South Africa, for example, the top-up to the child-support grant, a research showing that actually it was relatively well targeted at households.

You had a large number in which informal workers were resident. We also saw the expansion of existing cash assistance programmes to reach previously excluded and affected workers by adjusting the eligibility requirements. We saw these horizontal expansion, for example, in Brazil. And then we also saw the introduction of new temporary schemes to reach informal workers excluded under existing schemes.

And I think again, South Africa social relief of distress grant, which targeted informal workers by excluding those who have access to formal social security or who were accessing other grants. And we saw Togo's Novissi scheme, which specifically aimed at informal workers. So, I think overall, though the increasing consensus about the response was that it was not particularly effective in reaching and providing adequately for informal workers, either it didn't reach them or, if it did, it wasn't enough to make a real difference. So for example, in WIEGO survey, we saw that there was no significant difference in the majority of cities in which relief was an offer in food security levels between those who received relief and those who didn't. This has been echoed in larger surveys. For example, the Innovations for Poverty Action surveys as well have shown something similar.

It doesn't mean we didn't see some relatively effective efforts. Brazil's Auxílio Emergencial reaching two-thirds of the population and sit at such a high level to actually decrease poverty
and inequality during a crisis period, which is remarkable. South Africa’s top-ups to the existing pensions and child-support grant was very effective for getting additional cash to these groups.

And India’s public distribution system as well. In the WIEGO survey, the Indian cities were the few where we saw access to food relief made a difference to support the devils of food security. And I think what this does is highlight the importance of the existing social protection infrastructure.

Where relief efforts were able to build off these that were stronger and more effective and I think that’s becoming an increasingly common opinion based on evidence. And I mean, for example, sitting in South Africa, there was a very noticeable difference between the relative ease of access to those who were getting cash via the top-ups to existing grants versus the administers of challenges and accessing the newly set up social relief of distress grant.

I think via contributory schemes these were much less common. So that shows you that, although we, particularly in Africa, hear of governments extending social protection to informal workers to contributory schemes, often these haven’t covered enough workers to really provide adequate relief. So it’s not surprising that most relief efforts built off the social assistance schemes.

But we did find two examples and these particularly were aimed at informal wage workers, Jordan’s Tadamun 2 unemployment allowance, providing a two-month allowance to workers and businesses that were not already registered. And, in South Africa, the temporary employee relief scheme, which was attached to the unemployment insurance fund, was at first only meant for registered workers, but after protest from groups of vulnerable wage workers, like domestic workers and farm workers, it was opened up to workers who were unregistered with the unemployment insurance fund, but who would otherwise be eligible if they had been registered by their employers.

So many domestic workers are just not registered and they were unable to access the TERS. But again, here we see a mixed picture. Jordan innovated to use the extension quite flexibly and to provide formalization opportunities. For example, the previous unregistered businesses were able to access the grant without being registered, but obviously there were incentives to register as well. Although there were issues with communication, confusion about multiple schemes on offer, which delayed the payment of benefits. There were also big questions about how the benefits were financed, which was at least partly in suspension of pension payouts.

So here we have the shifting of risk away from one vulnerable group and onto another vulnerable group, which is not an ideal situation. In South Africa, the unemployment insurance funds TERS was much less flexible with plus real systemic issues although it provided very generous benefits to those who could access it.
The inflexibility of the system meant very few could. And I think particularly problematic was the employer-led benefit applications and when this requirement was removed there were still conditions. For example, domestic workers needing a previous employer to sign off on their application, which means that only about 60,000 out of the approximately 1 million domestic workers in South Africa were actually able to access the benefit.

Francesca Bastagli: Gautam, could you tell us a bit more about what happened in India? What do we know about what has worked, what hasn’t worked in terms of the measures that were adopted to help step up and expand social protection to informal workers in India?

Gautam Bhan: In some ways, I think to take one point from what Laura said, which is very much the finding in our work as well that the better the safety net before the crisis, the better it was able to respond to informal workers. And I think in India, Laura mentioned this, the two places that did really well were food and rural employment. And I say rural employment because we have a national rural employment guarantee act that gives a hundred days of inflation index paid employment to all adult members vulnerable households.

That's really important that you don't have this in urban areas. And one of the big ways in which the government actually responded to the challenge of the income and economic shock that happened in both years, first and second wave for us, was to increase the allocation of rural employment days. So it was raised to 150 days instead of 100 days, for example.

And we saw the dominant picture in India last year was of hundreds and thousands of people leaving cities, often walking hundreds of kilometers on foot along highways because of lockdown restrictions on interstate transport. Partly basically saying to us that they had better chances of making it in rural areas than in urban areas.

So one of the first things I think that is absolutely pivotal to highlight in the Indian context was that the inadequacies of our urban safety nets for workers was blamed to see. I think this is a discussion we've had, that is the public discussion in India right now. It's not to say that rural areas did not struggle with similar constraints and there are other challenges that are particularly rural, but certainly we saw a kind of exodus from our cities pointing to how great that patchwork of what social protection was. And I think food was definitely the exception, even in the urban areas, building on India's Right to Food Act. So the National Food Security Act enrolls about two thirds of all rural households and about half of all urban households. And I think that really kicked in. But where I think where we struggled in many ways was precisely income support, the kind of cash transfer mechanisms and crisis cash transfer mechanisms Laura was talking about were not universal in India. We don't have the mechanisms for these kinds of transfers and especially in the urban.

Those transfers were limited to particular sectors of urban informal work. So construction workers received cash transfers, transport workers receive cash transfers, partly because there are acts that govern those transfers, but a majority of informal workers didn't. The good news was that scrambling for relief new innovations of cash transfers did occur. So many states tried to announce cash transfers for domestic workers, for contract workers, for head
loaders, one of the states aid for all those who were stranded in distress. So you saw innovation in the name of relief that I think is a lot of lessons to offer for widening that kind of crisis cash transfer income support, but on the whole, we did not see, like the South African and Brazilian experience, the ability to get and boost and compensate for lost income. And I think that we find ourselves in that difficult position even today and I think that, in many ways, one of the things that even marks our larger macroeconomic response are relief packages, are stimulus packages, have not taken the form of boosting household income or household spending. They have not been transfers and I think that this absence of a demand steady stimulus is a big debate in the country. A lot of the recovery packages and the COVID recovery packages have focused more on lending insurance protections for the formal economy and this goes back to how informal work is not just about the workers. It’s also about the structure of the larger economic paradigm at the national level. So if the assumption of relief packages is that if you support the formal economy, the benefits will trickle down to workers, this is very a dangerous assumption for workers who have been hit by repeated economic shocks.

Francesca Bastagli: You both talked about how the COVID crisis has exposed the social protection gap for informal workers.

Based on what we’ve seen so far in terms of measures taken since the onset of the crisis. Laura, what do you think are the main issues and trade-offs that the global policy community face in addressing this gap going forward?

Laura Alfers: One of the big issues, and I think this maybe speaks to lower-income rather than middle-income countries, is the issue of how we build a social protection system that allows for different groups of the informal economy. For example, I would say in many African countries, as I mentioned before, what we’re seeing is an extension to informal workers through either special schemes, special contributory schemes, or through extensions of existing social insurance schemes. But what we saw during the response was that many of these schemes have such low coverage that they can’t really be effectively used for relief efforts. I think we need to think more carefully about this expansion of the contributory system that it is happening to informal workers in particularly in low-income countries and how they are financed to ensure that there is a solidarity component.

Because if you are thinking of a continent like Africa, where say 20% of women’s informal employment is as contributing family workers, the idea that you are going to provide coverage for informal workers through expansions of the contributory system is probably unrealistic, but, potentially, this is an entry point to add a solidarity component or a non-contributory component to a contributory scheme.

I think that what that really calls for is, firstly, better alignment between contributory and non-contributory sort of pillars of the social protection system, but it also it raises the question of financing because, we are already seeing in some African countries governments calling for more taxation of the informal sector in order to finance state programmes.
And I think many informal workers are even below national tax threshold. So there isn't going to be a lot of joy out of that. So I think this big question of financing is going to be incredibly important. I also think linking social protection to the other important parts of informal workers lives is important.

We talk about cash plus services or the small tweaks that cash programmes have, which make them more accessible and beneficial for certain groups. And I think, perhaps, we also need to think through what does cash plus mean for informal workers and, for informal workers, that often means something to do with supporting the livelihoods.

So, although we see these so-called economic inclusion programmes proliferating around the world, they tend to be targeted at the very ultra poor, they're linked with social protection and business support measures, for example, but they have a hugely tight cutoff. So we're not seeing enough informal workers benefiting from the linkages between social protection access to create it's low interest loans, access to startup capital and I think that is something that needs to be thought about more.

Then, lastly, the better representation of informal workers in policy spaces related to social protection. Not just informal workers are the missing middle in receipt of social protection benefits, I think they are sort of a missing middle in who gets a seat at the table around social protection.

I think social assistance in the civil society spaces has tended to be dominated by organizations who focus on the specific groups who are the direct targets of social assistance and often that isn't informal workers. Increasingly, it may become so, as we see more extensions.

**Francesca Bastagli:** Gautam, how do you see these policy issues playing out in the Indian context?

**Gautam Bhan:** Like Laura was saying, there's definitely going to be an expanded conversation on insurance-based approaches to protection, particularly around health insurance. India has a new national public health insurance programme rolling out has had for some time, but it's become very centrally focused now, post the pandemic.

And I think that's both good, but it also needs to be balanced with not an overreliance on insurance-based approaches because they're feeling a little bit like a default kind of approach to many things that replace things like basic income crisis support. And I think that one of the questions that we have to ask ourselves is which forms of credit and insurance approaches allow for effective social protection, but also at what point are we building safety nets that shouldn't be based only on insurance. And I think that's the thing to think through, really to debate and I think it's very different when that insurance, for example, is about income and unemployment versus when it's about health expenditure. And I think that distinction is really important in some ways.

I think the other big discussion that's happening in India that's going to become very important to us is debates on registration. I think there is an increased call for large-scale, often
technologically enabled registration systems and databases, because I think everyone has woke up to the fact that we don't know a lot about a lot of our workers and don't recognize them in certain ways.

And I think registration is overall an inevitable and a good thing, but the terms of recognition are very important because it's important to think about terms and consequences of registration and processes of registration that also have workers' interests at heart. Informal work, like a lot of WIEGO's work has said, is not just about formalizing, is what you mean by formalizing, and the costs of formalizing, what are the gains of formalizing, and defining formalizing in terms of the interest of the worker. So I think registration and the portability of benefits is going to be a big question for us. So that comes up. So not just what social protection entitlements, but where you take them.

I alluded to the rural-urban locational defense that is strong in India, but also the fact that, for many migrant workers, the pandemic was an occasion where we were reminded of what some scholars have called sedentary bias in a lot of our social protection policies, where they assume you’re in one place and can be found. They don’t assume the mobility of workers, which I think is very central to the way it’s done through. So I think that we’re going to have a renewed interest in these debates: insurance versus grants, contributory versus noncontributory, systems of registration and recognition, questions of portability and anticipating the mobility of workers rather than being caught by surprise by migration, which shouldn’t be.

And I think that one of the things that is also going to be interesting is how the sudden expansion of relief shapes the social protection systems. We have, in some sense, seen the real vulnerability and I think one thing in India that has happened is that many people were surprised by the extent of vulnerability.

We've had this narrative in India of two decades of economic emergence and it's not untrue. Poverty has certainly declined in India, but I think what the pandemic has reminded us is that poverty may have declined, but vulnerability hasn't quite declined the same way and I think vulnerability is central to questions of social protection.

So I am hoping that we are able to hold on to the centrality of some of these questions, but I also have to say that I see a lot of business as usual thinking creeping back in. I also see a lot of continuities of previous ways of evading some of the rights and demands of informal workers coming in.

So I am cautious at this point, I think, of which direction we will go. There was a slogan in the first wave of saying we don't want to go back to normal because the normal was never equitable, but the normal exerts a very powerful inertia-like force and those interests are also very much at place. I think multiple directions in the Indian context at this point.

Francesca Bastagli: In our recent paper, Laura and I explore whether the COVID-19 response holds potential for resetting and possibly strengthening the social contract around the issue
of social protection. From the perspectives of South Africa and India, what is the emerging evidence in thinking on this? Laura, over to you first.

**Laura Alfers:** I think what the crisis did was raise the issue of social protection for informal workers, even amongst informal workers themselves in many cases. And certainly we see much more interest in this issue. But in particular, in South Africa, for example, domestic worker organizations, really seen as an opportunity to mobilize around making the unemployment insurance fund more inclusive and more accessible to domestic workers, to moving away from employer-led registration perhaps to worker-led registration.

We also see increased engagement from other groups of informal workers, self-employed informal workers and other sectors on the issue of the basic income grant, which has been raised as a possibility in South Africa.

But then, at the same time, the value of South Africa's grants was effectively cut in the 2021 budget with the below inflation increase. So it’s not clear to what extent this opening resists within the government itself. But I would say the social contract is a process, it's not a singular event and, perhaps, what this crisis has done is catalyze the start of a process of ensuring that social protection for all is a national priority.

**Gautam Bhan:** I think that there's no question it's an opportunity. I think there's no question that despite all the difficulties and complexities of it, at least we're able to have conversations about migrant workers, informal workers, who's responsible, what rights do people have, how do we deliver, why aren't we delivering. It's good to see these dominate many of the policy conversations after a long time and de-center a little bit of the endless conversations around growth agendas. I think certainly in India, we're already seeing, for example, welcome additions to expenditure on health infrastructure.

India spends one of the least amounts of its GDP among comparable countries on health infrastructure and watching that increase and watching that double I think is wonderful. So I think, in many cases, workers, workers organizations and federations absolutely feel like they have to make the most of this opportunity.

None of us are being naive about not expecting resistance, but I think certainly we must enter into this narrative very powerfully and shape it. So I think a lot of the question on whether or not this opportunity yields something actually depends on the mobilization around it. So I agree with Laura, social contract is not an event, but I think there are moments that allow a quickening and urgency to dialogue and those moments are often handed to us. We don't get to create them and I think this one has been handed to us at great cost. And what we owe to that cost, I think, is to really lean in on that process of shaping that new contract. And I think equally not just talking about reimagining social protection, but it's been a reminder to be quite specific about things that don't always hit the larger discourses of rights and entitlements, things like the design of databases, debates about the quantum of entitlements, questions of accountability and grievance to address the questions of tracking and monitoring.
The everyday delivery has really remained with me and I'm very happy to see a lot more conversation on this than used to happen.

Francesca Bastagli: So Laura and Gautam, as you know, the overarching question of this special series of this podcast is: Could COVID-19 be a turning point for social protection? And I'd like to ask this question to you both with regards to informal workers. So we've talked about both the potential opportunities. We've just heard about them, but also the trade offs and those potential risks that this crisis presents to extending social protection to informal workers going forward.

So if this crisis and the crisis response to date are to make a difference in addressing this missing middle gap, what do our priorities need to be? How do we help ensure that social protection for informal workers remains on the agenda and is taken forward, including the learning that is emerging from crisis response to date?

Laura Alfers: So one of the things that I would agree with what Gautam has said about the need for organizing around social protection. So certainly, we can work at creating the spot, the policy spaces and making the policy arguments around social protection, but if there is no demand for it coming from below, then I think we're only halfway there.

So I think there's a huge amount of work to do in building the capacity, educating, thinking through the solutions with the organizations, civil society groups, the grassroots organizations, the community-based organizations who are interested in working on this. And then I think, I mean, I'm sitting in South Africa right now where we have just experienced a week of unbelievable violence in Mayhem and there are many reasons for that violence that is bringing the country to a standstill, but it's certainly the environments of poverty, inequality, and food insecurity that has created the conditions for this violence to flourish. And I think we need to make the connections between what social protection can do, because we know there was a lot of evidence on what social protection can do, because we know there is not the full solution. It's not the only solution, but it is certainly part of the solution. And I think we are going to see an increasing amount of unrest as we come out of this crisis and the full devastation makes itself clear. And I think positioning social protection of at least as one key part of the solution to that is going to be important.

Gautam Bhan: I think the fact that large organizations and federations of workers were able to articulate their demands is key to why we got even what we got. It's the patchwork. So I would return centrally to the question of organizing, but I think that the other thing that has stayed with me has been the impact of how responding quickly, as mixed communities of researchers and organizers and workers, to document the impact of the pandemic, to look at the measurable impacts to constantly generate new knowledge about conditions of informal work, to respond very quickly to changing effects, I think has been very powerful. So I feel like, in some ways, the wealth of knowledge that has been created by closely looking and insisting that the COVID pandemic on informal workers be understood in its own terms, in its own specificities, has been very powerful politically in addition to organizing. And I'm hoping that
this combination of continuing to generate this knowledge base of this evidence that has to be wielded in a certain moment to have political impact, I think in addition to organizing, these are the two ways I think we can really build and strengthen a response.

And I think this is the time to do it. I think we will be better off for it. So yeah, on that, I'm quite hopeful.

Francesca Bastagli: Thank you so much Gautam and Laura.

Gautam Bhan: Thanks for having me. That was really great.

Laura Alfers: Thanks, Francesca.

Francesca Bastagli: We will post links to key resources on this topic in the show notes of this episode, and you can find the ODI/GIZ research that forms the basis of this special series at the website, odi.org.

This was the final episode in the ODI/GIZ special series on COVID-19: a turning point for social protection, and you can listen to all the episodes in the series at both the socialprotection.org website and at odi.org. Stay tuned for new episodes of the regular Social Protection Podcast.

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