



# **Sri Lanka National Social Protection Strategy**

**Department of National Planning  
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic  
Development**

**2025**

# National Social Protection Strategy for Sri Lanka

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## Executive Summary

**Sri Lanka's National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)** outlines a 10-year roadmap (2025–2035) to build an inclusive, sustainable, and digitally enabled system of social protection. Grounded in the **National Social Protection Policy (2024)**, the strategy rests on four pillars—**Social Assistance, Social Care, Social Insurance, and Labour Market & Productive Inclusion**.

The NSPS directly supports the Government's policy commitments to expand human capital investment, reduce inequality, and modernize welfare delivery systems, as articulated in its development Framework and key sectoral policy frameworks.

The strategy envisions a Sri Lanka where **no one is left behind**, and every citizen is empowered to live with **dignity, security, and opportunity**.

- Protect the poor, vulnerable, and excluded through income and care support.
- Expand coverage to informal workers and the elderly through contributory schemes.
- Promote employment, productivity, and labour dignity.
- Build adaptive systems for crises and demographic change.

### **Priority Interventions: 2025–2035**

- Expand and digitize all social assistance programmes
- Introduce microinsurance and pension reforms for informal workers.
- Establish community-based care for elders, children, and PWDs.
- Ensure labour protections, minimum wage compliance, and decent work pathways.

### **Financing and Delivery:**

- NSPS will be financed through a blend of government budgets, mandatory and voluntary contributions, and efficiency savings.
- All programmes will be delivered through a unified national social registry.

### **Outcomes by 2030**

- **Social Assistance:**  $\geq 95\%$  of poor and vulnerable populations receiving regular and adequate benefits.
- **Social Care:** Expanded coverage of home- and community-based care services, including support for caregivers, elderly, and persons with disabilities, ensuring access to quality care and psychosocial support.
- **Social Insurance:** Expanded access to contributory schemes (pensions, health, unemployment) for all workers, including those in informal and migrant sectors.
- **Labour Market & Productive Inclusion:**  $\geq 90\%$  minimum wage compliance; expanded access to upskilling and reintegration programs.
- **Systems Strengthening:** Full digital program coverage with a unified registry, digital payments, and crisis-responsive delivery.

## Policy and Reform Alignment

### Alignment with National and International Reform Agendas

The **National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)** supports Sri Lanka's commitment to inclusive growth, social equity, and fiscal responsibility. It is fully aligned with:

### Government Policy Framework and Development Vision

- Ensures **fiscally sustainable** and **targeted social spending** as part of macroeconomic stabilization.
- Introduces **digitally enabled, shock-responsive systems** to protect vulnerable populations.
- Expands **social insurance for informal workers**, supporting labour market formalization and long-term resilience.
- Advances the goals set out in and National Policy Framework.
- Delivers on commitments to **human capital investment, poverty alleviation, and social cohesion**.
- Complements ongoing reforms in **labour, health, education, and digital governance**.

### Global Commitments and SDGs

- Supports **SDG 1.3**: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems for all.
- Contributes to **SDG 2** (Zero Hunger), **SDG 3** (Good Health and Well-being), **SDG 4** (Quality Education), **SDG 5** (Gender Equality), **SDG 8** (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and **SDG 10** (Reduced Inequalities).

*The NSPS thus acts as a foundational pillar in bridging economic reform with social equity, helping ensure that no one is left behind in Sri Lanka's development journey.*

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## 1. Introduction

Sri Lanka continues to contend with multiple interlinked socio-economic challenges—demographic shifts (such as a rapidly aging population), persistent poverty, economic volatility, and a predominantly informal labor market. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic meltdown underscored persistent vulnerabilities in the social protection system, especially concerning benefit adequacy, coverage gaps, and responsiveness to shocks.

In July 2024, the government approved the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP), the first nationwide framework designed to weave together social assistance, care, insurance, and labor-market interventions into a unified, Life Cycle-Oriented system. The NSPP highlights the need for a unified social registry, digitization of benefit delivery, better targeting, and enhanced responsiveness to unforeseen crises.

Importantly, the strategy now incorporates a nationally endorsed village empowerment initiative designed to promote grassroots-led development and household-level economic inclusion. Anchored within Pillar 4 of the NSPP, this initiative focuses on building decentralized, citizen-led systems for coordinated service delivery, livelihood support, and long-term exit from poverty. Its validity is established through Cabinet approval and its alignment with the NSPP's long-term objectives, particularly productive inclusion and community resilience.

The strategy also aligns with national priorities that place social protection as a central pillar. Key areas of focus include:

- Ensuring minimum income support for low-income households, persons with disabilities, and chronically ill individuals;
- Providing allowances and care support for elderly citizens in need;
- Offering incentives for organizations supporting persons with disabilities;
- Extending financial and nutritional support to women-headed and single-parent families;
- Introducing measures to strengthen local micro-businesses and improve the resilience of low-income families.

By aligning the NSPP with the national priorities, this Social Protection Strategy aims to forge a comprehensive roadmap that is evidence-based, fiscally credible, and politically anchored. The strategy envisions an approach that prioritizes the most vulnerable—informal workers, elderly, women and children, and persons with disabilities—while maintaining macroeconomic stability underpinned by effective governance and transparency.

This Social Protection Strategy has been developed through a comprehensive, inclusive, and evidence-based process, aligning with internationally recognized methodologies and best practices. It draws upon global experiences and successful models from countries with robust social protection systems, adapted thoughtfully to the Sri Lankan context. The strategy is grounded in an extensive review of existing policy frameworks, rigorous analysis of national data, and in-depth consultations with a wide array of stakeholders, including government institutions, development partners, academia, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and community representatives. By incorporating these diverse perspectives, the strategy ensures relevance, responsiveness, and long-term sustainability, aiming to build a rights-based, lifecycle-oriented, and shock-responsive social protection system that leaves no one behind.

## 2. Current Social Protection Landscape

Despite Sri Lanka's extensive portfolio of social protection programs—including poverty alleviation schemes, public pensions, health subsidies, and other welfare measures—the landscape remains fragmented, underfunded, and inefficient<sup>1</sup>.

### A. Coverage Gaps & Fragmentation

#### 1. Informal Sector Exclusion

Over 60–70% of Sri Lanka's workforce is in the informal economy, yet largely invisible

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2023/06/19/3-ways-to-make-social-protection-work-for-sri-lanka-s-poor-and-vulnerable#:~:text=One%2Dfourth%20of%20Sri%20Lankans,not%20eligible%20are%20receiving%20support.>

to formal social protection schemes, including pensions, health benefits, and unemployment insurance<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Low Poverty Coverage & Inclusion Errors

- *Aswesuma* covers only ~69% of the poorest 40%, with significant leakage to wealthier households—about 10–15% of benefits reach these groups<sup>3</sup>.
- UNICEF data indicates that 58% of eligible households were excluded, and the same proportion of ineligible households were included<sup>4</sup>.

## B. Inadequate Benefit Levels

### 1. Real Value Below Basic Needs

- Social assistance in Sri Lanka accounts for a small share of GDP, and pandemic relief transfers provided only a modest contribution to household consumption, particularly among the poorest.<sup>5</sup>
- The current monthly allowances for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled, and low-income households are fixed amounts<sup>6</sup> that fall significantly short of covering basic subsistence expenses and consumer price levels. As of April 2025, the Department of Census and Statistics reported the national poverty threshold, indicating the minimum monthly income considered necessary for basic living standards<sup>7</sup>.

### 2. Disparities in Resource Allocation

The majority of social protection spending is directed toward pensions for formal-sector workers, while social assistance programs account for only a small portion of total expenditure<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/projects-and-partnerships/projects/promoting-and-building-social-protection-south-asia-sri-lanka-component#:~:text=Background%20and%20Rationale%20In%20Sri%20Lanka%2C%20only,of%20the%20workforce%20%2D%20without%20adequate%20coverage.>

<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/media/136411/file/Sri-Lanka-2022-COAR.pdf#:~:text=While%20Sri%20Lanka's%20flagship%20cash%20transfer%20programme%2C,benefit%20values%2C%20translates%20into%20limited%20poverty%20impact.>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2023/116/article-A001-en.xml?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2023/116/article-A001-en.xml?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>6</sup>

[https://www.cabinetoffice.gov.lk/cab/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=16&Itemid=49&lang=en&dID=13080#:~:text=30.,31.](https://www.cabinetoffice.gov.lk/cab/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=16&Itemid=49&lang=en&dID=13080#:~:text=30.,31.)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.statistics.gov.lk/povertyLine/2021\\_Rebase?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.statistics.gov.lk/povertyLine/2021_Rebase?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.socialprotectionfloorscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-R2SSC-Case-Studies-Sri-Lanka.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.socialprotectionfloorscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2024-R2SSC-Case-Studies-Sri-Lanka.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

### C. Weak Data Systems & Targeting

- **Lack of Centralized Registry & Eligibility Rules**

No unified system exists<sup>9</sup>; beneficiary selection is inconsistent across agencies, leading to duplication and politicization<sup>10</sup>

- **Pilot Reforms Yet to Materialize**

Although new criteria for poverty alleviation targeting were developed, implementation has stalled due to delays in data infrastructure and administrative approval.<sup>11</sup>

### D. Institutional & Coordination Weaknesses

- **Multiple Parallel Agencies**

Programs are spread across various ministries and councils, such as Department of Samurdhi Development, Elderly Secretariat, Disability Secretariat, etc., causing overlap, inefficiency, and burdensome red tape<sup>12</sup>

- **Governance Challenges**

Certain systemic factors have influenced the fairness of beneficiary selection and the quality of services.

### E. Emerging Vulnerabilities & Demographic Pressures

- **Rapid Aging**

By 2030, ~20% of the population will be over 60, but only ~30% currently receive formal pension benefits—women are disproportionately uncovered<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> *The current social registry maintained by the Welfare Benefit Board (WBB) is limited by incomplete coverage, particularly of informal and vulnerable populations, and lacks full integration with other national data systems, which constrains its effectiveness for dynamic eligibility assessment and coordinated service delivery.*

<sup>10</sup> The Informal Sector and Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Key to Effective Social Spending | by Maya Karunaratne | Jun, 2025 | Medium

<sup>11</sup> Sri Lanka: 2021 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for Sri Lanka in: IMF Staff Country Reports Volume 2022 Issue 091 (2022)

<sup>12</sup> 3 ways to make social protection work for Sri Lanka's poor and vulnerable

<sup>13</sup> Sri Lanka can benefit from the pandemic experience to craft a comprehensive social protection strategy

- **Child Malnutrition & Unemployment Risks**

A substantial share of children experiences undernutrition and other deprivations, while youth unemployment remains high, underscoring vulnerabilities identified by multidimensional child poverty indicators (MPI child) and the need for comprehensive social protection measures.<sup>14</sup>

## **F. COVID-19 & Economic Crisis Impact**

- **Rising Poverty and Challenges in Response**

Poverty surged from ~11% in 2019 to ~25% in 2022; yet, more than half of the poorest lacked access to social safety nets during the crisis<sup>15</sup>

- **Temporary Relief, No Structural Reform**

Pandemic cash transfers offered short-term support, but gaps remained in reaching certain mid-income households and urban poor populations.

## **G. Fiscal Constraints and Reliance on External Support**

- **Low Spending Floors Amid IMF Programs**

Social protection expenditures hover at 0.4%, with IMF-backed floors aiming to raise this to 0.6–0.7% of GDP<sup>16</sup>

- **Budget Competition & Pension Burden**

Policy commitments to limit public wage and pension growth have constrained discretionary funding, risking further underinvestment in assistance programs<sup>17</sup>

## **3. Strategic Framework – NSPS (Sri Lanka, 2025–2035)**

### **1. Vision**

*“A society where every individual enjoys dignity, resilience, and opportunity through universal, equitable, and sustainable social protection.”*

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.caritaslk.org/news/4112/>

<sup>15</sup> [The Informal Sector and Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Key to Effective Social Spending | by Maya Karunaratne | Jun, 2025 | Medium](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Sri Lanka: Request for an Extended Arrangement Under the Extended Fund Facility-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for Sri Lanka in: IMF Staff Country Reports Volume 2023 Issue 116 \(2023\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2023/116/article-A001>



## 2. Mission

*“To operationalize an integrated, lifecycle-based social protection system that ensures income support, care, insurance, and productive inclusion for all Sri Lankans.”*

### Strategic Objectives

#### PILLAR 1: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Strategic Objective 1.1:** Establish an integrated, transparent, and digital Unified Beneficiary Registry to improve targeting, coordination, and accountability of social assistance programs.

**Strategic Objective 1.2:** Develop structured, time-bound graduation pathways that support the poorest households to transition from dependency to self-sufficiency.

**Strategic Objective 1.3:** Implement lifecycle-based social assistance schemes that ensure age- and vulnerability-appropriate support across all stages of life.

**Strategic Objective 1.4:** Build a responsive safety net system capable of rapidly scaling up during economic, climatic, and other systemic shocks.

**Strategic Objective 1.5:** Institutionalize case management and exit strategies to enhance program efficiency, track progress, and prevent long-term dependency.

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#### PILLAR 2: SOCIAL CARE

**Strategic Objective 2.1:** Establish a coherent national care system with defined policies, standards, and regulatory frameworks for elder, child, and disability care.

**Strategic Objective 2.2:** Professionalize caregiving through nationally recognized training, certification, and career development pathways.

**Strategic Objective 2.3:** Strengthen the role of informal caregivers through financial, psychological, and institutional support mechanisms.

**Strategic Objective 2.4:** Expand community-based care networks leveraging local government officers and volunteers for last-mile outreach.

**Strategic Objective 2.5:** Foster public-private partnerships to expand affordable and quality care services across the country.

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#### PILLAR 3: SOCIAL INSURANCE

**Strategic Objective 3.1:** Extend social insurance coverage to informal sector workers through accessible, affordable, and technology-enabled contribution schemes.

**Strategic Objective 3.2:** Consolidate existing fragmented schemes into a unified Integrated Social Insurance Platform for improved efficiency and portability.

**Strategic Objective 3.3:** Guarantee universal risk protection for vulnerable populations by

subsidizing key insurance services such as maternity, disability, and health.

**Strategic Objective 3.4:** Digitize registration, contribution, and claims processes to enhance access, reduce fraud, and streamline service delivery.

**Strategic Objective 3.5:** Adapt social insurance mechanisms to meet the needs of emerging worker groups such as gig workers, freelancers, and platform-based labor.

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## **PILLAR 4: LABOUR MARKET & PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION**

**Strategic Objective 4.1:** Integrate social assistance beneficiaries into employment and skills development programs to promote economic inclusion and dignity.

**Strategic Objective 4.2:** Create community-based public works and environmentally sustainable job opportunities to provide transitional employment while addressing infrastructure and climate-related needs.

**Strategic Objective 4.3:** Promote entrepreneurship and microenterprise development among disadvantaged groups, including youth, women, and returnee migrants.

**Strategic Objective 4.4:** Enhance employability through market-responsive technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and targeted reskilling.

**Strategic Objective 4.5:** Ensure safe and sustainable reintegration of returnee migrants through comprehensive support systems.

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### **Cross-Cutting Strategic Objectives**

- **Objective 5.1:** Establish a Unified Social Registry that consolidates beneficiary data across all pillars to enable targeting, monitoring, and coordination.
- **Objective 5.2:** Ensure secure, inclusive, and efficient delivery of social protection benefits through digital payment systems.
- **Objective 5.3:** Strengthen accountability through grievance redressal systems accessible to all social protection beneficiaries.
- **Objective 5.4:** Apply a gender-transformative and inclusion lens across all policies, programs, and delivery mechanisms.
- **Objective 5.5:** Build a professional cadre of social workers and case managers to support integrated service delivery and household-level support.

## **4. Principles Guiding the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)**

The National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) is anchored in a set of interrelated principles that ensure that all policies and programmes are inclusive, responsive, rights-based, and sustainable. These principles shape both the design and implementation of interventions across the four pillars—social assistance, social care, social insurance, and labour market & productive

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inclusion—and are essential for realizing the national vision of dignity, equity, and resilience for all.

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### **1. Rights-Based and Lifecycle Approach**

Social protection is a right for all individuals and must be available throughout their lives—from birth to old age—regardless of socio-economic background, gender, or ability.

- All programmes will be aligned with human rights principles and the Constitution of Sri Lanka.
- Interventions will target vulnerabilities across the lifecycle: childhood, working age, parenthood, old age, and during disability or ill-health.

### **2. Universality with Progressive Targeting**

Sri Lanka will pursue universal coverage of key social protection guarantees, while prioritizing the most vulnerable through progressive targeting mechanisms.

- Universal entitlements (e.g., old-age income support, child benefits) will be expanded over time.
- Targeted assistance will focus on the poor, informal workers, persons with disabilities, and socially excluded groups.

### **3. Inclusiveness and Equity**

All programmes will ensure equitable access and outcomes, with a special focus on:

- Gender equality – ensuring women’s access to benefits, economic inclusion, and recognition of unpaid care.
- Disability inclusion – enabling accessible services and income support for persons with disabilities.
- Regional equity – addressing disparities across urban, rural, and estate sectors, and underserved districts.

### **4. Shock-Responsive and Climate-Resilient**

The social protection system will be designed to respond flexibly and rapidly to economic shocks, natural disasters, health pandemics, and climate-related risks.

- Contingency mechanisms will allow temporary scale-up of transfers.
- Early warning systems and disaster risk financing will be linked to scalable social protection interventions.

## **5. Fiscal and Institutional Sustainability**

The NSPS will maintain fiscal discipline while gradually expanding entitlements and benefits.

- Reforms (e.g., pension and social insurance) will ensure long-term solvency.
- Dedicated financing mechanisms and efficiency gains through digital delivery will help contain costs.

## **6. Digitalization, Interoperability, and Efficiency**

Technology will drive transparency, accountability, and cost-effectiveness.

- A single, integrated social protection information system will serve all ministries and levels of government.
- Beneficiary registries, payment systems, and monitoring tools will be interoperable and centrally accessible.

## **7. Coordination and Whole-of-Government Approach**

A coordinated governance framework is essential to avoid fragmentation, duplication, and inefficiencies.

- A high-level Social Protection Steering Committee will guide implementation.
- Line ministries will coordinate across health, education, labor, social welfare, and local authorities.

## **8. Decentralization and Community Engagement**

Local authorities, community-based organizations, and non-state actors will play a key role in outreach, delivery, and feedback mechanisms.

- Decentralized planning and service delivery will be supported by capacity building.
- Community voices, particularly of marginalized groups, will be incorporated in programme design and grievance redress.

## 9. Evidence-Based and Adaptive Implementation

Programmes will be designed, adjusted, and scaled based on evidence, monitoring data, and feedback.

- All major interventions will undergo pilot testing, process evaluation, and impact assessments.
- A national M&E framework will track progress against KPIs and guide course corrections.

## 10. Public Accountability and Transparency

Social protection will be implemented transparently with robust oversight and grievance systems.

- All beneficiary data, eligibility criteria, and payment information will be publicly available.
- Grievance redress platforms will be accessible via multiple channels, including mobile, online, and local offices.

## 5. Key Strategic Interventions by Pillar

### PILLAR 1: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

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#### 1.1 Establish a Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR):

*A centralized, interoperable registry will enhance transparency, eliminate duplication, and enable effective targeting across all social protection programs.*

#### Operational Mechanism:

**1.1.1. Develop a centralized digital Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) using NIC-linked, household-level GN/DS data across all major social assistance schemes (Targeted social assistance program, Elderly Allowance, Disability, etc.):**

This strategy is meant to create a comprehensive, interoperable, and accurate digital database that consolidates beneficiary information from all key social assistance programs into a single, unified system. This registry aims to improve targeting efficiency, reduce duplication, enhance transparency, and streamline service delivery.

- **Centralized Database Creation:**

The UBR will be developed as a centralized digital platform, accessible by authorized government agencies, that collects, stores, and manages beneficiary data from various social assistance schemes. This unified system ensures a single source of truth for social protection data.

- **Use of National Identity Card (NIC) as the Primary Identifier:**

Each beneficiary will be uniquely identified using their National Identity Card number. The NIC acts as a reliable and official identifier to accurately link individuals and their household members across multiple programs, reducing errors caused by name or demographic inconsistencies.

- **Household-Level Data Integration:**

Data will be collected and maintained at the grassroots level — specifically at the **Grama Niladhari (GN)** and **Divisional Secretariat (DS)** levels. This locality-based approach ensures detailed and context-specific data capturing, such as household composition, socio-economic status, and eligibility criteria.

- **Multi-Scheme Consolidation:**

The registry will incorporate beneficiary information from all major social assistance programs, including but not limited to:

- **Cash Transfer Program**
- **Elderly Allowance**
- **Disability Benefits**
- **Other relevant welfare schemes** administered by agencies such as the Department of Social Services (DSS), Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, and the Public Health sector.

By bringing all these datasets together, the UBR enables a holistic view of each household's entitlements and participation.

- **Avoidance of Duplication and Fraud:**

The registry's integration and NIC-linking mechanisms will minimize duplicate registrations across schemes, thereby preventing double-dipping and reducing leakage. It also helps identify fraudulent claims and ensures that resources are directed only to eligible beneficiaries.

- **Real-Time Eligibility Verification and Updates:**

The system will allow quick and automated verification of beneficiary eligibility during enrollment and renewals by cross-referencing data across schemes and against updated socio-economic criteria.

- **Improved Targeting and Coverage Optimization:**  
With access to granular, household-level data, policymakers and implementing agencies can better target assistance to vulnerable groups, monitor coverage gaps, and adapt programs in response to emerging needs or demographic changes.
- **Data Privacy and Security:**  
Given the sensitivity of personal and household data, the UBR will incorporate robust data protection standards, including encryption, access controls, and compliance with national data privacy laws to safeguard beneficiary information.
- **Interoperability and System Integration:**  
The UBR will be designed with interoperability protocols to link with other relevant databases such as:
  - **Welfare Benefit Board’s Social Information Registry (WBIS)**
  - **DSS databases**
  - **Ministry of Education’s child disability records**
  - **Estate-sector data, including those from the Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) and other relevant administrative sources**

This integration supports comprehensive case management and program coordination.

- **Capacity Building and Maintenance:**  
Field-level officers (e.g., GN officers, social workers) will be trained to collect, update, and manage data accurately. Regular audits and data quality assessments will be conducted to maintain system integrity.

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### **1.1.2. Design interoperability protocols to allow integration of WBB’s WBIS, DSS databases, MoE’s child disability records, and PHDT estate data:**

Interoperability protocols are technical standards and procedures that enable different information systems to communicate and exchange data seamlessly. In this context, protocols will be designed to allow the Unified Beneficiary Registry to connect and synchronize with existing databases from various agencies such as:

- **Welfare Benefits Board’s (WBB)’s WBIS:** Welfare Benefit Information System which tracks cash transfer beneficiaries.
- **Department of Social Services (DSS) databases:** Holding data on social welfare recipients such as elderly and disabled persons.

- **Ministry of Education (MoE) child disability records:** Containing data on children with disabilities in the education system.
- **Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) estate data:** Information specific to estate sector beneficiaries.

These protocols will ensure that data from these diverse sources can be integrated without loss or duplication, maintaining data accuracy and consistency. This will enable real-time updating of beneficiary information across programs, enhancing coordination, reducing administrative costs, and improving service delivery to vulnerable groups.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **WBB:** Lead development and technical management of the UBR system.
- **DSS:** Coordinate integration of existing programs (elderly, disability).
- **Registrar General's Dept & Department of Registration of Persons:** Provide NIC data integration and validation.
- **Provincial Councils:** Ensure alignment with Finance Commission guidelines at GN-level targeting.
- **ICTA:** Support software and digital interface development.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- National Social Protection Steering Committee with dedicated UBR Working Group.
- Monthly inter-agency data harmonization meetings.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Annual audit of registry completeness and error rates.
- Monthly reporting of duplication rates, coverage expansion, and data integration progress.

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## **1.2. Develop and Strengthen Graduation Pathways**

*Structured graduation models are essential to help vulnerable households transition from social assistance to sustainable livelihoods through skills, assets, and market linkages.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

**1.2.1. Launch "Poverty Alleviation Graduation Program" with time-bound packages combining cash, asset transfer (livestock, tools), skills training, mentoring, and market linkage support:**



The " Graduation Program" is a structured, multi-component intervention aimed at helping ultra-poor households transition out of poverty and achieve sustainable livelihoods. This program is designed with clear timelines (time-bound) to ensure focused support and measurable progress within a specified period.

- **Cash Transfers:** Provide regular, conditional or unconditional cash payments to beneficiaries to meet immediate consumption needs and stabilize household finances.
- **Asset Transfers:** Distribute productive assets such as livestock (e.g., goats, chickens) or tools (e.g., farming equipment, small business kits) to enable beneficiaries to start or expand income-generating activities.
- **Skills Training:** Offer tailored vocational and entrepreneurial training to improve beneficiaries' technical capabilities and enhance their ability to generate sustainable income.
- **Mentoring:** Assign mentors or case-workers who provide continuous guidance, motivation, and problem-solving support throughout the program to encourage beneficiaries to effectively use the resources and training.
- **Market Linkage Support:** Facilitate connections between beneficiaries and local markets, suppliers, or buyers to help them sell their products or access affordable inputs, thus increasing the viability and profitability of their economic activities.

Together, these components form an integrated package that empowers beneficiaries holistically, addressing immediate needs while building long-term self-reliance.

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### 1.2.2. Use household poverty profiles to target beneficiaries (multidimensional poverty scorecards):

To ensure the program reaches the most vulnerable and deserving households, targeting is based on comprehensive poverty profiles rather than income alone. These profiles use **multidimensional poverty scorecards**, which assess a range of indicators across different dimensions of poverty such as:

- Health and nutrition status
- Education level
- Living standards (housing, sanitation, access to clean water)
- Employment and income stability
- Vulnerability to shocks and social exclusion

Data collected through these scorecards at the household level (often by GN or DS officials) allows the program to identify families facing multiple, overlapping deprivations. This precise targeting improves resource allocation efficiency and maximizes impact by prioritizing households that would most benefit from graduation support.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **WBB:** Provide cash and monitor exit eligibility.
- **DSS & Department of Samurdhi Development:** Serve as case managers, tracking progress.
- **Vocational Training Authority & NAITA:** Provide skills training.
- **Local Banks & MFIs:** Enable microfinance or business loans post-graduation.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Use of shared household data among ministries.
- Integrated dashboards and referral tools at DS-level.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Biannual household assessments.
- Graduation rate tracking by district and program.

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### **1.3. Implement Lifecycle-Based Targeting**

*Designing social protection programs around key stages of the life course—childhood, working age, old age, and disability—ensures timely, needs-based support across the population.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

**1.3.1. Use NIC and UBR to identify and enroll beneficiaries automatically across life stages: child (grants, nutrition), working-age (caregivers, PwDs), elderly (pensions), disabled (disability grants):**

The integration of the **National Identity Card (NIC)** system with the **Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR)** enables the creation of an automated, efficient, and comprehensive beneficiary identification and enrollment process that spans all critical life stages:

- **Children:** Automatically identify eligible children for social assistance programs such as child grants and nutrition support based on birth records, household data, and

vulnerability indicators. This ensures timely provision of benefits that support child health, education, and development.

- **Working-Age Adults:** Recognize working-age individuals who may qualify for support, including caregivers looking after dependents, persons with disabilities (PwDs), and those with temporary or permanent vulnerabilities. This supports inclusion in caregiving assistance, vocational training, or disability support schemes.
- **Elderly:** Identify elderly citizens eligible for pensions and other social safety nets through age verification via NIC and cross-referencing with UBR records. This facilitates automatic enrollment and timely pension disbursements to ensure financial security in old age.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** Use disability data integrated from various ministries (e.g., MoE, NSPD) to register and enroll PwDs for targeted disability grants and specialized services, ensuring equitable access to support based on verified needs.

This system leverages digital data linkage to minimize errors, reduce duplication, and speed up the enrollment process, making social protection more inclusive and responsive to individual life circumstances.

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### 1.3.2. Prioritize elderly women and children with special needs:

Given their increased vulnerability, **elderly women** and **children with special needs** are prioritized within the social protection framework to address their specific challenges:

- **Elderly Women:** Often face compounded disadvantages due to gender and age, including higher poverty risk, limited access to healthcare, and social isolation. Prioritizing elderly women means ensuring that pension schemes, health screenings, and social care services are tailored to their needs, providing targeted financial support, healthcare access, and community engagement opportunities.
- **Children with Special Needs:** Children with disabilities or chronic health conditions require specialized support beyond standard child welfare programs. Prioritizing them involves ensuring early identification, access to inclusive education, nutrition programs, medical care, and disability allowances. This prioritization helps reduce long-term inequalities and promotes their well-being and integration into society.

This targeted focus enhances equity within the social protection system, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations receive the necessary attention and resources.

#### Key Stakeholders & Roles:

- **MWCA:** Coordinate support for elder women and women-headed households.

- **NSPD & MoE:** Identify PwDs and children with special needs.
- **WBB:** Harmonize criteria with lifecycle-sensitive indicators.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Use of shared household data among ministries.
- Integrated dashboards and referral tools at DS-level.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- UBR lifecycle targeting reports.
- Inclusion coverage by life stage.
- Real-time eligibility flagging via NIC systems.

### **1.4. Build Shock-Responsive Social Protection Systems**

*Adaptive systems that can scale quickly during crises—such as natural disasters, pandemics, or economic shocks—are critical to protect vulnerable populations and preserve development gains.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

##### **1.4.1. Integrate early warning data (DMC) with UBR to trigger automatic top-ups for affected households**

This strategy focuses on creating a **shock-responsive social protection system** by linking disaster risk management with social assistance delivery:

- **Integration of Data Systems:** The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) and other relevant institutions provide real-time early warning data on natural hazards such as floods, landslides, droughts, or cyclones. This information is linked with the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) and other relevant databases, which hold detailed information on households, including composition, geographic location, and vulnerability status. This integrated approach supports timely assistance and risk mitigation for all vulnerable populations, not limited to social assistance recipients.
- **Automatic Trigger Mechanism:** When the DMC issues a warning or identifies a disaster event in a specific geographic area, the integrated system automatically flags households within the affected zones in the UBR database.
- **Immediate Response Activation:** Flagged households receive automatic additional support—such as cash transfers or in-kind assistance—without needing to reapply or

undergo lengthy verification. This approach minimizes administrative delays and ensures timely assistance for all vulnerable populations during emergencies.

- **Benefits:** This integration enhances the social protection system's **responsiveness and efficiency**, providing timely financial relief to households whose livelihoods and well-being are disrupted by disasters, helping them cope with shocks and recover faster.
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#### 1.4.2. Pre-position cash/in-kind aid using mapped vulnerabilities (flood-prone, landslide, etc.)

This approach involves proactive disaster preparedness through strategic resource planning based on detailed vulnerability mapping:

- **Vulnerability Mapping:** Using geographic information system (GIS) tools and historical data, areas prone to hazards like floods, landslides, droughts, or storms are identified and mapped at a granular level (e.g., GN or village level). This mapping also considers socioeconomic vulnerabilities such as poverty, disability, and elder concentration.
  - **Pre-positioning Resources:** Based on this data, government agencies and partners stockpile **cash reserves**, food supplies, medical kits, shelter materials, and other essential goods **in or near high-risk zones** before disasters strike.
  - **Strategic Deployment:** When an event occurs, these resources are quickly mobilized to support affected populations. Pre-positioning minimizes logistical challenges and response times, enabling aid delivery when and where it's most needed.
  - **Coordination:** This process requires close collaboration between disaster management authorities, social protection agencies, local governments, and civil society to align resource stocks with real-time risk data and beneficiary needs.
  - **Outcome:** Pre-positioning ensures that vulnerable households receive **immediate, lifesaving support**, reducing suffering, preventing displacement, and limiting economic losses during disasters.
- 

Together, these two strategies strengthen the **shock-responsive capacity** of social protection systems, allowing governments to anticipate risks, rapidly assist affected populations, and build resilience against recurring hazards.

#### Key Stakeholders & Roles:

- **DMC and Other relevant Institutions:** Provide disaster alerts, manage risk mapping.
  - **DSS & WBB:** Disburse funds to affected beneficiaries.
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- **MWCA:** Identify vulnerable female-led households post-disaster.
- **Civil Society Partners:** Deliver shelter, psychosocial support.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Real-time GN-level risk dashboards linked to UBR.
- Emergency Social Assistance Reserve Funds (central & provincial).

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Monthly shock-response coverage audits.
- Disaster after-action reviews and beneficiary feedback surveys.

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### **1.5. Establish Robust Monitoring and Exit Strategies**

*Continuous monitoring and clearly defined, dignified exit pathways are essential to track progress, prevent dependency, and support long-term self-reliance among beneficiaries.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

##### **1.5.1. Train Samurdhi Development and Social Services Officers to serve as case managers who track beneficiary progress**

This strategy aims to enhance the effectiveness and personalization of social assistance programs through dedicated case management:

- **Capacity Building:** Samurdhi Development Officers and Social Services Officers will receive specialized training focused on case management skills, including beneficiary assessment, counseling, progress monitoring, and data management. Training also covers ethical considerations, confidentiality, and effective communication.
- **Role as Case Managers:** These officers act as **frontline coordinators** who maintain regular contact with beneficiary households. They assess needs, track changes in household circumstances, and guide beneficiaries through available services and graduation pathways.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** Case managers collect and update data on each beneficiary's progress—such as improvements in income, employment, skills acquisition, or health—and identify barriers that may delay graduation or necessitate additional support.
- **Benefits:** This personalized approach ensures social assistance is responsive to household needs, improves targeting accuracy, and increases the likelihood of sustainable graduation from poverty.

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### 1.5.2. Introducing digital case plans and exit milestones linked to graduation criteria

To make case management more efficient and transparent, digital tools and clear graduation milestones are introduced:

- **Digital Case Plans:** Each beneficiary household will have a **customized digital case plan** that outlines agreed-upon goals, services, and timelines. This plan is accessible to case managers and supervisors for continuous updates and monitoring.
- **Exit Milestones:** Graduation from social assistance programs is based on clear, measurable criteria (e.g., income thresholds, asset accumulation, stable employment). These milestones are embedded into the digital system to track readiness for program exit.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** The digital platform enables automatic alerts when beneficiaries reach key milestones or require intervention, facilitating timely decision-making and case follow-up.
- **Benefits:** Digitization improves data accuracy, reduces paperwork, and enhances coordination across agencies, making graduation processes more efficient and less prone to errors or bias.

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### 1.5.3. Enable a transparent and ethical appeals mechanism

A fair and accessible appeals system is essential to protect beneficiaries' rights and ensure trust in social protection programs:

- **Appeals Platform:** Establish a clear, user-friendly mechanism—both digital and offline—for beneficiaries to **challenge exclusion, inclusion errors, or decisions** related to their social assistance benefits.
- **Ethical Standards:** Appeals procedures are governed by principles of transparency, confidentiality, timeliness, and non-discrimination. Trained personnel handle appeals with impartiality and respect for the dignity of applicants.
- **Monitoring and Accountability:** Independent auditors, civil society organizations, or oversight committees regularly review appeals outcomes to identify systemic issues and recommend improvements.
- **Benefits:** This mechanism enhances program fairness, reduces grievances, prevents exclusion errors, and strengthens beneficiary confidence and program legitimacy.

Together, these elements create a **robust case management and monitoring framework** that supports effective graduation from social assistance while safeguarding beneficiaries' rights and promoting transparency.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **WBB:** Monitor appeals, run exclusion/inclusion correction platforms.
- **DSS:** Oversee social contracts and case management.
- **Independent Auditors/CSOs:** Monitor appeals transparency.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Digital social contract templates.
- Monthly case management performance reports.

**M&E Framework:**

- Graduation tracking KPIs.
- Number of ethical exits, appeals resolved, and reintegration cases.

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## **1.6. Promote Integrated Graduation and Community Empowerment**

*Combining household-level support with community-driven initiatives ensures sustainable exits from poverty while strengthening local resilience, inclusion, and social cohesion.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

### **1.6.1. Link community-level development planning with graduation program**

- **Community-Driven Approach:** The graduation program is integrated with local development initiatives under the community-led programmes which empowers communities at the Grama Niladhari (GN) or village level to plan and implement socio-economic development activities.
- **Household-Level Targeting:** Using community insights, local authorities and Community-led Councils identify vulnerable households eligible for graduation support. This ensures interventions are context-specific and aligned with community priorities.
- **Coordinated Service Delivery:** Community plans include actions that complement graduation activities—such as skills training, asset support, and social services—facilitating a holistic pathway out of poverty.



- **Sustainability and Ownership:** Linking these efforts fosters **local ownership** and accountability, encouraging community members to actively participate in tracking progress and sustaining gains beyond program completion.
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#### **1.6.2. Engage Elders' Committees and Community Elder Facilitators to monitor and support at-risk households**

- **Elders' Committees:** Established groups of respected community elders act as watchdogs and advocates for vulnerable individuals, especially older persons, who may face social isolation or economic hardship.
  - **Community Elder Facilitators (CEFs):** These trained volunteers work alongside Elders' Committees to conduct regular household visits, monitor wellbeing, and identify risks such as neglect, abuse, or worsening poverty.
  - **Support and Referral:** CEFs provide psychosocial support, help link at-risk elders and their families to social protection programs, and facilitate referrals to health, legal, or social services.
  - **Community Safety Net:** This grassroots network strengthens social cohesion and acts as an early warning system to prevent vulnerable households from falling deeper into poverty.
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#### **1.6.3. Integrate estate-sector tracking through PHDT and other relevant estate development and welfare agencies.**

- **PHDT Role:** The Plantation Human Development Trust (PHDT) plays a key role in overseeing social protection within estate communities, which have unique socio-economic challenges compared to urban or rural settings.
  - **Tailored Tracking Systems:** PHDT manages a specialized data system that tracks beneficiaries' status, graduation progress, and service utilization within the estate sector, ensuring tailored interventions.
  - **Coordination with National Programs:** This estate-specific tracking is integrated with the broader Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) to maintain consistency while addressing sector-specific needs.
  - **Targeted Support:** PHDT's data allows for focused outreach, better resource allocation, and monitoring of households that require specialized support within plantation areas.
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Together, these strategies promote **community empowerment, targeted monitoring, and sector-sensitive support**, thereby strengthening the graduation program's effectiveness and sustainability at the grassroots level.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Local Authorities & GN Officers:** Coordinate household targeting.
- **PHDT & RPCs:** Identify graduation-eligible estate households.
- **Elder Committees:** Monitor isolated elders and recommend assistance.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Integrated GN-level household development databases.
- Community-based monitoring systems using CEFs and ERPOs.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Graduation case studies by area.
- Community outreach and empowerment KPIs (e.g., % of elders receiving psychosocial support, # of community referrals made).

## **PILLAR 2: SOCIAL CARE**

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### **2.1. Establish a Comprehensive National Care System**

*A coordinated care system is essential to address the needs of children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities (PwDs), ensuring accessible, quality, and inclusive care services across all stages of life.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

#### **2.1.1 Develop a national, integrated care framework for elderly, children, and PwDs**

- **Comprehensive Care System:** Establish a unified, nationwide framework that coordinates social care services for elderly individuals, children with special needs, and persons with disabilities (PwDs). This system is designed to combine insurance-based funding with community-oriented care delivery.

- **Insurance-Linked Funding:** The framework promotes sustainable financing mechanisms such as social insurance contributions and government subsidies to ensure affordable and equitable access to care services.
  - **Multi-Level Service Coordination:** The framework integrates services across health, social welfare, and community sectors, enabling seamless care transitions between home, community, and institutional settings.
  - **Person-Centered Care:** It prioritizes individualized care plans tailored to beneficiary needs, emphasizing dignity, autonomy, and social inclusion.
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### 2.1.2 Establish care standards for all care homes and facilities with a registry and licensing system

- **Quality Assurance:** Define clear, enforceable standards for infrastructure, staffing, safety, hygiene, and service quality applicable to all residential and day care facilities serving elders, children with disabilities, and PwDs.
  - **Mandatory Registration:** Create a national registry that catalogs every care provider and facility, ensuring full transparency of service availability and compliance status.
  - **Licensing & Inspection:** Implement a licensing system that requires care homes to meet standards before operation and periodic inspections to maintain quality and safety.
  - **Accountability & Complaints:** Establish mechanisms for beneficiaries and families to report grievances, ensuring responsiveness and continuous improvement in care delivery.
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### 2.1.3 Implement provincial mandates to include care infrastructure in development planning

- **Mainstreaming Care Infrastructure:** Require provincial and local governments to incorporate care facility development, upgrading, and maintenance into their annual and long-term development plans.
  - **Resource Allocation:** Allocate specific budget lines for expanding physical infrastructure such as elder day centers, accessible transport, and disability-friendly public spaces.
  - **Integration with Housing & Urban Planning:** Promote inclusive community design ensuring care infrastructure is accessible within neighborhoods, particularly in underserved rural and estate areas.
  - **Disaster Resilience:** Ensure care infrastructure is designed and built to withstand natural hazards, minimizing service disruption during emergencies.
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#### 2.1.4. Link health system screening (e.g., frailty) with social care pathways and benefit referrals

- **Early Identification:** Integrate routine screening for health conditions relevant to care needs — such as frailty in elders, developmental delays in children, and disability assessments — into primary healthcare services.
- **Referral Mechanisms:** Develop clear protocols so that health workers can seamlessly refer screened individuals to appropriate social care services, benefits, and rehabilitation programs.
- **Data Sharing & Coordination:** Use interoperable digital health and social care information systems to share screening results securely among care providers, case managers, and social workers.
- **Continuity of Care:** Establish multidisciplinary teams that coordinate medical treatment, social support, and community services to improve outcomes and reduce duplication.

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These components together build a **robust, integrated social care system** that ensures high-quality, accessible, and sustainable support tailored to the diverse needs of vulnerable populations.

#### Key Stakeholders & Roles:

- **MWCA & DSS:** Policy leadership and coordination of elder/disability care policy implementation.
- **NSE (National Secretariat for Elders) and NSPD:** Lead on disability-inclusive policy, accessibility standards, and service oversight.
- **Ministry of Health (MoH):** Implement screening, referral, and integration with health services.
- **Provincial Councils:** Allocate budget and implement care infrastructure at local level.
- **Local Authorities & NGOs:** Operate and monitor community and institutional care centers.

#### Coordination Tools:

- Inter-ministerial Social Care Working Group.
- Provincial PDP templates to include social care priorities.
- UBR integration with health and care provider registries.

### **M&E Framework:**

- Annual care facility audits and accessibility assessments.
- Performance scorecards for care services across districts.
- Inclusion of social care indicators in Provincial Health & Social Development Reviews.

### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Digital care facility registry.
  - Trained MOH, PHM, and ERPO personnel on elder/disability care referrals.
  - Disaster-resilient infrastructure upgrades (e.g., for elder homes in hazard zones).
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## **2.2. Strengthen Caregiver Training and Certification Systems**

*Developing standardized training and accreditation for formal and informal caregivers enhances the quality, safety, and professional recognition of care services across the country.*

### **Operational Mechanism:**

#### **2.2.1. Establish a National Caregiver Training Institute (NCGTI) under the NVQ system**

- **Dedicated Training Institute:** Set up a specialized national institute responsible for delivering standardized, high-quality training programs for caregivers across the country, focusing on eldercare and disability support.
  - **Dual Training Model:** Adopt a dual system approach that combines formal classroom-based education with practical on-the-job training. This ensures caregivers gain both theoretical knowledge and real-world skills in care settings.
  - **National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Framework:** Align all training programs with the NVQ competency standards to provide recognized and accredited certification, enhancing the professionalism and employability of caregivers.
  - **Partnerships:** Collaborate with hospitals, care homes, NGOs, and community centers to provide practical placements and apprenticeships for trainees.
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#### **2.2.2. Provide NVQ-aligned curriculum for elder and disability care**

- **Standardized Curriculum:** Develop a comprehensive curriculum that covers essential caregiving competencies including personal care, mobility assistance, nutrition, medication support, communication, and psychological care.
  - **Customization for Special Needs:** Include specialized modules addressing the unique requirements of elderly individuals and persons with disabilities, ensuring culturally appropriate and dignity-preserving care.
  - **Competency-Based Assessment:** Use NVQ-aligned competency tests and practical evaluations to certify caregiver proficiency and readiness for professional roles.
  - **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly update the curriculum to reflect emerging best practices, technological advancements, and policy changes in social care.
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### 2.2.3. Conduct caregiver awareness campaigns to boost youth/women participation

- **Targeted Outreach:** Implement nationwide campaigns through schools, vocational centers, community organizations, and media channels to raise awareness about caregiving as a viable and rewarding career option.
  - **Gender-Sensitive Promotion:** Emphasize opportunities for women and youth, addressing cultural barriers and misconceptions that may discourage participation.
  - **Incentives and Scholarships:** Promote availability of scholarships, and career advancement pathways to attract and retain motivated trainees.
  - **Success Stories:** Highlight role models and success stories from the caregiving profession to inspire prospective caregivers.
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### 2.2.4. Incorporate modules on abuse prevention, inclusive care, and assistive technology

- **Abuse Prevention Training:** Educate caregivers on identifying, preventing, and reporting all forms of abuse—physical, emotional, financial, and neglect—ensuring protection and safety of care recipients.
  - **Inclusive Care Principles:** Train caregivers to provide respectful, person-centered care that embraces diversity and promotes social inclusion, empowering elderly and disabled individuals.
  - **Assistive Technology Use:** Provide guidance on using assistive devices and technologies (mobility aids, communication tools, health monitoring equipment) to enhance care quality and recipient independence, as recommended in assistive device assessments.
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- **Ethics and Professionalism:** Emphasize ethical caregiving practices, confidentiality, and maintaining professional boundaries.

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Together, these actions will establish a **professionalized, well-trained caregiving workforce** that meets the growing social care needs with quality, compassion, and inclusivity.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **TVEC & NISD:** Lead curriculum design and NVQ-level implementation.
- **MoH & NSPD:** Technical support for module design and training delivery.
- **MWCA:** Gender-sensitive care workforce policy.
- **Ministry of Education (MoE):** Train teachers on inclusive education for children with disabilities.

**Coordination Tools:**

- National Care Workforce Development Plan.
- Provincial Care Training Partnerships (TVEC, NISD, DSS).
- Trainee tracking system for certification and job placement.

**M&E Framework:**

- Number of certified caregivers by district and care sector.
- Employer satisfaction and care quality audits.
- Tracer studies on employment outcomes for certified caregivers.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Establishment of regional caregiver training centers.
- Funds for training subsidies.
- Digital certification and registration system for caregivers.

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## 2.3. Strengthen Care Economies and Support for Informal Caregivers

*Recognizing and investing in the care economy—including support for unpaid and informal caregivers—ensures equitable burden-sharing, economic empowerment, and sustainable social protection outcomes.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

### 2.3.1. Introduce caregiver training, psychosocial support, and respite care—especially targeting women caregivers

- **Caregiver Support:** Provide regular recognition and support—such as training, counseling, respite services, and peer networks—to informal caregivers, many of whom are women, who provide unpaid care for elderly, disabled, or chronically ill family members. This helps alleviate caregiving burdens and acknowledges their vital contributions.
  - **Psychosocial Support Services:** Establish counseling and mental health support programs tailored for caregivers to address stress, burnout, social isolation, and emotional challenges associated with caregiving duties. These services can be delivered via community centers, helplines, or digital platforms.
  - **Respite Care Provision:** Develop formal respite care options—short-term relief services that temporarily take over caregiving responsibilities—allowing caregivers time to rest, attend to personal needs, or manage emergencies. This is crucial to sustain caregiver wellbeing and reduce long-term fatigue.
  - **Priority for Women Caregivers:** Since women disproportionately undertake informal caregiving, programs will prioritize their inclusion and provide gender-sensitive support mechanisms, ensuring empowerment and protection against exploitation or overwork.
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### 2.3.2. Provide support to households caring for PwDs and bedridden elders

- **Household Care Support:** Offer targeted assistance to reduce the burden on families caring for persons with disabilities (PwDs) and bedridden elderly relatives. This may include access to medical supplies, assistive devices, home modifications, and care-related services.
  - **Caregiver Support:** Provide training, counseling, respite services, and peer networks to households to help sustain home-based care and enhance caregiving capacity.
  - **Conditional Support:** Link assistance to care quality standards or participation in training programs to ensure improved outcomes for vulnerable individuals.
  - **Targeted Outreach:** Use social registries and health data to identify and prioritize eligible households, especially in underserved or remote areas.
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### 2.3.3. Partner with MWCA and MoH to integrate caregivers into formal support pathways

- **Inter-Ministerial Collaboration:** Foster strong coordination between the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MWCA) and Ministry of Health (MoH) to create structured



pathways that formally recognize and support informal caregivers within national health and social care systems.

- **Referral Systems:** Enable caregivers to access health screenings, training, social benefits, and psychological services through streamlined referral mechanisms connected to primary health care and social welfare offices.
  - **Training and Certification Linkages:** Facilitate caregivers' entry into formal training programs and certification (e.g., via the National Caregiver Training Institute), thereby enhancing skills and enabling career development opportunities.
  - **Data Integration:** Develop shared databases or registries of informal caregivers to ensure they are accounted for in policy planning, receive timely support, and are included in emergency response plans.
  - **Policy and Advocacy:** Collaborate on policy formulation to institutionalize caregiver support, ensuring budget allocations, legal protections, and program sustainability.
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Together, these measures build a **comprehensive care economy** that supports and empowers informal caregivers, reduces their financial and emotional burdens, and integrates them effectively into formal care systems, ultimately improving care quality and social protection for vulnerable populations.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **MWCA & DSS:** Administer caregiver support schemes and manage payments.
- **NISD:** Train informal caregivers under NVQ standards.
- **Mental Health Directorate (MoH):** Provide psychosocial and mental health support.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Caregiver registration system integrated with UBR.

**Referral pathways:** Establish dedicated personnel separate from existing overworked staff, coordinating through PHMs, social assistance officers, and the Women's Bureau to ensure effective service delivery.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Number of registered informal caregivers receiving support.
- Surveys on caregiver stress, satisfaction, and wellbeing.
- Tracking financial inclusion outcomes among caregiving households.

### Capacity/Resource Needs:

- Fund for caregiver assistance.
  - Trained psychosocial counselors in social care units.
  - Provincial caregiver registries with GN-level validation.
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## 2.4. Develop Community-Based Care Networks

*Building localized care networks through community institutions and services ensures accessible, culturally appropriate, and inclusive support for vulnerable groups within their own environments.*

### Operational Mechanism:

#### 2.4.1. Use DS-level Social Care Units as hubs for community-based care

- **Centralized Service Points:** Designate Divisional Secretariat (DS)-level Social Care Units as primary coordination centers for delivering community-based care services. These units will serve as accessible, local hubs where care planning, case management, and resource allocation occur.
  - **Multi-disciplinary Teams:** Staff these units with trained social workers, healthcare coordinators, and administrative personnel to manage and oversee care delivery, respond to emerging needs, and liaise with other government and non-governmental service providers.
  - **Localized Service Delivery:** Ensure that these hubs maintain strong links with grassroots-level actors and communities to understand local needs and mobilize appropriate responses, enhancing responsiveness and cultural relevance.
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#### 2.4.2. Train GN-level care agents and volunteers in elder/PwD support

- **Capacity Building at Grassroots:** Provide specialized training programs for Grama Niladhari (GN)-level frontline workers and community volunteers focused on identifying, supporting, and monitoring elderly individuals and persons with disabilities (PwDs).
  - **Skills Covered:** Training will include basic health screening, psychosocial support, disability awareness, referral procedures, and care ethics to improve quality of community care.
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- **Empowerment and Motivation:** Equip care agents with practical tools, training, and recognition to encourage sustained engagement and enhance their effectiveness.
  - **Community Trust:** Leveraging trusted local actors enhances uptake of services and promotes early detection of care needs.
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#### 2.4.3. Create digital care tracking tools for high-need individuals and integrate with UBR

- **Individual Care Monitoring:** Develop user-friendly digital platforms (e.g., mobile apps or web portals) for care agents to register, track, and update the status of high-need community members such as frail elders, disabled persons, and chronic illness patients.
  - **Data Integration:** Link these care tracking tools with the centralized Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) to maintain a comprehensive, up-to-date picture of social care recipients across sectors.
  - **Real-Time Updates:** Enable timely information sharing among care providers to coordinate services, avoid duplication, and rapidly respond to changes in care needs or emergencies.
  - **Data Privacy and Security:** Ensure strict protocols to protect sensitive personal information, complying with data protection standards.
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#### 2.4.4. Establish referral pathways across health, education, and social sectors

- **Multi-sectoral Linkages:** Create clear, standardized referral protocols that connect community care agents and Social Care Units with relevant services in the health system (clinics, hospitals), education (special schools, inclusive programs), and social welfare (disability benefits, elder services).
  - **Streamlined Processes:** Design referral tools and communication channels (phone, digital platforms) to facilitate quick and coordinated movement of clients between service points.
  - **Capacity to Follow Up:** Assign responsibility for follow-up monitoring to ensure referrals result in actual service access and continued care.
  - **Cross-sector Training:** Conduct joint training sessions for workers in all involved sectors to foster understanding of each other's roles and improve collaboration.
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Together, these components form a **community-based care network** that brings essential care services closer to vulnerable populations, ensures holistic support by linking multiple sectors, and leverages digital tools and local agents to enhance efficiency, responsiveness, and coverage.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **DSS & MWCA:** Lead Social Care Units and coordinate field agents.
- **MoH:** Conduct community elder case management and medical-social referrals.
- **NSPD:** Ensure disability-inclusive protocols.
- **MoE & Women's Bureau:** Link schools and gender-sensitive outreach.
- **PHDT & RPCs:** Implement estate-specific community care.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Integrated care referral system (health–education–social protection).
- GN-level care coordination committees.
- Mobile applications for case monitoring (e.g., elder care apps).

**M&E Framework:**

- Monthly community outreach and case referral reports.
- Feedback from care recipients and households.
- Emergency preparedness drills involving care agents and Social Care Units.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Staff training in disaster-responsive elder/PwD care.
- Digital infrastructure for real-time case tracking.
- Transportation for mobile outreach in plantation and rural areas.

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## **2.5. Expand Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Social Care**

*Leveraging partnerships between government, private sector, NGOs, and community organizations can mobilize resources, innovation, and expertise to enhance the reach and quality of social care services.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

### **2.5.1. Provide grants, tax incentives, and co-funding to NGOs, religious organizations, and private providers offering elder/disability day care or mobile care units**

- **Targeted Financial Support:** Establish grant programs that allocate funds to NGOs, faith-based organizations, and private care providers who run day care centers or operate mobile care units specifically for elders and persons with disabilities (PwDs).
  - **Tax Incentives:** Offer tax deductions or credits for organizations investing in these care services, reducing their operational costs and encouraging expansion or quality improvements.
  - **Co-Funding Models:** Develop matching fund schemes where government provides partial funding conditional on recipient organizations raising complementary funds through donations, fundraising, or service fees, thereby maximizing resource mobilization.
  - **Capacity Building:** Include provisions for training, quality assurance, and monitoring alongside funding to ensure that supported services meet care standards and effectively address beneficiary needs.
  - **Increased Accessibility:** Support for mobile care units enhances outreach to remote, underserved, or mobility-restricted individuals who cannot easily access fixed facilities.
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### **2.5.2. Support Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in disaster response through mobile teams and emergency relief**

- **Collaborative Disaster Preparedness:** Foster formal partnerships between government agencies, private healthcare providers, NGOs, and community groups to create mobile emergency care teams capable of rapid deployment during disasters (floods, landslides, pandemics).
  - **Shared Resources:** Leverage private sector expertise, logistical capabilities, and equipment in coordination with public emergency management to enhance coverage and speed of response.
  - **Emergency Relief Services:** PPPs can provide essential services such as mobile medical clinics, psychosocial support, distribution of relief materials, and temporary shelters specifically designed to meet the needs of vulnerable elders and PwDs during crises.
  - **Sustainable Financing:** Combine government emergency funds with private and donor contributions, including in-kind support, to maintain readiness and operational capacity of mobile teams.
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### 2.5.3. Promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) investments in elder/disability-friendly infrastructure (e.g., accessible clinics, benches)

- **CSR Engagement:** Encourage corporations and businesses to allocate part of their CSR budgets toward developing or upgrading infrastructure that supports elders and persons with disabilities.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** Investments can include building or retrofitting clinics with ramps and accessible toilets, installing public seating and shaded rest areas in parks and markets, or creating safe pedestrian pathways.
- **Recognition and Incentives:** Establish awards or public recognition programs to incentivize businesses that invest in social infrastructure, enhancing their public image while contributing to social inclusion.
- **Community Partnerships:** Facilitate dialogue between businesses, local governments, and community organizations to identify priority infrastructure projects and ensure alignment with beneficiary needs.
- **Long-Term Impact:** These CSR-driven improvements help create an enabling environment that enhances mobility, comfort, and access to services for vulnerable populations outside formal care settings.

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Together, these measures leverage diverse funding and implementation partners, reducing sole government financial and operational burdens while expanding and improving the quality and reach of elder and disability care services through collaborative and incentivized approaches.

#### Key Stakeholders & Roles:

- **DSS & Finance Commission:** Administer grants and monitor partner quality.
- **Local Authorities & NGOs:** Operate centers and outreach programs.
- **Private Sector/CSR Arms:** Fund infrastructure, vehicles, or in-kind support.
- **RPCs & PHDT:** Roll out estate-specific care services.

#### Coordination Tools:

- PPP Guidelines and Quality Licensing Toolkit.
- Public registry of licensed service providers.
- Disaster-response MoUs with NGO partners.

#### M&E Framework:

- Annual PPP performance reviews.
- Beneficiary satisfaction surveys.
- Licensing compliance audits and disaster-readiness assessments.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- PPP implementation unit within DSS or MWCA.
- Contract management tools and grant tracking.
- Disaster contingency funds accessible by NGO partners.

### **PILLAR 3: SOCIAL INSURANCE**

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#### **3.1. Promote Inclusion of Informal Sector Workers in Social Insurance**

*Extending social insurance coverage to informal workers ensures protection for a large and vulnerable segment of the workforce, fostering economic security and social equity.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

**3.1.1. Design and launch user-friendly mobile and web platforms that allow informal sector workers to make small, flexible pension and insurance contributions directly via smartphones or community digital kiosks. These platforms should offer multilingual support and simple interfaces to maximize accessibility.**

- **Accessible Digital Solutions:** Develop intuitive digital platforms—both mobile apps and web portals—tailored to the needs of informal workers, many of whom may have limited digital literacy. Features should include simple navigation, clear icons, and step-by-step guidance.
- **Flexible Payment Options:** Allow users to make micro-contributions of varying amounts and frequencies to accommodate irregular and fluctuating incomes common in informal employment.
- **Multilingual Support:** Provide interfaces and support in Sinhala, Tamil, and English to ensure broad accessibility across Sri Lanka’s diverse population.
- **Community Access Points:** Establish digital kiosks or terminals in community centers, Grama Niladhari offices, and other local hubs for workers who lack personal smartphone or internet access.

- **Offline and Low-Bandwidth Functionality:** Design platforms to work efficiently with low internet connectivity and include offline data entry with later synchronization to accommodate rural and remote areas.
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### **3.1.2. Develop a government co-contribution scheme targeting the poorest informal workers to incentivize enrolment and reduce financial barriers, with eligibility criteria verified through social registries or poverty databases.**

- **Financial Incentives:** Implement a scheme where the government matches or subsidizes contributions from informal workers below defined poverty thresholds, easing their financial burden and encouraging enrollment.
  - **Targeted Eligibility:** Use existing social registries, poverty databases, or national beneficiary lists to accurately identify eligible individuals and prevent leakage of benefits to non-poor workers.
  - **Conditional Enrollment:** Tie co-contributions to regular payment compliance and continued participation to promote sustained engagement with social insurance programs.
  - **Transparency and Accountability:** Establish clear guidelines and periodic audits to ensure funds are distributed fairly and efficiently to intended beneficiaries.
- 

### **3.1.3. Leverage the Department of Labour's existing field network (labor officers, labor inspectors) to actively identify, register, and onboard informal workers into social insurance schemes, ensuring continuous monitoring for compliance with minimum contributions.**

- **Field Outreach Teams:** Mobilize labor officers and inspectors who have local knowledge and presence to conduct in-person identification and enrollment of informal workers in their communities.
  - **On-the-Spot Registration:** Equip field officers with mobile devices linked to the digital platform to register workers instantly and assist them in making their first contributions.
  - **Compliance Monitoring:** Use labor officers to regularly follow up with registered informal workers to verify continued contribution payments and provide support or reminders.
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- **Data Collection and Reporting:** Field teams will submit regular reports on enrollment progress, challenges faced, and compliance rates to central authorities for monitoring and policy adjustments.
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#### **3.1.4. Run intensive outreach and awareness campaigns through local government bodies, Grama Niladhari (GN) offices, trade unions, and civil society to educate informal workers on the benefits and procedures of social insurance.**

- **Multi-Channel Communication:** Use flyers, posters, local radio, social media, and community meetings to disseminate information about social insurance benefits, eligibility, enrollment steps, and contribution processes.
  - **Trusted Messengers:** Engage GNs, trade union leaders, community influencers, and NGOs to build trust and credibility in messaging, addressing misconceptions and fears about social insurance.
  - **Targeted Campaigns:** Tailor outreach to specific informal worker groups (e.g., street vendors, domestic workers, small-scale farmers) with culturally relevant content and examples.
  - **Feedback Mechanisms:** Create platforms (hotlines, suggestion boxes) for informal workers to ask questions, provide feedback, and report barriers to enrollment or payment.
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#### **3.1.5. Integrate registration and contribution platforms with national digital identity systems (NIC) and other e-government services to streamline enrollment, verification, and record-keeping.**

- **NIC Linkage:** Use the National Identity Card system for accurate beneficiary identification, preventing duplication and fraud, and enabling seamless data sharing across government agencies.
- **E-Government Integration:** Connect social insurance platforms with existing digital government services such as tax records, social welfare databases, and labor market information to enable holistic service delivery and eligibility verification.
- **Automated Verification:** Implement real-time verification protocols to confirm worker identity, eligibility, and contribution status during enrollment and ongoing payments.
- **Data Security and Privacy:** Ensure strong cybersecurity measures are in place to protect personal data, comply with privacy regulations, and build user confidence in the system.

- **Interoperability Standards:** Adopt open data and interoperability standards allowing future expansion and integration with other social protection programs or financial services.
- 

Together, these detailed operational steps support an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable social insurance system for informal workers, balancing digital innovation with human outreach and government oversight.

### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Department of Labour (DoL):** Lead worker registration, compliance monitoring, and outreach.
- **Ministry of Finance (MoF):** Provide budget and subsidy allocation for co-contribution schemes.
- **Telecommunications Providers:** Partner to provide reliable mobile connectivity and digital payment solutions.
- **Local Government and GN Offices:** Facilitate local outreach and assist informal workers in registration.
- **NGOs & Trade Unions:** Conduct awareness and training programs.

### **Coordination Tools:**

- Inter-agency task force linking DoL, MoF, and digital service providers.
- Mobile platform analytics and reporting dashboards for real-time enrolment monitoring.

### **M&E Framework:**

- Track number of informal workers registered and contributing monthly.
- Measure contribution compliance rates and co-contribution disbursement accuracy.
- Survey informal workers' awareness and satisfaction with services.

### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Development of multilingual, low-bandwidth mobile apps.
  - Training for DoL field officers on digital registration tools.
  - Outreach materials tailored for informal economy workers.
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## **3.2. Consolidate Social Insurance Schemes for Greater Efficiency**

*Integrating multiple fragmented insurance programs through coordinated governance and digital integration improves portability, administrative efficiency, and equitable access to*

*benefits across sectors. These efforts will be linked to an Integrated Social Insurance Platform (ISIP), which consolidates data and services without creating a new institutional body.*

## **Operational Mechanisms:**

### **3.2.1. Strengthen inter-institutional coordination and harmonization**

- **Coordinated Governance:** Establish formal coordination committees among existing agencies (EPF, ETF, Aghara, and informal worker programs) to oversee alignment of policies and operations.
- **Harmonization of Schemes:** Align contribution rates, benefit formulas, eligibility criteria, and operational procedures across all schemes while preserving institutional autonomy.
- **Stakeholder Coordination:** Facilitate communication and collaboration among ministries, employers, workers, unions, and service providers to ensure smooth coordination and decision-making.

### **3.2.2. Develop interoperable data systems for portability and transparency**

- **Data Integration:** Connect all schemes through interoperable IT systems linked with the ISIP, consolidating contribution and benefit histories into a single, comprehensive record.
- **Portability of Benefits:** Enable workers to carry accumulated benefits across jobs, sectors, and regions without disruption.
- **Real-Time Updates:** Ensure that contributions and claims are immediately reflected across all schemes.
- **User-Centric Access:** Provide beneficiaries with digital portals and mobile applications to track benefits, manage claims, and monitor transfers independently.

### **3.2.3. Create a unified digital platform for contributions, claims, and benefit management**

- **Centralized Contribution & Claims Management:** Employers, workers, and self-employed individuals can manage contributions and claims for all schemes through a single interface.
- **Standardized Procedures:** Establish uniform rules and documentation for enrollment, contributions, claims, appeals, and dispute resolution.
- **Integrated Customer Service:** Offer combined support channels including call centers, online chat, and local service desks for beneficiaries and employers.
- **Analytics & Reporting:** Use built-in analytics to monitor performance, compliance, and identify service gaps or bottlenecks.

### 3.2.4. Simplify administrative processes through regulatory and operational reforms

- **Legal Harmonization:** Review and amend existing laws and regulations to unify governance, reporting, and operational mandates across schemes.
- **Eliminate Redundancies:** Identify and remove overlapping functions, eligibility criteria, and conflicting benefit rules to enhance efficiency.
- **Streamlined Compliance:** Simplify registration, reporting, and audit processes for both employers and workers.
- **Capacity Building:** Train staff on digital platforms, harmonized procedures, and inter-institutional coordination to ensure smooth implementation.

#### **Impact:**

These steps aim to transform Sri Lanka's social insurance landscape into a cohesive, efficient, and user-friendly system that maximizes coverage, reduces administrative burdens, and adapts to the evolving labor market—without creating new institutional structures.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Ministry of Labour:** Lead inter-agency coordination and regulatory alignment.
- **EPE, ETF, and Agrahara Boards:** Implement harmonized processes and integrate with ISIP.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Ensure funding and financial sustainability.
- **IT Agencies:** Develop and maintain interoperable digital infrastructure.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Inter-agency working groups and harmonization committees.
- Shared digital platforms with single sign-on for beneficiaries.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Track administrative efficiency gains.
- Measure beneficiary satisfaction with access and portability.
- Monitor cross-scheme portability cases and dispute resolution.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- IT teams for platform integration and maintenance.
- Change management specialists for institutional strengthening.
- Stakeholder engagement forums for continuous consultation and feedback.

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### 3.3. Ensure Universal Risk Protection for Vulnerable Populations

*Providing comprehensive coverage against key social risks—such as maternity, disability, and child health—promotes inclusive security and reduces inequality across all segments of society.*

#### Operational Mechanism:

#### 3.3.1. Roll out subsidized or free insurance products targeting key social risks like maternity, disability, and child health.

- **Targeted Coverage:** Develop insurance products that specifically address major social risks impacting vulnerable groups, such as maternity care for women, disability support for persons with disabilities, and comprehensive child health services.
- **Subsidization Strategy:** Offer these insurance schemes either fully subsidized or at highly affordable premiums for low-income and marginalized populations to ensure wide access and equity.
- **Learning from Models:** Adapt lessons from international experiences in expanding social health insurance to cover maternity and child health services under a universal framework, ensuring quality care and financial protection.
- **Service Packages:** Define benefit packages covering prenatal, delivery, postnatal care, rehabilitation, assistive devices, and child immunization and nutrition services.
- **Provider Networks:** Contract with public and private healthcare providers to deliver these services, ensuring geographic and quality coverage.

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#### 3.3.2. Integrate health insurance enrolment and claims data with the National Identity Card (NIC) system and health service delivery records to streamline eligibility verification and reduce fraud.

- **Data Linkage:** Create interoperable digital systems that connect individual health insurance enrollment and claims databases with the NIC system, enabling quick and reliable identity verification.
  - **Eligibility Checks:** Use integrated data to automatically verify eligibility for insurance benefits based on socio-economic status, employment, or special needs, reducing manual paperwork.
  - **Fraud Prevention:** Cross-check claims against health service delivery records (e.g., hospital visits, treatment logs) to identify and prevent duplicate claims, ghost beneficiaries, and other fraudulent activities.
  - **Real-Time Updates:** Ensure that data updates in real-time to maintain accuracy in beneficiary status and benefit utilization.
  - **Privacy and Security:** Implement robust data protection protocols to safeguard sensitive personal and health information.
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### 3.3.3. Introduce a Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme

Enable working parents (formal and informal sectors) to access paid leave benefits, supporting gender equality and early childhood care.

- **Scheme Design:** Establish a PPL program that provides income support to parents during a defined period around childbirth or adoption.
  - **Inclusive Coverage:** Extend the scheme to include workers in the informal economy, self-employed parents, and employees of small enterprises through simplified enrollment and flexible access arrangements.
  - **Benefit Structure:** Offer paid leave for a defined period to ensure income security while parents care for newborns or newly adopted children.
  - **Support for Early Childhood Care:** Link paid leave benefits to programs promoting breastfeeding, immunizations, and early childhood development, emphasizing the critical window for child health.
  - **Equity Measures:** Provide additional support where needed to ensure low-income families can access leave benefits without financial hardship.
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### 3.3.4. Harmonize Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Across Employment Sectors

Promote shared caregiving responsibilities by ensuring consistent parental leave benefits for all workers.

- **Policy Alignment:** Harmonize rules, duration, and eligibility criteria for parental leave across formal and informal employment sectors.
- **Portability:** Ensure that parental leave benefits are transferable across jobs and employment sectors, including informal work.
- **Paternity Leave:** Extend PPL benefits to fathers, encouraging their active participation in early childcare and promoting gender equality in caregiving roles.
- **Gender-Sensitive Messaging:** Develop awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of shared parental responsibilities and the social benefits of fathers' involvement in caregiving.
- **Monitoring:** Track uptake of parental leave benefits to assess gender equity outcomes and inform future policy refinements.

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Together, these actions would build a comprehensive social risk protection system that supports vulnerable populations, promotes gender equality, and improves early childhood wellbeing through accessible, integrated, and equitable insurance and leave benefits.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Ministry of Health:** Oversee health insurance linkage and service integration.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Design and regulate PPL scheme.
- **Department of Registration of Persons:** Manage NIC data integration.
- **Employers and Informal Worker Representatives:** Facilitate awareness and compliance.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Inter-ministerial committee on social risk protection.
- Digital verification systems linking NIC and health insurance databases.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Coverage rates for maternity, disability, and child health insurance.
- Uptake and utilization of Paid Parental Leave by sector and gender.
- Impact assessments on child health and female labor retention.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- IT infrastructure for secure data linkage.
- Training for service providers on new benefit schemes.
- Awareness campaigns targeting vulnerable groups.

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### **3.4. Implement Digital Registration and Benefit Portability**

*Leveraging digital platforms linked to national identity systems enables seamless registration, real-time updates, and portability of social protection benefits across regions and employment sectors.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

##### **3.4.1. Deploy NIC-linked mobile and online platforms to enable seamless registration, contributions, and claims management accessible across regions and employment types.**

- **Unified Digital Access:** Develop user-friendly mobile apps and web portals linked directly to the National Identity Card (NIC) system, enabling individuals to register for social insurance programs, make contributions, and file claims anytime and anywhere.
- **Cross-Platform Compatibility:** Ensure platforms work on smartphones, tablets, and desktop computers to accommodate diverse user preferences and technological capabilities.
- **Inclusive Design:** Cater to various employment types—formal, informal, self-employed, gig economy workers—by providing flexible interfaces and contribution options tailored to their income patterns.
- **Real-Time Processing:** Automate registration and claims workflows to expedite approvals and payments, reducing bureaucracy and improving user experience.
- **Multilingual Support:** Offer interfaces in multiple local languages to enhance accessibility for all ethnic and linguistic groups.

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##### **3.4.2. Provide multiple registration points including online portals, Grama Niladhari offices, mobile registration units, and community kiosks to maximize accessibility, especially in rural and remote areas.**

- **Decentralized Access:** Complement digital platforms with physical registration points to serve individuals without reliable internet or digital literacy.
- **Grama Niladhari Offices:** Utilize local administrative offices as trusted venues for beneficiary registration and assistance, leveraging existing government presence.
- **Mobile Registration Units:** Deploy outreach teams equipped with tablets and mobile internet to visit rural and underserved areas, facilitating on-the-spot registration and education.
- **Community Digital Kiosks:** Establish kiosks in accessible community hubs (libraries, post offices, community centers) staffed or self-service, enabling beneficiaries to register and manage their accounts with guidance.



- **Awareness Campaigns:** Conduct localized promotion efforts to inform communities about available registration options and benefits of enrollment.
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### **3.4.3. Develop secure digital identity verification and authentication systems to protect beneficiary data and streamline benefit portability.**

- **Biometric Integration:** Use biometric verification methods (fingerprints, facial recognition) linked to NIC records to confirm beneficiary identities, preventing identity fraud and duplicate registrations.
  - **Two-Factor Authentication:** Implement secure login protocols such as OTPs (one-time passwords) sent via SMS or email to add layers of security during account access.
  - **Data Encryption:** Employ advanced encryption standards to safeguard personal data during transmission and storage, ensuring confidentiality and compliance with data protection laws.
  - **Access Controls:** Define role-based access to sensitive data within government agencies and service providers to minimize unauthorized usage.
  - **Portability Facilitation:** Link beneficiary accounts to unique digital IDs so that contributions, benefits, and records follow individuals across jobs, regions, and program types without interruption.
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### **3.4.4. Incorporate real-time updates of contributions and benefit claims to improve transparency and reduce delays.**

- **Live Transaction Monitoring:** Design systems to record and display contribution payments and claim statuses instantly, allowing beneficiaries to track their accounts and pending benefits.
  - **Automated Notifications:** Send alerts via SMS, email, or app notifications to inform users of successful contributions, claim approvals, or required actions.
  - **Dashboard Access:** Provide beneficiaries and administrators with intuitive dashboards summarizing account activity, enhancing accountability and user empowerment.
  - **Fraud Detection:** Integrate analytics to flag suspicious patterns or inconsistencies in real-time, enabling prompt investigation and fraud prevention.
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- **Reduced Administrative Lag:** Streamline internal workflows through automation, minimizing processing times and manual errors in claims and contribution reconciliation.
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Together, these measures create an accessible, secure, and transparent digital ecosystem for social insurance administration, significantly improving user experience and operational efficiency while ensuring data integrity and inclusiveness.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Department of Registration of Persons:** Provide NIC infrastructure and authentication services.
- **Ministry of Technology and Digital Infrastructure:** Lead platform development.
- **Local Government and GN Offices:** Facilitate local registration points.
- **Social Insurance Administrators:** Manage benefit processing.

**Coordination Tools:**

- National digital identity and e-governance integration frameworks.
- Multi-channel service delivery models.

**M&E Framework:**

- Registration rates and time taken for onboarding.
- Incidences of fraud or data breaches.
- Beneficiary feedback on registration and claim processes.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Digital literacy training for field officers and beneficiaries.
  - Investment in ICT infrastructure and cybersecurity.
  - Helpdesks and call centers for user support.
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### **3.5. Expand Social Protection Coverage for Emerging Worker Groups**

*Adapting social insurance and assistance programs to include gig, freelance, and self-employed workers ensures inclusive protection in a rapidly changing labor market.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

**3.5.1. Partner with gig economy platforms (e.g., PickMe, Uber) to create streamlined enrolment pathways for gig, freelance, and self-employed workers into contributory insurance schemes.**

- **Strategic Collaboration:** Establish formal partnerships or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with major gig platforms to facilitate the social insurance enrollment process for their registered workers.
  - **Integrated Systems:** Develop APIs or data-sharing protocols allowing gig platforms to directly offer social insurance registration and contribution options through their apps or websites, minimizing user effort.
  - **Onboarding Assistance:** Enable platform-initiated prompts or reminders to encourage workers to register for insurance programs during their daily app usage, leveraging the existing trust and communication channels.
  - **Simplified Verification:** Use platform data for identity verification and income tracking, speeding up eligibility confirmation and contribution calculations.
  - **Inclusive Enrollment:** Expand coverage beyond ride-hailing to include delivery services, freelance marketplaces, and other emerging gig sectors.
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### 3.5.2. Design flexible contribution schedules and payment options suitable for irregular and variable incomes common in these emerging worker groups.

- **Flexible Payment Plans:** Offer daily, weekly, or monthly contribution options to accommodate fluctuations in earnings typical among gig workers.
  - **Micro-Contributions:** Allow small, incremental payments, enabling workers to contribute amounts proportional to their current income rather than fixed large sums.
  - **Multiple Payment Channels:** Provide a variety of payment methods—mobile money, digital wallets, bank transfers, and cash payments at kiosks—to maximize accessibility.
  - **Contribution Holidays:** Introduce provisions for temporary suspension or reduction of contributions during periods of low or no income, reducing the risk of dropouts.
  - **Automated Deductions:** Facilitate automatic deductions linked to gig platform earnings where feasible, reducing administrative burden for workers.
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### 3.5.3. Develop tailored awareness programs and support services to educate these workers on social insurance benefits and enrollment processes.

- **Targeted Communication:** Design outreach campaigns specifically addressing the needs, concerns, and work realities of gig and freelance workers, using relatable language and examples.
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- **Digital Literacy Support:** Provide easy-to-understand digital guides, video tutorials, and FAQs accessible via mobile apps and social media to help workers navigate registration and contribution systems.
  - **Helplines and Chatbots:** Establish dedicated customer support channels including phone hotlines, chatbots, and community help desks to assist with enrollment and claim queries.
  - **Peer Education:** Train experienced gig workers as community ambassadors who can share knowledge and encourage others to participate in social insurance programs.
  - **Feedback Mechanisms:** Incorporate regular surveys and feedback loops to improve awareness efforts and address emerging issues promptly.
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### 3.5.4. Monitor the evolving labor market trends to continuously adapt social insurance products and policies.

- **Labor Market Analysis:** Conduct ongoing research on gig economy growth, worker demographics, income patterns, and sector shifts to understand changing needs.
  - **Product Innovation:** Adjust social insurance products—coverage types, benefit levels, contribution rules—to better align with new forms of work and emerging risks.
  - **Policy Review:** Update legal frameworks and regulations to reflect the realities of platform-based work, ensuring protections without stifling innovation.
  - **Stakeholder Engagement:** Maintain active dialogue with gig platforms, worker associations, and policy experts to anticipate future trends and collaboratively develop solutions.
  - **Data-Driven Decisions:** Use platform-provided and government-collected data to measure program uptake, financial sustainability, and worker outcomes, guiding strategic adjustments.
- 

Together, these actions will help integrate gig and informal workers into social protection systems effectively, ensuring that this growing and diverse workforce receives coverage that is accessible, affordable, and relevant to their unique employment contexts.

#### Key Stakeholders & Roles:

- **Ministry of Labour:** Policy design and regulatory oversight.
  - **Gig Economy Platforms:** Facilitate worker enrolment and payroll deductions.
  - **Social Insurance Authorities:** Develop tailored schemes and service delivery.
  - **Worker Associations and NGOs:** Conduct outreach and capacity building.
-

**Coordination Tools:**

- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with gig platforms.
- Flexible contribution management systems.

**M&E Framework:**

- Enrollment and contribution rates among gig and freelance workers.
- Worker satisfaction and awareness levels.
- Financial sustainability analyses of flexible schemes.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Development of APIs to connect gig platforms with insurance systems.
- Communication materials adapted to diverse work contexts.
- Training of frontline staff on new worker categories.

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**3.6. Strengthen and Modernize the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) System**

*Improving the EPF system enhances retirement security and promotes formal savings culture among workers.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

**3.6.1. Digitize the entire EPF contribution and withdrawal process through a secure online member portal and mobile app, allowing workers real-time access to their accounts, balances, and transaction histories.**

- **Member Portal and Mobile App Development:** Build a secure, user-friendly digital platform accessible via web and smartphones that enables EPF members to register, view their account balances, track contribution histories, and initiate withdrawal requests anytime, anywhere.
- **Secure Authentication:** Implement robust multi-factor authentication methods such as OTPs, biometric verification, or national ID-linked logins to ensure data security and protect sensitive member information.
- **Real-Time Updates:** Enable real-time updates of contributions and transaction statuses, giving members transparent and immediate insights into their EPF activities.
- **Automated Notifications:** Send automated alerts via SMS or app notifications for contribution receipts, withdrawal approvals, and important deadlines to keep members informed and engaged.

- **Digital Document Management:** Allow members to upload and manage necessary documents for withdrawals or claims digitally, reducing paperwork and speeding up processing times.
- 

### **3.6.2. Simplify registration and contribution processes for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) by introducing easy-to-use digital payment solutions and streamlined compliance checks.**

- **User-Friendly MSME Portal:** Create a dedicated, simplified digital interface tailored for MSMEs to facilitate easy employer registration, employee enrollment, and contribution submissions.
  - **Multiple Payment Options:** Integrate diverse digital payment methods such as bank transfers, mobile money, credit/debit cards, and QR code-based payments to suit varied MSME preferences and capabilities.
  - **Automated Compliance Monitoring:** Develop backend systems to automatically verify timely contributions, flag delays or underpayments, and send reminders or penalties as necessary, reducing manual oversight.
  - **Integration with Tax and Business Registries:** Link EPF systems with tax authorities and business registries to streamline data sharing, improve compliance accuracy, and simplify employer reporting requirements.
  - **Capacity Building:** Provide training and online tutorials for MSME owners and payroll staff to navigate the digital tools effectively and understand EPF obligations.
- 

### **3.6.3. Enable EPF portability by integrating EPF accounts with the unified Integrated Social Insurance Platform, allowing workers to carry their benefits across jobs**

- **System Integration:** Develop interoperable digital infrastructure connecting EPF accounts with the Integrated Social Insurance Platform database, facilitating seamless transfer and consolidation of benefits.
  - **Universal Member IDs:** Use National Identity Card (NIC) numbers or similar unique identifiers to track worker accounts across multiple employers and sectors.
  - **Automated Portability Processes:** Create workflows that automatically update account statuses and transfer accrued contributions whenever a member changes jobs or employment sectors, minimizing paperwork.
  - **Member Notifications:** Inform workers of portability status and confirm successful transfers via SMS or portal alerts to maintain transparency.
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- **Policy Harmonization:** Align regulations and procedures across different schemes to remove barriers preventing portability, ensuring benefits continuity.
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Together, these steps will modernize the EPF system by making it more accessible, transparent, and responsive to member needs, while supporting employer compliance and facilitating the seamless movement of workers within the labor market.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **EPF Board:** Lead digital modernization and member services.
- **Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL):** Support digital payment infrastructure.
- **MSME Associations:** Facilitate employer compliance and awareness.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Ensure regulatory support and funding.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Digital member portals and secure payment gateways.
- MSME outreach and capacity-building programs.

**M&E Framework:**

- User adoption rates of digital platforms.
- Reduction in EPF processing times and errors.
- MSME compliance rates and contribution growth.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- IT infrastructure upgrade and cybersecurity measures.
  - Training for EPF staff and MSME employers on digital tools.
  - Customer service enhancements for member support.
- 

### **3.7. Enhance Accessibility and Impact of the Employment Trust Fund (ETF)**

*Strengthening the ETF improves financial support for employee welfare and incentivizes formal employment.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

#### **3.7.1. Fully digitize ETF contribution tracking and automate loan and withdrawal applications via online portals and mobile apps, reducing paperwork and processing time.**

- **Digital Contribution Tracking System:** Develop a secure, centralized digital platform that records all employer and employee ETF contributions in real time, allowing both parties to monitor payment status and history instantly.
  - **Online Loan and Withdrawal Applications:** Build user-friendly online portals and mobile applications where ETF members can apply for loans or withdrawal benefits,
-

upload required documents, and track the status of their applications without needing to visit offices physically.

- **Automated Processing Workflows:** Implement backend automation to validate application eligibility, verify documentation, and approve or flag cases for manual review, thereby significantly reducing processing time and minimizing human error.
  - **Electronic Notifications:** Send automated SMS and email updates to applicants about their application progress, disbursement dates, or any additional requirements, improving communication and service transparency.
  - **Secure Data Storage and Privacy:** Ensure all digital systems comply with data protection standards, safeguarding members' personal and financial information.
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### **3.7.2. Conduct nationwide awareness campaigns focusing on MSMEs and informal sector employers and employees to increase ETF coverage.**

- **Targeted Outreach Programs:** Design and roll out awareness campaigns using multiple media channels (radio, TV, social media, community meetings) that specifically address MSMEs and informal sector stakeholders, highlighting the benefits and obligations related to ETF participation.
  - **Employer Engagement Workshops:** Organize regional workshops and training sessions to educate MSME owners and informal employers on ETF registration processes, contribution requirements, and compliance benefits.
  - **Informal Worker Education:** Develop accessible educational materials (pamphlets, videos, mobile messages) in local languages explaining how informal sector workers can enroll in and benefit from ETF schemes.
  - **Partnerships with Trade Associations:** Collaborate with MSME chambers, trade unions, and civil society groups to leverage their networks for wider dissemination and support.
  - **Incentive Programs:** Consider temporary incentives or subsidies to encourage informal employers and workers to join the ETF, such as reduced initial contributions or penalty waivers.
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### **3.7.3. Expand the ETF loan portfolio to include products for skills training, affordable housing, and entrepreneurship financing to support workers' welfare and economic advancement.**



- **New Loan Products Design:** Develop diverse loan schemes tailored to workers' needs, such as low-interest loans for vocational or skills training, affordable housing loans, and microloans to start or expand small businesses.
  - **Partnerships with Financial Institutions:** Collaborate with banks, microfinance institutions, and credit cooperatives to co-finance or administer these new loan products efficiently.
  - **Flexible Repayment Terms:** Offer repayment schedules aligned with workers' income patterns, particularly for informal and gig economy workers who may have irregular earnings.
  - **Loan Application Support:** Provide assistance through digital platforms and support centers to help members understand loan eligibility, complete applications, and access funds.
  - **Impact Monitoring:** Track the uptake and outcomes of these loan products to ensure they contribute effectively to workers' economic well-being and social mobility.
- 

#### **3.7.4. Link ETF data systems with the Integrated Social Insurance Platform's platform to facilitate better coordination, portability, and transparency of benefits.**

- **Data System Integration:** Develop interoperable IT infrastructure to connect ETF records with the Integrated Social Insurance Platform databases, enabling seamless data exchange and unified member profiles.
  - **Benefit Portability:** Ensure ETF contributions and entitlements are transferable across different social insurance schemes, jobs, and geographic locations, supporting labor mobility without loss of benefits.
  - **Unified Member Dashboard:** Provide members with a single digital interface where they can view all their social insurance benefits, contributions, and claims status across multiple schemes.
  - **Administrative Efficiency:** Streamline processes for employers and administrators through shared systems, reducing duplication and improving data accuracy.
  - **Enhanced Reporting and Analytics:** Utilize integrated data to generate comprehensive reports on coverage, contributions, and claims, facilitating better policy decisions and financial management.
-

These measures will modernize ETF management, improve service delivery, broaden coverage particularly among MSMEs and informal workers, and strengthen the fund's role in supporting workers' financial security and economic advancement.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **ETF Board:** Lead digitization and product development.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Promote ETF awareness and compliance.
- **MSME and informal sector representatives:** Assist outreach.
- **Financial institutions:** Partner in loan product delivery.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Integrated digital platforms for ETF management.
- Public-private partnerships for product expansion.

**M&E Framework:**

- ETF coverage growth rates in target sectors.
- Loan disbursement volumes and repayment performance.
- Beneficiary satisfaction surveys.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- IT systems for loan processing and contribution tracking.
- Staff training on digital tools and customer service.
- Marketing and communication resources.

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### 3.8. Strengthen and Expand the Social Security Board (SSB) Schemes

*Enhancing the SSB's offerings ensures broader coverage for self-employed individuals, informal sector workers, and migrant laborers, promoting inclusive social protection.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

**3.8.1. Scale up the “Surekuma” pension scheme by simplifying enrollment processes and expanding eligibility criteria to attract more self-employed and informal sector workers.**

- **Simplified Onboarding:** Streamline the registration process by reducing paperwork, minimizing documentation requirements, and enabling self-registration through digital and in-person channels. Use national IDs and mobile verification to make the process quick and secure.
- **Expanded Eligibility:** Broaden the criteria to include a wider range of informal sector workers, such as daily wage laborers, domestic workers, small-scale farmers, fishermen, gig workers, and home-based workers. This inclusive approach ensures better coverage of marginalized populations.

- **Flexible Contribution Plans:** Introduce tiered contribution options to allow low-income and irregular-income earners to participate based on their financial capacity, with the possibility of upgrading to higher tiers over time.
- **Government Co-Contributions:** Consider targeted government matching or co-contributions for certain vulnerable groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, or workers in high-risk jobs) to encourage enrollment and improve long-term benefit adequacy.
- **Local Enrollment Drives:** Partner with community organizations, cooperatives, and local government bodies to facilitate enrollment drives and build trust among informal workers.

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### 3.8.2. Integrate SSB schemes with the Integrated Social Insurance Platform’s unified platform to improve portability of benefits and administrative coordination.

- **Unified Social Protection System:** Merge SSB records with the Integrated Social Insurance Platform’s digital platform to create a consolidated database of beneficiaries, contributions, and entitlements across all social protection schemes.
- **Portability of Contributions:** Allow workers to transfer or consolidate their contributions across different social insurance schemes (e.g., ETF, EPF, SSB) when changing jobs or moving between formal and informal sectors, ensuring continuous coverage and retirement security.
- **Data Synchronization:** Enable real-time data sharing between systems to track contribution histories, prevent duplication, and improve transparency in benefits delivery.
- **Integrated Service Delivery:** Develop common service centers and online portals where beneficiaries can access multiple schemes—pensions, health insurance, unemployment benefits—under a single interface, improving user experience and reducing administrative overhead.
- **Policy Alignment:** Harmonize policies across SSB schemes and the national authority to avoid fragmentation and ensure consistent rules for eligibility, benefits, and payouts.

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### 3.8.3. Develop user-friendly digital platforms for registration, contribution payments, and benefit claims, including mobile-friendly interfaces.

- **Comprehensive Digital Portal:** Build an intuitive, multilingual web and mobile platform where individuals can register, make or schedule contributions (e.g., via bank transfer or mobile money), update personal details, and submit benefit claims.

- **Mobile Optimization:** Ensure mobile-friendly access, given the high smartphone penetration even in lower-income communities. Include offline or USSD-based features for low-connectivity areas.
- **Automated Notifications:** Enable SMS/email alerts for upcoming payment deadlines, confirmation of contributions, or benefit disbursements to improve transparency and trust.
- **Secure Access:** Use two-factor authentication and biometric options where possible to protect user data and build confidence in digital systems.
- **Help and Support Channels:** Include chatbot services, toll-free hotlines, and video tutorials to assist users unfamiliar with digital tools.

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#### 3.8.4. Implement targeted public awareness campaigns emphasizing scheme benefits, especially in rural and underserved communities.

- **Localized Communication Strategies:** Use local languages and culturally relevant messaging to explain the benefits of the Surekuma scheme and how to enroll or contribute.
- **Diverse Media Platforms:** Disseminate information via radio, television, social media, community newspapers, and posters at marketplaces and religious institutions, ensuring outreach across demographic and literacy levels.
- **Community Ambassadors:** Train community leaders, Grama Niladharis, Samurdhi Development Officers, and social mobilizers to act as outreach agents, helping spread information and build trust.
- **Myth-Busting and Testimonies:** Address common misconceptions (e.g., that pensions are only for public sector workers) and share real-life stories of beneficiaries to demonstrate the value of participation.
- **Engagement at Key Events:** Leverage local festivals, mobile service camps, and government outreach events to conduct live enrollment and information sessions.

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These measures will significantly enhance the **reach, efficiency, and credibility** of the Surekuma pension scheme and other SSB schemes, ensuring broader **social protection coverage for informal and self-employed workers** in Sri Lanka.

#### Key Stakeholders & Roles:

- **Social Security Board (SSB):** Scheme administration and digital platform management.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Policy guidance and coordination.

- **Local Government and Community Groups:** Outreach and support.
- **NGOs:** Conduct awareness and education programs.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Centralized digital enrollment and claims system.
- Community engagement forums.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Enrollment and contribution statistics.
- Claim processing times and beneficiary feedback.
- Outreach effectiveness indicators.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Platform development and maintenance resources.
- Training for field staff and community educators.
- Funds for awareness and enrollment drives.

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### **3. 9. Enhance Role of National Insurance Trust Fund (NITF) in Social Protection**

*Strengthen the integration of NITF's insurance products into the national social protection architecture. NITF has statutory authority to provide affordable public-sector insurance (e.g., Agrahara health insurance, SRCC&T<sup>18</sup>, agricultural crop insurance) and reinsurance support across sectors*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

##### **3.9.1. Extend Public Access to NITF's Agrahara Medical Insurance Scheme to Informal Sector Workers**

The Agrahara Insurance Scheme, traditionally reserved for public sector employees, offers medical expense coverage and has been a crucial pillar of health security. However, informal workers — including estate laborers, smallholder farmers, fisherfolk, and self-employed individuals — are largely left out of this coverage, despite being highly vulnerable to health shocks and financially unstable.

- **Revise Eligibility Criteria:** Include informal sector occupations in the eligibility list for Agrahara benefits.
- **Subsidize Premiums:** Develop tiered premium structures based on income brackets, with government co-contributions for the poorest categories.

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<sup>18</sup> Insurance cover to all Strike, Riot, Civil Commotion & Terrorism

- **Enrollment via Grama Niladhari & Community-Based Organizations (CBOs):** Simplify sign-up by using community structures that already interact with informal workers.

The expected impact of these interventions includes significantly broader health coverage for millions of citizens who are currently uninsured, particularly those in the informal sector. By extending insurance access and integrating microinsurance schemes, the reforms will reduce catastrophic health expenditures among low-income families, shielding them from financial hardship due to illness or injury. Collectively, these measures will strengthen Sri Lanka's commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and advancing Sustainable Development Goal 3.8, which aims to ensure access to quality essential healthcare services and financial risk protection for all.

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### **3.9.2. Utilize SRCC&T Reinsurance Products for Social Shock-Responsive Support**

Sri Lanka has periodically experienced civil unrest, natural disasters, and strikes, often leaving poor communities without livelihoods or access to immediate financial aid. NITF's existing SRCC&T (Strike, Riot, Civil Commotion & Terrorism) reinsurance coverage — used in the private insurance sector — can be repurposed to offer public emergency relief.

- **Develop pre-agreed payout triggers** (e.g., in case of disaster declaration or curfew imposition) to deploy emergency financial support.
- **Establish shock-responsive social protection protocols**, allowing rapid transfer of cash, temporary shelter subsidies, or emergency health coverage to affected households.
- **Coordinate with Disaster Management Centre (DMC) and Divisional Secretariats** for verification and delivery.

The expected impact includes minimized livelihood loss during unrest or disasters, strengthened resilience among vulnerable populations, and increased public trust in insurance institutions as effective and responsive components of Sri Lanka's social protection system.

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### **3.9.3. Integrate NITF's Microinsurance Schemes into the National Social Insurance Platform**

NITF already offers several microinsurance products such as:

- Crop Insurance for farmers against harvest failure.
- Workmen's Compensation for workplace injuries or deaths.

However, these operate in silos, lack integration with national databases, and are underutilized by informal workers due to awareness, trust, and access issues.

- **Merge these schemes into a centralized digital social insurance platform, interoperable with other welfare systems.**
- **Facilitate single-window enrolment for multiple products (e.g., health, crop, life).**
- **Use mobile technology for awareness, policy management, and premium reminders.**

The expected impact includes expanded and seamless insurance coverage for risks faced by informal economy workers, increased uptake of insurance among rural and estate-based populations, and improved operational efficiency through reduced duplication and better coordination across beneficiary systems.

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### **3.9.4. Deploy Digital Membership Management and Claims Systems**

Manual processing and paper-based systems currently slow down claim settlements, allow room for fraud, and are inaccessible for remote populations. Digitizing the system will align NITF's service delivery with modern standards of e-governance and financial inclusion.

- **Link insurance accounts to National Identity Card (NIC) numbers to streamline identity verification.**
- **Build a mobile-accessible platform for:**
  - Policy enrollment
  - Premium payments (via e-wallets or post offices)
  - Claim submissions and status tracking
- **Integrate with the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) and national social protection dashboard to avoid overlap.**

The expected impact includes enhanced transparency, reduced fraud, and quicker claims processing, along with lower transaction costs for both beneficiaries and insurers. These improvements will foster greater trust and participation from the informal sector in national insurance schemes.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **National Insurance Trust Fund (NITF):** Product development and scheme administration.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Oversight and funding support.
- **Disaster Management Authorities:** Coordinate social shock response.
- **Agricultural and labor sector organizations:** Outreach and enrollment.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Digital integration platforms for membership and claims.
- Multi-sectoral coordination committees for social shock responses.

**M&E Framework:**

- Enrollment rates among informal and marginalized groups.
- Timeliness and adequacy of shock-responsive benefit payments.
- Fraud and claims audit reports.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Digital infrastructure for membership and claims processing.
- Staff trained in microinsurance and shock-responsive mechanisms.
- Funding mechanisms for emergency disbursements.

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**3.10. Strengthen and Expand Digital Pension Systems for Service Quality and Efficiency**

*The Department of Pensions has already taken important steps toward digital transformation, introducing e-pension services and related digital tools that have enhanced service delivery for retirees. Building on these achievements, further strengthening and expansion of digital systems will ensure more comprehensive lifecycle protection, streamlined administration, and resilience against emerging challenges such as cyber threats.*

**Operational Mechanism:****3.10.1. Consolidate and expand the deployment of secure, integrated pension management platforms across all District and Divisional Secretariats to cover the full spectrum of pension-related services.**

This will include scaling up and interlinking existing modules such as:

- E-pension services for real-time processing of payments, pension status tracking, and updates related to promotions, arrears, and retirement age adjustments.
- Widow and orphan registries to ensure timely, automatic transfer of benefits to eligible dependents upon the death of the primary pensioner.
- Death reporting modules integrated with civil registration systems (e.g., Registrar General's Department) to prevent erroneous payments and strengthen fraud control.
- Railway travel pass automation to simplify issuance and renewal of concessionary passes for pensioners.

All modules should be interoperable with national databases such as the Social Protection Registry and the National Identity Database, with secure biometric or PIN-based authentication.



Interfaces should prioritize accessibility through local language support and user-friendly design for elderly pensioners.

Training for district-level pension officers and mobile support services for remote communities will further enhance effectiveness. By building on the Department's existing digital infrastructure and achievements, this initiative will advance transparent, efficient, and citizen-centered pension services, contributing to the broader goals of social protection and digital governance in Sri Lanka.

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### **3.10.2. Implement structured change management programs and capacity-building workshops targeting both staff and pensioners to improve digital literacy and ease of adoption, drawing lessons from previous ransomware recovery experiences.**

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

Launch targeted digital literacy and change management initiatives for both administrative staff and pensioners, leveraging prior cybersecurity incident lessons to promote trust and ease of adoption.

As Sri Lanka expands digital pension management systems, successful implementation will require not only technological infrastructure but also a deliberate focus on human readiness. A well-structured change management program is essential to ensure that both administrative staff and pensioners—especially elderly and low-tech-literate users—can confidently transition to digital platforms.

This initiative should include the following components:

- **Structured Change Management for Administrative Staff:**
  - Develop training curricula focused on system operations, data protection protocols, troubleshooting, and client-facing support.
  - Deliver capacity-building sessions through a cascading model (national → district → divisional level) with training-of-trainers (ToT) modules.
  - Include scenario-based learning that incorporates case studies from previous ransomware or cyberattack incidents (e.g., system recovery protocols, communication strategies, secure backup practices).
  - Appoint "Digital Champions" within each Secretariat office to act as peer mentors and first responders for technical queries during the transition phase.

- **Digital Literacy Workshops for Pensioners:**

- Organize regular, community-based digital familiarization sessions using local languages and hands-on demonstrations.
- Focus content on how to use e-pension portals, understand SMS/email alerts, and verify benefit transfers or update personal data.
- Involve family members or caregivers where possible to create a supportive learning environment.
- Use printed guides with illustrated steps and hotline numbers for additional support.

- **Trust Building through Cybersecurity Transparency:**

- Share simplified briefings with users about how the systems are protected, what was learned from past cyber incidents (e.g., ransomware attacks), and how safeguards are now in place.
- Promote transparent communication in case of disruptions and involve pensioner associations in preparedness drills.

- **Monitoring and Feedback Loops:**

- Establish feedback mechanisms—such as short surveys or community forums—to gather user experiences and improve training content iteratively.
- Track uptake metrics and digital engagement to identify areas needing additional support.

Through these coordinated actions, the government can ensure smoother digital adoption, build trust in digital systems, and improve the overall success and resilience of Sri Lanka's pension modernization efforts.

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### **3.10.3. Utilize mobile and digital payment platforms such as LankaQR and GovPay to automate pension disbursements, reducing delays, minimizing cash dependency, and enhancing convenience.**

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

Integrate pension disbursement systems with mobile and digital payment platforms such as LankaQR and GovPay to ensure timely, secure, and convenient transfer of funds to pensioners.

Transitioning pension payments from manual, cash-based methods to automated digital platforms offers multiple operational and beneficiary benefits:

- **Automation and Timeliness:**

- Automated digital payments eliminate delays caused by manual processing, physical cheque clearance, or in-person collection requirements.
- Payment schedules can be programmed into the system, ensuring punctual monthly disbursements without human intervention or errors.
- Integration with pension management databases enables real-time updates and notifications for beneficiaries.

- **Enhanced Convenience for Pensioners:**

- Pensioners can receive funds directly into mobile wallets or bank accounts accessible via smartphones or basic feature phones, improving financial inclusion.
- For rural or immobile pensioners, digital payments reduce the need to travel long distances to collect cash, improving safety and comfort.
- Use of widely adopted platforms like LankaQR enables payments through QR code scanning at various retail outlets or banking agents, expanding access points.

- **Reduced Cash Dependency and Risks:**

- Lower reliance on cash mitigates risks such as theft, loss, or counterfeit currency handling during disbursement and collection.
- Digital payments reduce administrative costs related to cash handling, transportation, and security personnel.
- Digital trails enhance transparency and auditability, strengthening accountability in pension fund management.

- **Supporting Infrastructure and Outreach:**

- Government should ensure interoperability between pension databases and payment platforms for seamless fund transfers.
- Provide training and awareness campaigns to pensioners on using mobile wallets, QR code payments, and GovPay applications.
- Establish helpdesks and user support lines to assist pensioners facing technical challenges.

- **Monitoring and Feedback:**

- Track disbursement success rates, time-to-payment metrics, and user satisfaction to continuously optimize the digital payment process.

- Use data analytics to identify pensioners who may require additional assistance or alternative payment methods.

By adopting these mobile and digital payment solutions, the pension system becomes more efficient, accessible, and secure, significantly enhancing the service experience for millions of pensioners across Sri Lanka.

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#### **3.10.4. Strengthen cybersecurity protocols with regular backups, monitoring, and contingency plans to protect sensitive pensioner data and ensure uninterrupted services.**

##### **Operational Mechanism:**

Implement a comprehensive cybersecurity framework encompassing regular data backups, continuous system monitoring, and well-defined contingency plans to safeguard pensioner information and maintain uninterrupted pension services.

Given the critical importance and sensitivity of pensioner data, alongside growing cyber threats, the government must prioritize robust cybersecurity measures to protect this information and uphold trust in digital pension systems:

- **Regular and Secure Data Backups:**

- Schedule frequent automated backups of all pension management databases, including beneficiary records, payment histories, and identity information.
- Store backups securely in geographically separated, encrypted data centers or cloud environments to mitigate risks from localized physical or cyber incidents.
- Periodically test backup restoration processes to verify data integrity and recovery speed.

- **Real-Time System Monitoring and Threat Detection:**

- Deploy advanced intrusion detection and prevention systems (IDPS) that continuously monitor network traffic, user activities, and system behaviors for suspicious patterns.
- Use Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) tools to aggregate and analyze security logs, enabling rapid identification and response to potential threats.
- Maintain a dedicated cybersecurity operations center (SOC) staffed with trained analysts to oversee ongoing system health and threat mitigation.

- **Data Encryption and Access Controls:**

- Implement end-to-end encryption for data at rest and in transit to prevent unauthorized interception or tampering.
- Apply strict role-based access controls (RBAC), ensuring only authorized personnel can access sensitive pensioner data, with multi-factor authentication (MFA) reinforcing login security.
- Enforce least privilege principles, limiting data exposure to only what is necessary for each user's role.
- **Comprehensive Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plans:**
  - Develop detailed contingency plans outlining step-by-step procedures for responding to cyber incidents, data breaches, hardware failures, or ransomware attacks.
  - Establish backup communication channels and manual processing protocols to maintain essential pension disbursement functions during system outages.
  - Regularly conduct cybersecurity drills and simulations with pension office staff to ensure preparedness and rapid response capabilities.
- **Compliance and Audit Mechanisms:**
  - Align cybersecurity policies with national and international data protection standards (e.g., Sri Lanka's Personal Data Protection Act, ISO 27001).
  - Schedule periodic security audits, vulnerability assessments, and penetration testing to identify and remediate weaknesses proactively.
  - Engage independent third-party auditors to validate cybersecurity posture and build stakeholder confidence.
- **Capacity Building and Awareness:**
  - Train all pension office employees on cybersecurity best practices, phishing awareness, and incident reporting protocols.
  - Inform pensioners about safeguarding personal information and recognizing fraud attempts related to pension disbursements.

By embedding these cybersecurity measures, the government can ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of pension data, prevent service disruptions, and maintain the trust of pensioners and other stakeholders in Sri Lanka's digital pension management systems.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Department of Pensions:** Lead system implementation and service delivery.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Provide funding and policy oversight.

- **District Secretariats:** Execute digital services locally.
- **Technology Providers:** Support system development and security.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Change management frameworks and digital literacy campaigns.
- Cybersecurity incident response teams and protocols.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Pension payment timeliness and error rates.
- Digital literacy levels among staff and pensioners.
- System uptime and security incident reports.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Investments in digital infrastructure and cybersecurity.
- Training programs for pension staff and beneficiaries.
- Dedicated helpdesk and technical support units.

## **PILLAR 4: LABOUR MARKET & PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION**

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### **4.1. Implement Integrated Activation Services**

*Coordinated activation teams at local levels support social assistance recipients in accessing employment, training, and social services, facilitating sustainable economic inclusion.*

#### **Operational Mechanism:**

**4.1.1. Establish coordinated activation teams at District and Divisional Secretariat levels comprising social assistance officers, job counselors, vocational trainers, and social workers to support poverty alleviation cash transfer and other social assistance recipients.**

To effectively support individuals receiving social assistance, multi-disciplinary "activation teams" should be established at both District and Divisional Secretariat levels. These teams should include:

- **Social assistance officers** to ensure continuity of benefits and compliance with program conditions.
- **Job counselors** to guide individuals in exploring employment options based on their skills, interests, and labor market trends.
- **Vocational trainers** to provide advice on skill-building and link individuals to relevant training programs.

- **Social workers** to identify and address psychosocial or structural barriers (such as caregiving burdens, domestic violence, or mental health concerns) that may prevent beneficiaries from participating in economic activities.

These teams should meet regularly, coordinate case management, and work collaboratively with local government units, NGOs, and private sector actors to ensure a holistic approach to beneficiary empowerment and transition from welfare to work.

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#### **4.1.2. These teams will conduct needs assessments, develop individualized employment and training plans, and facilitate access to available labor market programs and social services.**

Each beneficiary will be treated as a unique case. Activation teams should:

- **Conduct comprehensive assessments** of skills, educational background, household responsibilities, health conditions, and barriers to work (transportation, childcare, discrimination, etc.).
- **Develop tailored employment activation plans**, identifying suitable career paths, training needs, and personal development goals aligned with local labor market demands.
- **Facilitate linkages to:**
  - National and local job placement programs
  - Government and NGO-run vocational training institutes
  - Microenterprise support schemes
  - Auxiliary services such as childcare, transport subsidies, psychosocial support, and healthcare services.

This personalized approach will foster dignity, improve self-reliance, and ensure that social protection programs are not only about income support but also serve as a springboard toward economic inclusion.

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#### **4.1.3. Develop an integrated digital platform linking social assistance databases with job vacancy registries, vocational training providers, and employer networks to streamline referrals and track beneficiary progress.**

To maximize efficiency and transparency, a national **activation information system** should be built to:

- **Digitally link the poverty alleviation cash transfer and other welfare recipient databases** to public and private job portals/vacancies, **TVET provider registries**, and **employer networks**.
- Allow activation teams to:
  - Refer individuals in real-time to job openings or training opportunities.
  - Monitor attendance, training completion, and job placement outcomes.
  - Track long-term beneficiary progress and re-entry into the labor force.
- Generate reports to evaluate the effectiveness of activation efforts and improve program design based on data analytics.

This platform should be mobile-responsive, multilingual, and secure, with appropriate role-based access for government, civil society, and employer partners.

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#### **4.1.4. Conduct outreach campaigns to increase awareness of activation services, focusing on marginalized groups such as women, youth, and disabled persons.**

Despite the availability of employment and training services, many beneficiaries—especially from marginalized groups—may remain unaware of or hesitant to access them due to cultural, geographic, or informational barriers. Therefore:

- **Community-based outreach programs** (via Grama Niladhari, community groups, and religious institutions) should be launched to raise awareness of activation services and opportunities.
- **Special focus should be placed on:**
  - **Women**, especially widows or single mothers, who may face additional caregiving burdens.
  - **Youth** with limited work experience or soft skills.
  - **Persons with disabilities**, who require tailored services, assistive technology, and accessible work environments.
- Outreach tools can include village-level workshops, mobile information vans, SMS alerts, radio and social media campaigns, and peer-mentor ambassadors.

By making activation services visible, relatable, and inclusive, more people will engage voluntarily in pathways to economic self-reliance.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Ministry of Labour:** Policy guidance and oversight of activation teams.



- **Department of Samurdhi Development:** Manage social assistance beneficiary data and coordinate activation efforts.
- **District and Divisional Secretariats:** Host and operationalize activation teams.
- **Vocational Training Authority & Employers:** Provide training opportunities and job placements.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Digital case management systems.
- Inter-agency coordination committees at district level.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Number of social assistance recipients enrolled in activation services.
- Job placement and training completion rates.
- Beneficiary satisfaction and economic outcomes surveys.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Training for activation team staff on counseling and digital tools.
- Development and maintenance of integrated digital platforms.
- Budget for outreach and transport support for beneficiaries.

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## **4.2. Promote Public Works and Green Job Opportunities**

*Community-based public works programs focused on climate resilience and sustainable infrastructure provide employment while supporting environmental and social objectives.*

### **Operational Mechanism:**

**4.2.1. Launch community-based public works programs focusing on climate-resilient infrastructure, environmental restoration, care economy (e.g., elder care assistants), and rural development.**

Public works programs should be redesigned and modernized to go beyond traditional road-building or land-clearing tasks. The aim is to create **productive, inclusive, and forward-looking employment opportunities** for low-income and vulnerable households. These community-based public works programs should be designed to:

- **Build climate-resilient infrastructure**, such as rainwater harvesting systems, flood-resistant rural roads, drought-resistant irrigation channels, and community shelters.
- **Restore environmental ecosystems**, including reforestation, mangrove restoration, watershed management, and soil erosion control—all of which have long-term social and economic benefits.

- **Develop the care economy**, by training and employing individuals—particularly women—as elder care assistants, child caregivers, and community health workers, thus addressing both employment and demographic care needs.
- **Advance rural development goals**, such as improving village access roads, irrigation systems, market sheds, sanitation facilities, and digital connectivity.

These programs should be community-owned, locally planned, and implemented with technical support to ensure sustainability and local empowerment.

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#### **4.2.2. Ensure predictable public works opportunities for poor households, providing income security during seasonal unemployment.**

One of the core principles of social protection is predictability of support. Therefore:

- Introduce a structured public works scheme where poor and vulnerable households are offered paid employment opportunities, particularly during the lean agricultural season or post-disaster recovery periods.
- Ensure payments are timely, fair, and gender-sensitive, with priority support for female-headed households, households with persons with disabilities, or households caring for elderly or chronically ill members.
- This approach provides short-term income relief while allowing households to better plan their finances and maintain food security, children’s education, and access to healthcare.
- Use digital payment platforms linked to mobile money or bank accounts to reduce leakages and increase transparency.
- The scheme could draw inspiration from international good practices but be flexibly adapted to the Sri Lankan context.

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#### **4.2.3. Collaborate with local government bodies to identify priority projects aligned with environmental sustainability and community needs.**

For public works to be effective and relevant:

- Establish mechanisms for **bottom-up project identification** through Village Development Committees, Pradeshiya Sabhas, or Divisional Secretariats.
- Projects must be:
  - **Geographically targeted** to reach the poorest and most climate-vulnerable areas.

- **Socially inclusive**, ensuring participation from women, youth, and persons with disabilities.
- **Environmentally sustainable**, with expert review of ecological impact.
- Local government authorities should be trained in **participatory planning, budget management, and performance monitoring**.
- Create a framework for **social audits**, allowing community members to review project effectiveness, quality, and transparency.

This decentralized, participatory model will enhance ownership, improve governance, and ensure that public works investments yield long-term benefits to the community.

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#### **4.2.4. Incorporate capacity building and skills development components in public works projects to improve participants' employability beyond the program.**

Public works should not be limited to labor-for-cash. They must be integrated with **skills upgrading and human capital development** to ensure participants can transition into more stable employment:

- Introduce **on-the-job training** in construction, environmental management, caregiving, agriculture, and digital literacy.
- Offer **certifications** in collaboration with vocational training institutions or the TVEC (Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission).
- Provide **life skills training** such as financial literacy, health awareness, basic IT skills, and communication skills.
- Establish **referral pathways** for public works beneficiaries to transition into microenterprise development programs, apprenticeships, or formal sector jobs.

This approach transforms public works from a temporary income solution into a **platform for long-term employability**, economic inclusion, and upward mobility.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Ministry of Labour & Ministry of Environment:** Joint program design and implementation.
- **Local Government Authorities:** Identification and management of public works projects.
- **Community-Based Organizations:** Mobilization and supervision of participants.
- **NGOs specializing in environmental and social protection:** Technical support.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Project management and payroll digital systems.
- Environmental and social safeguards frameworks.

**M&E Framework:**

- Number of households employed and days worked.
- Impact assessments on community infrastructure and environmental indicators.
- Participant skill improvement tracking.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Funds for wages and project materials.
  - Training for supervisors on environmental and social safeguards.
  - Monitoring and reporting tools.
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**4.3. Strengthen Enterprise Development Support**

*Providing seed capital, mentorship, and market linkages empowers youth, women, and returnee migrants to start and grow sustainable businesses, driving inclusive economic growth.*

**Operational Mechanism:****4.3.1. Provide seed capital grants, start-up toolkits, and mentorship programs targeting youth, women entrepreneurs, and returnee migrants to establish and grow small businesses.**

To stimulate inclusive economic growth and reduce dependency on welfare:

- **Seed capital grants** (not loans) should be provided to individuals with viable micro- or small business ideas, especially in low-income communities and underserved areas. These grants could range from LKR 50,000 to LKR 200,000, depending on the business plan and context.
- Provide **start-up toolkits** tailored to different sectors. For example:
  - Sewing machines and fabric for tailoring startups.
  - Toolsets for carpenters and masons.
  - Equipment for home-based food processing or catering.
  - Smartphones and basic tech gear for digital freelancers.

- Pair each grant recipient with a **mentor** through public-private partnerships or NGOs. Mentorship should cover both technical skills and business acumen, and include regular follow-up visits and troubleshooting support.
- **Targeted beneficiary groups** should include:
  - **Youth**, especially school leavers and those not in education, employment, or training (NEET).
  - **Women**, including those from female-headed households and survivors of domestic violence.
  - **Returnee migrants**, helping them reintegrate economically after displacement or overseas work, bringing in their acquired skills.

These programs should have clear eligibility criteria, transparent selection processes, and post-grant monitoring systems to ensure sustainability and accountability.

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#### 4.3.2. Facilitate linkages between small entrepreneurs and cooperatives, trade networks, and digital marketplaces to improve access to inputs, credit, and customers.

Entrepreneurs often struggle not because of weak ideas, but due to poor market access and fragmented supply chains:

- Strengthen or re-establish **producer cooperatives and savings groups**, enabling micro-entrepreneurs to benefit from economies of scale in purchasing inputs and distributing products.
- Establish partnerships with **wholesalers, retailers, and e-commerce platforms** to give small producers access to broader markets beyond their local communities.
- Facilitate connections with **microfinance institutions and banks**, allowing entrepreneurs to access working capital loans, insurance, and mobile banking services.
- Create **cluster-based linkages** to organize entrepreneurs around common value chains (e.g., organic farming, crafts, food processing, home-based digital services), allowing targeted support and branding opportunities.
- Encourage use of **collective marketing models** for women's groups and community-based enterprises, with branding that emphasizes local, ethical, or eco-friendly production.

Such integrated market linkage strategies will help small businesses move from survival to profitability, while building inclusive local economies.

#### 4.3.3. Develop incubation centers offering business development services such as financial literacy, marketing, and legal advice.

To promote sustainability and scale of micro-enterprises:

- Establish **local incubation hubs** in key urban and rural districts. These can be run by local authorities, chambers of commerce, universities, or development partners.
- Services offered should include:
  - **Business registration support** and compliance with local laws.
  - **Financial literacy training**, such as managing budgets, calculating profits, keeping records, and tax awareness.
  - **Marketing and branding assistance**, including social media promotion, packaging design, and customer engagement.
  - **Legal advice** on contract negotiation, licenses, and intellectual property for those with innovative ideas.
  - **Access to digital tools** such as accounting software, website templates, and online training.
- These centers should also host regular **entrepreneurship boot camps**, innovation challenges, and networking events.

This will not only boost survival rates of new businesses but also create a culture of entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic self-reliance.

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#### 4.3.4. Encourage use of digital platforms for business operations, including e-commerce and mobile payments.

The digital economy provides enormous opportunities to overcome geographic and financial barriers:

- Conduct **digital skills training** for entrepreneurs to use mobile phones for:
  - Online advertising (via Facebook Marketplace, WhatsApp Business, Instagram, etc.).
  - E-commerce platforms (Daraz, Kapruka, etc.) to sell products/services.
  - **Mobile payment apps** (e.g., eZ Cash, mCash, QR payments) for safe, cashless transactions.

- Promote adoption of **digital bookkeeping tools**, enabling entrepreneurs to track sales, manage inventory, and plan investments.
- Work with fintech providers and telcos to expand **low-cost digital solutions** and incentivize uptake through free trials or zero-rated data packages.
- Create **digital business directories** to help entrepreneurs reach broader customer bases.

Special attention should be paid to bridging the **gender digital divide**, ensuring that women-owned businesses are equally empowered with the tools and knowledge to thrive in the digital space.

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#### 4.4. Expand Skills Development and Reskilling Programs

*Demand-driven vocational training and reskilling initiatives equip workers—especially in caregiving, tourism, construction, and ICT—with the skills needed for sustainable employment.*

##### Operational Mechanism:

##### 4.4.1. Scale up demand-driven Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) with dual apprenticeship programs combining classroom instruction and workplace learning.

- **Dual Apprenticeship Model:** Establish a structured TVET system where students split their time between institutional learning and hands-on training at workplaces. Students would receive practical skills on-site with industry partners while also completing theoretical and soft skills training at vocational institutes.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):** Forge formal agreements between training institutions and private sector companies to create apprenticeship slots and co-develop training schedules.
- **Accreditation & Certification:** Ensure that both components (institute and workplace) are aligned with national qualification frameworks and lead to nationally/internationally recognized certification.
- **Incentives:** Offer incentives (such as tax benefits, recognition awards, or partial subsidies) to companies participating in apprenticeship schemes to ensure sustainability and wide uptake.

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#### 4.4.2. Prioritize training in sectors with high growth potential and labor demand, including caregiving, tourism, construction, and ICT

- **Labor Market Assessments:** Use real-time labor market intelligence and skills forecasting to identify industries with emerging employment opportunities. Update training priorities accordingly.
- **Sector-Specific Curricula:** Design modular and competency-based curricula tailored to specific industry needs. For instance:
  - **Caregiving:** Geriatric care, home nursing, disability support services
  - **Tourism:** Eco-tourism, hospitality management, tour guiding
  - **Construction:** Green building practices, safety certification, site management
  - **ICT:** Software development, cybersecurity, digital marketing, and data analytics
- **Gender Inclusion:** Ensure that training in male-dominated sectors (e.g., construction, ICT) and female-dominated sectors (e.g., caregiving) are accessible and appealing to all genders, through gender-sensitive recruitment and safe learning environments.

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#### 4.4.3. Collaborate with private sector employers to design curricula aligned with labor market needs and facilitate on-the-job training opportunities

- **Industry Advisory Boards:** Establish sector-specific advisory panels consisting of employers, industry bodies, and training providers to co-develop and regularly update training content.
- **Workplace Exposure:** Institutionalize internship and on-the-job learning components in all technical programs, allowing students to experience real-world applications of their learning.
- **Skills Matching Platforms:** Create digital platforms that match trainees and graduates with internships and apprenticeships offered by employers.
- **Quality Assurance:** Monitor employer engagement quality through periodic feedback from trainees, trainers, and supervisors to ensure the training relevance and practical skill development.

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#### 4.4.4. Implement continuous skills upgrading programs for workers to adapt to technological changes and economic shifts



- **Lifelong Learning Framework:** Institutionalize systems for workers to access short-term reskilling and upskilling modules throughout their careers, particularly in response to automation, digitization, and green transitions.
- **Flexible Learning Modes:** Provide blended learning options, including online courses, evening/weekend classes, and mobile learning units to cater to working adults.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** Expand the RPL system to allow experienced workers to gain formal recognition and certification for skills already acquired on the job.
- **Training Vouchers/Subsidies:** Offer government-subsidized training vouchers or digital learning credits to encourage continuous participation by workers and employers.

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These comprehensive interventions would ensure that the TVET system in Sri Lanka is inclusive, agile, and aligned with both national development goals and international labor market trends.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC):** Curriculum development and certification.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Program funding and regulation.
- **Employers and Industry Associations:** Training placement and standards input.
- **NGOs and Training Providers:** Deliver training and outreach.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- National skills registry and labor market information systems.
- Apprenticeship management platforms.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Enrollment and completion rates in TVET programs.
- Employment outcomes of trainees.
- Employer satisfaction with skill levels.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Expansion of TVET infrastructure and qualified trainers.
- Funding for apprenticeships.
- Monitoring systems for apprenticeship quality.

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### **4.5. Strengthen Migration Support and Reintegration Services**

*Comprehensive reintegration programs provide returnee migrants with business start-up support, psychosocial care, and skills training to facilitate their sustainable re-entry into the*

*local economy.*

### **Operational Mechanism:**

#### **4.5.1. Establish One-Stop Reintegration Centers Providing Business Start-up Support, Psychosocial Counseling, Skills Training, and Job Placement Services**

- **Integrated Service Hubs:** Create well-resourced Reintegration Centers at district or provincial level that offer multiple services under one roof, reducing fragmentation and accessibility barriers.
- **Business Start-Up Support:**
  - Provide business incubation assistance such as feasibility analysis, business plan development, and registration support.
  - Offer access to co-working spaces, market linkage advice, and local supplier connections.
- **Skills Training:**
  - Conduct skills gap assessments to determine additional training needs of returnees.
  - Offer short-term training in emerging and in-demand sectors such as caregiving, ICT, agro-processing, and green jobs.
- **Job Placement Services:**
  - Maintain a centralized database of job openings and match returnees based on qualifications, interests, and local opportunities.
  - Offer interview preparation workshops and CV writing support.
- **Psychosocial Counseling:**
  - Employ trained counselors to support returnees experiencing stress, trauma, or social isolation.
  - Provide family counseling to support reintegration into household and community life.

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#### **4.5.2. Facilitate Access to Financial Services Including Microcredit and Grants to Support Entrepreneurship Among Returnees**

- **Microfinance Access:**

- Partner with microfinance institutions and banks to offer low-interest loans tailored for returnees, with flexible repayment terms and grace periods.
- **Seed Capital Grants:**
  - Establish targeted grant schemes for vulnerable returnees (e.g., women-headed households, victims of exploitation, low-skilled returnees) to launch micro-enterprises.
- **Financial Literacy Training:**
  - Include budgeting, savings, and debt management in all reintegration programs.
  - Promote mobile banking and digital financial services for improved access and convenience.
- **Loan Guarantee Schemes:**
  - Introduce state-backed credit guarantee mechanisms to encourage private lenders to support returnee businesses with reduced risk.

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#### **4.5.3. Integrate Health and Psychosocial Care Services within Reintegration Programs to Address Mental Health and Social Challenges Faced by Returnees**

- **Health Screening and Referrals:**
  - Offer initial physical and mental health screenings upon return and provide referral pathways to public health institutions.
- **Mental Health Services:**
  - Train community health workers to detect and manage common mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, or PTSD among returnees.
  - Facilitate access to tele-counseling and peer support groups for returnees in rural or underserved areas.
- **Social Reintegration:**
  - Organize community dialogue sessions and sensitization programs to reduce stigma and promote social acceptance of returnees.
  - Include reintegration support for family members affected by the migration cycle (e.g., spouses, children).
- **Reproductive and Occupational Health:**
  - Provide sexual and reproductive health services, particularly for female returnees.

- Educate returnees on occupational safety if transitioning to new forms of employment or self-employment.

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#### **4.5.4. Coordinate with Destination Countries to Ensure Continuity of Support and Skills Recognition**

- **Bilateral Agreements:**

- Strengthen Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with labor destination countries to include provisions for skills certification, social security portability, and reintegration assistance.

- **Pre-Return Coordination:**

- Work with foreign missions and employers to identify returnees in advance and ensure planned, safe, and supported returns.

- **Migrant Engagement:**

- Leverage networks with Sri Lankans living abroad to provide mentoring, business advice, and knowledge transfer opportunities for returnees.
- Create online platforms connecting investors with returnee entrepreneurs and local cooperatives.

- **Skills Certification and Recognition:**

- Establish formal mechanisms for recognizing and certifying skills acquired abroad, especially in construction, hospitality, domestic work, and healthcare.
- Collaborate with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) authorities to issue recognition-of-prior-learning (RPL) certificates to returnees.

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These comprehensive reintegration strategies aim to ensure returning migrant workers are supported economically, socially, and emotionally, while leveraging their skills and experiences to contribute meaningfully to Sri Lanka's development.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism:** Lead reintegration policy and center operations.
- **Ministry of Labour:** Skills development and employment linkages.

- **NGOs specializing in migrant welfare:** Provide psychosocial and business support.
- **Financial Institutions:** Facilitate access to credit.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Reintegration service portals.
- Case management systems tracking returnees' progress.

**M&E Framework:**

- Number of returnees accessing reintegration services.
- Success rate of business startups and job placements.
- Beneficiary satisfaction and wellbeing assessments.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Trained counselors and business advisors.
  - Funding for grants and operational costs of centers.
  - Digital platforms for service coordination.
- 

#### **4.6. Empower Community-Led Village Development Programmes for Local Development**

*Mobilizing community councils to design and monitor household economic plans strengthens grassroots empowerment, coordinated service delivery, and sustainable livelihoods.*

**Operational Mechanism:**

##### **4.6.1. Establish Grama Niladhari (GN)-Level Community-led Councils**

**Comprising community leaders, Samurdhi Development Officers, Economic Development Officers, and local government representatives to design household-level economic development plans.**

**Purpose:**

To decentralize decision-making and empower local communities to lead inclusive and targeted development interventions at the grassroots.

**Key Features:**

- **Composition:**
  - Chaired by the GN officer.
  - Members include Samurdhi Development Officer, Economic Development Officer, Agricultural Extension Officer, Women Development Officer, Youth

Officer, local government representative (Pradeshiya Sabha), school principal, religious leaders, and respected community elders.

- **Functions:**

- Identify vulnerable households needing economic upliftment using social registry data and local insights.
- Facilitate participatory household profiling to understand existing skills, assets, and challenges.
- Develop **Household Economic Development Plans (HEDPs)** tailored to the family's needs (e.g., home gardening, dairy farming, small business start-up, vocational training).

- **Linkages:**

- Act as a coordination mechanism to align government livelihood programs, NGO support, and private sector opportunities with community needs.
- Ensure horizontal integration between welfare schemes and development initiatives.

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#### **4.6.2. Deploy Activation Teams to Provide Ongoing Support for Livelihoods, Vocational Training, and Social Integration at the Community Level**

##### **Purpose:**

To operationalize the plans developed by Community-led Development Councils and ensure sustained support and follow-up for households transitioning out of poverty.

##### **Key Features:**

- **Composition of Activation Teams:**

- Trained social mobilizers, community development officers, livelihood coordinators, and youth mentors.
- Attached to Divisional Secretariat offices but working closely with GN Divisions.

- **Functions:**

- Provide **door-to-door support** to households in implementing their economic plans.
- Facilitate enrolment in vocational training programs or connect to microfinance schemes and market access networks.

- Monitor household well-being, including school attendance of children, nutrition status, and income stability.
  - Conduct awareness sessions on financial literacy, rights and entitlements, and gender equality.
  - **Social Integration:**
    - Organize community-level events to promote social inclusion, particularly for households historically excluded or marginalized (e.g., estate families, persons with disabilities, women-headed households).
    - Mediate family or community conflicts that hinder livelihood improvements.
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#### **4.6.3. Utilize Data-Driven Five-Year Household Transition Plans Linked to Key Productive Inclusion Indicators**

##### **Purpose:**

To ensure targeted, measurable, and evidence-based pathways for households to transition from social protection to sustainable economic self-reliance.

##### **Key Features:**

- **Transition Plans:**
  - Developed per household in consultation with Community-led Development Councils and activation teams.
  - Include milestones over five years related to income generation, asset accumulation, skills development, and access to basic services.
- **Indicators May Include:**
  - Monthly household income thresholds.
  - Number of household members with formal or self-employment.
  - Ownership or use of productive assets (e.g., livestock, agricultural land, equipment).
  - Participation in community or market groups.
  - Enrollment in vocational or business training.
  - Reduction in dependency on welfare payments.

- **Technology Support:**
    - Use digital tracking dashboards to monitor progress at the GN and DS level.
    - Integrate household data with Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) and National Social Protection Database.
  - **Use of Results:**
    - Identify bottlenecks and re-align support.
    - Reward high-performing communities with additional resources.
    - Share success stories to inspire broader participation.
- 

#### **4.6.4. Foster Community Ownership and Accountability Through Regular Monitoring Meetings and Participatory Planning Processes**

##### **Purpose:**

To ensure sustainability and effectiveness of programs through inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance structures at the community level.

##### **Key Features:**

- **Monitoring Meetings:**
  - Held quarterly at GN-level with participation of households, council members, activation teams, and external observers.
  - Discuss household progress, implementation issues, and local development challenges.
  - Review use of local funds or grants and ensure community oversight of resource allocation.
- **Participatory Planning:**
  - Annual village development planning sessions with active engagement of all community segments including women, youth, elderly, and persons with disabilities.
  - Use visual and accessible tools such as community scorecards and problem trees.
- **Social Audits:**



- Invite civil society, media, and independent observers to periodically review activities and give feedback.
- **Capacity Building:**
  - Provide training to Community-led Development Council members on facilitation, conflict resolution, financial oversight, and inclusive governance.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:**
  - Establish complaint-handling systems and mobile platforms for households to share issues or suggestions confidentially.

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These measures together ensure a **bottom-up, inclusive, and sustainable approach** to household-level economic empowerment and social transformation, particularly in poor and vulnerable communities across Sri Lanka.

#### **Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment** -: Lead council establishment and coordination.
- **Divisional Secretariats:** Provide technical support and oversight.
- **Local Government and Community-Based Organizations:** Facilitate community engagement.
- **Economic Development Officers:** Deliver technical assistance and monitor progress.

#### **Coordination Tools:**

- Household economic data management systems.
- Community monitoring and reporting frameworks.

#### **M&E Framework:**

- Number of active Community-led Development Councils and households covered.
- Progress against household economic development targets.
- Community feedback on service delivery and support.

#### **Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- Training for council members and activation teams.
- Data collection and management tools.
- Funding for community activities and incentives.

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### **4.7. Strengthen Support for Migrant Workers and their Families**

*Enhancing services for migrant workers and their families ensures comprehensive social protection and facilitates successful reintegration.*

### **Operational Mechanism:**

#### **4.7.1. Expand the "Vigamanika Shramika" Pension Scheme to enhance long-term financial security for returning migrant workers.**

- **Objective:** To provide migrant workers with sustainable income security in old age, encouraging formal contributions and long-term economic planning.
- **Actions:**
  - **Increase Enrollment:** Introduce targeted campaigns (including at airport departure points, embassies, and village-level meetings) to register both outgoing and returning migrant workers in the pension scheme.
  - **Simplify Contribution Processes:** Enable digital payments via mobile platforms (e.g., **LankaQR**, **eZ Cash**) and establish auto-deduction systems through licensed foreign employment agencies or remittance channels.
  - **Policy Integration:** Link the scheme with national social protection and pension frameworks (e.g., NSSF, EPF) to ensure portability and avoid duplication.
  - **Flexible Options:** Introduce contribution tiers that suit different income levels and allow for temporary suspensions or catch-up payments when workers face financial constraints or repatriation.

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#### **4.7.2. Develop a centralized, NIC-linked digital platform providing migrant workers access to pre-departure orientation, insurance claims, remittance services, and reintegration programs**

- **Objective:** Create a seamless digital ecosystem to manage the entire migration cycle using the **National Identity Card (NIC)** as a unique identifier.
- **Platform Features:**
  - **Pre-Departure Services:** Provide access to mandatory training, rights information, contract verification, and embassy contacts.
  - **In-Migration Services:** Enable migrant workers to monitor and manage their **insurance coverage (e.g., health, life, job loss)**, and track remittances.
  - **Reintegration Support:** Offer digital registration for reintegration programs, including financial grants, employment services, and counseling.
  - **User Interface:** Make the platform multilingual (Sinhala, Tamil, English, Arabic) and mobile-responsive with biometric login and SMS updates.

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#### 4.7.3. Strengthen bilateral labor agreements with key destination countries to improve worker protection, rights enforcement, and dispute resolution mechanisms

- **Objective:** Ensure safer migration pathways, better working conditions, and legal redress for Sri Lankan migrant workers.
- **Approach:**
  - **Update MOUs:** Review and renegotiate bilateral labor agreements with GCC countries, South Korea, Malaysia, and other key destinations to incorporate:
    - Minimum wage guarantees
    - Enforcement of working hours and safety standards
    - Onsite grievance mechanisms
    - Recognition of social security contributions
  - **Monitoring:** Assign Labor Welfare Officers in embassies to proactively monitor employer compliance and support dispute mediation.
  - **Skill Certification Recognition:** Establish equivalence frameworks that enable Sri Lankan training and qualifications (e.g., NVQ) to be recognized abroad, enhancing employability and earnings potential.

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#### 4.7.4. Establish dedicated support centers offering counseling, financial literacy training, and entrepreneurship development services to migrant families

- **Objective:** Support the well-being of migrant families and improve their economic resilience during and after the migration cycle.
- **Support Center Services:**
  - **Psychosocial Counseling:** Address mental health issues related to long-term family separation, exploitation, or trauma faced by returnees.
  - **Financial Literacy Programs:** Teach household budgeting, safe remittance use, investment options, and debt management for both migrants and families.
  - **Entrepreneurship Development:** Provide business training and link families to microfinance institutions, cooperatives, and digital marketplaces for starting small ventures using remittances.

- **Geographic Coverage:** Prioritize high-migration districts (e.g., Kurunegala, Anuradhapura, Gampaha, Batticaloa) and integrate services with divisional secretariats.

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By implementing these detailed interventions, Sri Lanka can strengthen the socio-economic inclusion of migrant workers and their families while reinforcing circular migration as a sustainable development pathway.

**Key Stakeholders & Roles:**

- **Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment:** Manage pension scheme and support platforms.
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** Negotiate and oversee bilateral agreements.
- **Ministry of Finance:** Oversee fund management and subsidies.
- **NGOs and Community Organizations:** Deliver family support services.

**Coordination Tools:**

- Digital migrant services portals.
- Bilateral labor cooperation frameworks.

**M&E Framework:**

- Enrollment and benefit uptake rates under pension schemes.
- Migrant worker satisfaction with support services.
- Effectiveness of bilateral agreements in protecting rights.

**Capacity/Resource Needs:**

- IT systems for pension and service management.
- Trained counselors and financial advisors.
- Funding for migrant family support centers.

## **6.Implementation Plan**

### **6.1 Governance: Institutional Framework for Social Protection**

A sound governance structure is central to delivering an integrated, accountable, and rights-based social protection system. Sri Lanka will adopt a **multi-tiered governance architecture** with clear mandates, coordination platforms, and legal backing.

**Key Components:**

- **National Social Protection Committee (NSPC):** An inter-ministerial body to coordinate social protection initiatives.
  - Chaired by the President or Prime Minister.

- Includes Ministers of Finance, Social Empowerment, Health, Labour, Education, Women and Children, and Provincial Councils.
- Provides strategic oversight and inter-ministerial coordination.

### **Institutional Oversight and Responsibilities**

- **Oversight:** Functions can be managed under the Ministry of Finance.
- **Key Responsibilities:**
  - Implement social protection strategies.
  - Coordinate programs across relevant agencies.
  - Report on outcomes and progress.
  - Mobilize resources for social protection initiatives.
- **Systems Management:**
  - Oversee the Social Protection Management Information System (SP-MIS).
  - Supervise the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR).

### **Pillar-specific Lead Ministries:**

- **Social Assistance:** Ministry of Rural Development. Social Security and Community Empowerment
- **Social Care:** Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, and Ministry of Rural Development. Social Security and Community Empowerment
- **Social Insurance:** Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Labour
- **Labour Market Inclusion:** Ministry of Labour
- **Subnational Governance:**
  - Provincial Councils and District/Divisional Secretariats will lead localized implementation with support from national bodies.

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## **6.2 Coordination: Within and Beyond Government**

Effective implementation hinges on breaking down silos across government and enabling cross-sectoral and cross-level collaboration.

### **Internal Coordination:**

- **Inter-Ministerial Social Protection Working Group:**
  - Meets quarterly to align program implementation, data sharing, and budgeting.
  - Facilitates policy harmonization between contributory and non-contributory schemes.

- **Integrated SP-MIS and Unified Social Registry:**

- Digital platforms enabling interoperability across social assistance, health, education, insurance, and employment programs.
- Enables accurate targeting, duplication control, and portability of entitlements.

**External Coordination:**

- **Development Partners & Donors:**

- Sector working groups for technical assistance, capacity building, and joint financing.

- **Private Sector:**

- Engagement with gig platforms, employers, microfinance institutions to extend insurance and retirement schemes.

- **Civil Society and NGOs:**

- Implement community-based care models, monitor delivery, and support grievance redress mechanisms.

- **Academic and Research Institutions:**

- Collaborate on evaluations, innovation pilots, and training social protection professionals.

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## **6.3 Financing: Building a Sustainable and Inclusive System**

A mixed financing model will be adopted to ensure fiscal sustainability, equity, and scalability.

**Core Funding Modalities:**

**1. Basic Needs – Government Financed:**

- Funded through the national budget to guarantee minimum income security.
- Covers universal and poverty-targeted programs such as:
  - Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes
  - Elderly and disability benefits
  - Public works and food security programs

**2. Mandatory Contributions:**

- Formal workers and employers contribute to:

- EPF/ETF (to be consolidated into a unified pension fund)
- Agrahara and occupational insurance schemes
- Gradual inclusion of semi-formal and platform workers.

### **3. Voluntary Contributions:**

- Informal sector workers, domestic workers, and returnee migrants contribute to:
  - Micro-pension and micro-insurance schemes via mobile wallets or cooperative platforms.
- Government may provide matching contributions for low-income workers.

### **Additional Financing Strategies:**

- **Reallocation of inefficient subsidies** toward targeted cash transfers.
- **Levy on high-risk industries** (e.g., construction, ride-hailing) to fund injury insurance and maternity coverage.
- **Social Investment Bonds** and blended finance for enterprise development and caregiver training.

## **6.4 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E): Driving Performance and Learning**

A comprehensive and systematic Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework is critical to tracking the effectiveness of Sri Lanka's Social Protection Strategy, ensuring accountability to stakeholders, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement through evidence-based adaptive learning.

### **National M&E Framework**

- **Social Protection Results Framework**  
A results-oriented framework will be established to monitor progress across all four pillars of the strategy. This includes:
  - **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):**
    - Percentage of poor households covered by cash transfer programs.
    - Proportion of elderly population receiving formal care services.
    - Employment rates among targeted vulnerable groups (youth, women, migrants).
    - Rate of informal sector workers enrolled in social insurance schemes.

- **Annual Reporting:**
  - Detailed progress reports will be prepared annually and submitted to the Parliament and the National Social Protection Council (NSPC) to maintain transparency and political oversight.
- **Social Protection Research and Evaluation Unit**
  - Provides evidence-based assessments and supports policy research.
  - Conducts impact evaluations, social audits, and beneficiary surveys to measure program outcomes and social impact.
  - Publishes reports to guide policymakers and stakeholders.

### **Program-Level M&E**

- Each social protection program under the four pillars will incorporate a tailored M&E plan with:
  - **SMART Indicators:** Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound indicators directly aligned with national KPIs to facilitate consistent measurement.
  - **Baseline, Midline, and Final Evaluations:** Comprehensive data collection points to track program effectiveness over time. For example:
    - Baseline surveys to establish starting conditions for target populations.
    - Midline reviews to identify challenges and course-correct.
    - Final evaluations assessing overall impact and sustainability.
  - **Real-Time Monitoring Dashboards:**
    - Integration with the Social Protection Management Information System (SP-MIS) to provide up-to-date data on key outputs, such as graduation rates from poverty programs, number of care visits delivered, and job placements achieved through activation initiatives.

### **Adaptive Management**

- **Annual Learning and Review Forum:**
  - A multi-stakeholder forum involving government agencies, program implementers, beneficiaries, civil society, and development partners to review M&E findings.



- The forum will facilitate dialogue on successes, challenges, and necessary adjustments to program design or delivery.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:**
  - Establish structured channels for frontline staff and beneficiaries to provide ongoing feedback.
  - Civil society organizations will be engaged to conduct independent beneficiary feedback sessions, ensuring grassroots perspectives shape program refinement.
- **Grievance Redress and Resolution Tracking:**
  - Monitoring grievance mechanisms' performance through metrics such as response time and resolution rates.
  - Regular analysis of grievance data will identify systemic issues and inform policy and operational improvements.

**Table: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Sri Lanka's Social Protection Strategy**

<b>M&amp;E Component</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Key Activities / Features</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes / KPIs</b>
National M&E Framework	Overarching framework for monitoring all social protection pillars	- Develop Social Protection Results Framework with high-level KPIs- Annual progress reports to Parliament & NSPC	- % poor households covered by cash transfers- % elderly with care access- Employment rates for vulnerable groups
Social Protection Research and Evaluation Unit	Independent body for evaluation and research	- Conduct impact evaluations, social audits, beneficiary surveys- Publish reports to inform policy	- Quality and credibility of evaluations- Transparency in reporting- Evidence-based policy improvements
Program-Level M&E	Tailored M&E for each program within the four pillars	- Set SMART indicators aligned with national KPIs- Baseline, midline, final evaluations- Real-time	- Accurate program progress data- Timely identification of issues- Improved program performance

<b>M&amp;E Component</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Key Activities / Features</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes / KPIs</b>
		dashboards (SP-MIS integration)	
Adaptive Management	Mechanisms to learn from M&E and improve implementation	- Annual multi-stakeholder Learning & Review Forum- Frontline staff, beneficiary, civil society feedback loops- Grievance redress tracking and analysis	- Program adjustments based on evidence- Increased beneficiary satisfaction- Effective grievance resolution

## Annex 1:

### Institutional Strategic Directions for Social Protection in Sri Lanka

In developing a comprehensive and inclusive Social Protection Strategy for Sri Lanka, it is essential to align with the mandates, capacities, and ongoing initiatives of key government institutions. The institutional strategic directions outlined below are grounded in direct consultations with relevant stakeholders across the social assistance and social care pillars. These directions aim to maximize institutional synergies, reduce fragmentation, and foster coordinated delivery of services. By identifying the unique strengths and roles of each institution, the strategy ensures that policy interventions are contextually relevant, operationally feasible, and institutionally owned—thereby enhancing accountability, efficiency, and sustainability of the national social protection system.

**The following are the major institutions, though the strategy should not be limited to these and may also involve other relevant agencies**

#### 1. Welfare Benefit Board (WBB) Integration

**Strategic Direction WBB-1:** Leverage WBB as the digital anchor for social assistance and referral systems

**Interventions:**

- **WBB-1.1:** Expand the Welfare Benefit Information System (WBIS) to serve as a central digital backbone for all cash transfers, fully integrated with the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) and other ministries' MIS platforms.
- **WBB-1.2:** Establish transparent and independently audited eligibility and payment verification mechanisms to minimize inclusion/exclusion errors and political interference.
- **WBB-1.3:** Convene an inter-ministerial task force (DSS, MoH, NSPD, NSE, MWCA, DoL, SLBFE etc) to align cash disbursement mechanisms with care and referral pathways.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Data integration via NIC-linked identity systems.
- Tools for grievance redress at DS- and GN-level with mobile/public access.
- Direct-to-account payments including provisions for unbanked populations.

## 2. Department of Social Services (DSS)

**Strategic Direction DSS-1:** Position DSS as the operational hub for community-based social care and referral coordination

**Interventions:**

- **DSS-1.1:** Digitally map and register all care service providers across national, provincial, and divisional levels.
- **DSS-1.2:** Strengthen case management by training DSS officers and mobilizing Community Elder and Disability Care Facilitators at the GN level.
- **DSS-1.3:** Integrate DSS outreach and case data with WBB, MoH, and NSPD systems to enable coordinated service delivery.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Decentralization via budgeted provincial and DS-level units.
  - NVQ-aligned training and certification for social workers and caregivers.
  - Governance frameworks for coordinated service delivery at GN level.
- 

## 3. National Secretariat for Elders (NSE)

**Strategic Direction NSE-1:** Institutionalize eldercare across social assistance and care delivery frameworks

**Interventions:**

- **NSE-1.1:** Expand elder day-care, mobile home visits, and welfare outreach in high-density elderly districts.
- **NSE-1.2:** Establish integrated elder abuse reporting and response systems linked with DSS and MoH.
- **NSE-1.3:** Collaborate with MoH and DSS to pilot health-social care pathways for frail elderly and those with chronic conditions.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Digital elder registry linked through NIC and UBR.
  - Volunteer mobilization (e.g., youth, retirees) for care outreach.
  - Intergenerational awareness programming to reduce stigma and isolation.
-

#### 4. National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities (NSPD)

**Strategic Direction NSPD-1:** Mainstream disability inclusion across social protection systems  
**Interventions:**

- **NSPD-1.1:** Develop a disability registry interoperable with WBIS, UBR, MoE, and MoH systems.
- **NSPD-1.2:** Standardize disability certification and streamline benefit eligibility at DS/GN levels.
- **NSPD-1.3:** Expand independent living support via assistive-device provision, transport subsidies, and inclusive livelihood pathways.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Rollout accessibility compliance across public institutions.
- Cross-sector referral systems with DSS, WBB, and MoE.
- Pilot caregiver support programs and rehabilitation support for PwDs.

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#### 5. Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MWCA)

**Strategic Direction MWCA-1:** Integrate gender-responsive protection and support across social assistance & care

**Interventions:**

- **MWCA-1.1:** Link women and children's protection case files with cash-benefit systems for holistic support.
- **MWCA-1.2:** Enhance referral pathways for survivors of gender-based violence via helplines (1938/1929) and shelters.
- **MWCA-1.3:** Operate integrated facilities offering legal aid, counselling, vocational support, and cash benefits for women-headed households.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Shared MIS tracking of vulnerable women/children across sectors.
- Partnerships with NGOs and UNICEF for shelter and psychosocial services.
- Policy measures to reduce unpaid care work burdens and provide income support.

## 6. Ministry of Health – Policy and Planning (MoH PD Unit)

**Strategic Direction MoH-1:** Embed social determinants and care referral within health outreach systems

**Interventions:**

- **MoH-1.1:** Train PHMs in early detection of disability, frailty, malnutrition, and mental health within UBR-linked systems.
- **MoH-1.2:** Develop referral protocols between community clinics, DSS case management, and WBB assistance platforms.
- **MoH-1.3:** Integrate health facility data (elder, child, chronic illness) with social assistance databases.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Unified registries for health and social risk tracking.
  - Social prescribing models linking PHM detection to care services.
  - Expand mobile health-social outreach teams targeting vulnerable populations.
- 

## 7. Disaster Management Centre (DMC) and Other Relevant Agencies

**Strategic Direction DMC-1:** Institutionalize shock-responsive social protection through anticipatory systems

**Interventions:**

- **DMC-1.1:** Define early-warning thresholds that trigger pre-registered cash/in-kind disbursements via WBIS and DSS.
- **DMC-1.2:** Embed hazard vulnerability data into UBR to identify at-risk households (elder, PwDs).
- **DMC-1.3:** Collaborate with DSS, MoH, and WBB to adapt targeting and financing models for emergency contexts.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Formal disaster protocols integrating social protection actors.
  - Contingency funds at provincial level managed jointly by DMC and DSS.
  - Simulation drills and preparedness plans including social protection delivery. [Wikipedia](#)
-

## 8. Ministry of Plantation & Community Infrastructure

**Strategic Direction MPI-1:** Extend inclusive social protection to plantation and marginalized communities

**Interventions:**

- **MPI-1.1:** Coordinate with DSS and WBB to ensure plantation settlements are fully integrated into UBR and WBIS systems.
- **MPI-1.2:** Collaborate on infrastructure development (care hubs, roads, health links) to support service delivery.
- **MPI-1.3:** Deploy mobile hubs and outreach units for registration, health screening, and assistance in estates.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) with Regional Plantation Companies (RPCs) to establish and support community service centers.
  - Joint infrastructure-finance planning prioritizing access zones.
- 

## 9. Ministry of Finance / Finance Commission

**Strategic Direction FC-1:** Anchor performance-based fiscal transfers to support targeted social protection outcomes

**Interventions:**

- **FC-1.1:** Mandate provincial alignment with lifecycle-based targeting and UBR-based data as eligibility for block grant allocations.
- **FC-1.2:** Link finance transfers to outcome-based metrics (coverage, graduation, inclusion of elder & disability households).
- **FC-1.3:** Coordinate budgeting for contingency social assistance reserves in partnership with DSS and DMC.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Establish formulae for equitable transfers targeting elder, child, and PwD populations.
- Leverage Ministry of Finance data to monitor performance and equity in provincial allocations.

## 10. Department of Labour

**Strategic Direction DoL 1:** Strengthen formalization and social insurance coverage of informal sector workers

**Interventions:**

- **DoL 1.1:** Leverage Department of Labour networks and labor inspections to register informal workers and enforce minimum social insurance contributions.
- **DoL 1.2:** Develop simplified registration tools and outreach campaigns through field offices and digital platforms.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Integration with NIC-based digital ID systems for seamless registration.
  - Coordination with social insurance institutions to ensure compliance and portability.
- 

## 11. Employment Trust Fund Board (ETF)

**Strategic Direction ETF 1:** Enhance accessibility, digital management, and outreach of the ETF for improved employee welfare

**Interventions:**

- **ETF 1.1:** Digitize contribution and loan management platforms for ease of access by employees and employers.
- **ETF 1.2:** Expand awareness and simplified procedures to increase ETF enrollment in MSMEs and informal sectors.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Link ETF systems with national social insurance digital infrastructure.
  - Develop mobile apps and online portals to facilitate user interactions.
- 

## 12. National Insurance Trust Fund (NITF)

**Strategic Direction NITF 1:** Integrate and expand NITF's insurance products within the national social protection framework



**Interventions:**

- **NITF 1.1:** Extend Agrabara medical insurance and micro-insurance products to marginalized informal and rural sectors.
- **NITF 1.2:** Utilize SRCC&T reinsurance schemes for social shock-responsive payments in disaster and conflict zones.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Digital membership and claims systems linked with NIC and social insurance platforms.
  - Coordination with other insurance and social protection agencies for risk pooling.
- 

**13.Department of Pensions**

**Strategic Direction DoP 1:** Modernize pension delivery and enhance lifecycle protection for retirees

**Interventions:**

- **DoP 1.1:** Expand secure digital pension administration systems and mobile disbursement platforms.
- **DoP 1.2:** Strengthen staff capacity and beneficiary digital literacy for improved service quality.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Implement robust cybersecurity and data backup protocols.
  - Integrate pension databases with national digital ID and payment systems.
- 

**14.Social Security Board (SSB)**

**Strategic Direction SSB 1:** Broaden social security coverage for self-employed, informal sector, and migrant workers

**Interventions:**

- **SSB 1.1:** Expand enrollment in pension and insurance schemes for informal workers, with improved digital access.

- **SSB 1.2:** Increase awareness campaigns and integrate benefits with national social insurance platforms.

#### **Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Develop mobile and online registration and claims services.
  - Coordinate with migrant support services and formal insurance schemes.
- 

### **15.Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE)**

**Strategic Direction SLBFE 1:** Strengthen social protection and reintegration services for migrant workers and families

#### **Interventions:**

- **SLBFE 1.1:** Expand “Migrant Worker” pension scheme and develop a centralized digital platform for pre-departure and reintegration support.
- **SLBFE 1.2:** Enhance bilateral agreements and establish support centers for migrant families.

#### **Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Use digital tools for insurance claims, training, and reintegration tracking.
  - Collaborate with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and social protection institutions.
- 

### **16.Employees’ Provident Fund (EPF)**

**Strategic Direction EPF 1:** Strengthen and modernize the EPF system to enhance retirement security and promote formal savings

#### **Interventions:**

- **EPF 1.1:** Digitize contributions, withdrawal tracking, and member services via secure portals and mobile apps aligned with CBSL digital initiatives.
- **EPF 1.2:** Expand coverage to MSMEs with simplified registration and payment mechanisms.
- **EPF 1.3:** Improve transparency in investment management and reporting to members.
- **EPF 1.4:** Enable portability and integration with other social insurance schemes under a unified national system.

**Enabling Mechanisms:**

- Coordination with Ministry of Finance, Central Bank, and social protection digital platforms.
- Capacity building for employers and members on digital tools and benefits.

## Annex 2

### Social Protection Roadmap: 2025–2035

The Social Protection Roadmap serves as a practical implementation guide that translates strategic priorities into phased, actionable steps. It provides a clear trajectory for reform, identifying short-, medium-, and long-term interventions aligned with national development goals and fiscal realities. By sequencing reforms across policy, systems, institutional capacity, and delivery mechanisms, the roadmap ensures coherence, avoids duplication, and supports progressive realization of universal and lifecycle-based social protection. This roadmap is informed by evidence, stakeholder consultations, and global best practices, offering a structured pathway to build a resilient, inclusive, and integrated social protection system for all Sri Lankans.

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#### PHASE I: Foundation and Digitization (2025–2027)

**Objective:** Build institutional capacity, digitize systems, and launch pilot programs.

##### Pillar 1: Social Assistance

- Launch Unified Beneficiary Registry (pilot provinces) linked with NIC
- Design lifecycle-based assistance (elderly, PwDs, children)
- Initiate Aswesuma Graduation pilots in high-poverty areas
- Begin disaster-preparedness mapping with DMC, DSS
- Engage Department of Labour for informal worker registration pilots

##### Pillar 2: Social Care

- Draft National Long-Term Care Policy
- Begin care provider mapping and licensing
- Develop NVQ-aligned caregiver training framework
- Pilot elder health screenings and mobile outreach teams

##### Pillar 3: Social Insurance

- Digitize EPF and ETF contribution and withdrawal tracking
- Pilot Social Security Board informal sector pension scheme expansion
- Begin integrating National Insurance Trust Fund’s microinsurance products into national platforms

- Initiate digital pension service stabilization through Department of Pensions

#### **Pillar 4: Labour Market & Productive Inclusion**

- Establish district-level activation teams linking social assistance recipients to employment/training (pilot)
- Launch community public works programs focusing on climate resilience and care work
- Pilot seed capital and mentoring programs for youth, women, returnee migrants
- Scale TVET training with focus on caregiving, tourism, ICT
- Begin reintegration support centers for returnee migrants with SLBFE

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### **PHASE II: Expansion and Institutionalization (2028–2031)**

**Objective:** Scale programs nationally, consolidate institutional reforms, ensure integration.

#### **Pillar 1: Social Assistance**

- National roll-out of Unified Registry for all social assistance schemes
- Disability-sensitive targeting mainstreamed
- Emergency top-up systems formalized
- Integrate Community-led Development Councils for community targeting

#### **Pillar 2: Social Care**

- Universal caregiver certification and training
- Care pathways for transition-age PwDs
- Upgrade care centers in hazard-prone areas
- Link education and care pathways for PwD children

#### **Pillar 3: Social Insurance**

- Nationwide expansion of informal worker enrollment via Department of Labour
- Scale EPF and ETF digital systems with MSME inclusion
- Broaden Social Security Board scheme enrollment
- Strengthen NITF's role in public and informal sector insurance
- Enhance Department of Pensions digital disbursement platforms

#### **Pillar 4: Labour Market & Productive Inclusion**

- Expand activation services and digital linkage with social assistance
  - Guarantee minimum employment days in public works programs
  - Scale enterprise support programs (seed capital, mentoring)
  - Expand demand-driven TVET and apprenticeship schemes
  - Strengthen migrant worker support services and reintegration via SLBFE
- 

### **PHASE III: Sustainability and Resilience (2032–2035)**

**Objective:** Achieve universal coverage, integrated service delivery, and adaptive resilience.

#### **Pillar 1: Social Assistance**

- Near-universal lifecycle and household-based social assistance coverage
- AI/ML-driven dynamic targeting and program updates
- Expand Graduation to include microfinance, digital livelihoods
- Fully mainstream estate sector inclusion

#### **Pillar 2: Social Care**

- Full professionalization of care workforce
- Introduce long-term care insurance schemes
- Mandate inclusive infrastructure in public facilities
- Nationwide elder/disability resilience and preparedness campaigns

#### **Pillar 3: Social Insurance**

- Full integration and portability of EPF, ETF, SSB, NITF schemes under unified digital platform
- Comprehensive coverage for vulnerable populations (maternity, disability, child health)
- Mature digital registration, claims, and benefits management
- Strengthen social protection for migrant workers via SLBFE digital platforms and bilateral agreements

#### **Pillar 4: Labour Market & Productive Inclusion**

- Institutionalize activation services and integration with social protection

- Ensure sustainable green jobs and community infrastructure programs
  - Institutionalize enterprise support and market linkage systems
  - Scale lifelong skills development programs targeting priority sectors
  - Fully operational migrant worker reintegration and family support systems
- 

### **Cross-Cutting Enablers (2025–2035)**

- Strengthened inter-ministerial coordination including Department of Labour, EPF, ETF, SSB, NITF, Department of Pensions, SLBFE
- Unified digital infrastructure (NIC linkages, interoperable cloud platforms, social insurance portals)
- Gender-sensitive and inclusive programming with women-led community empowerment
- Integrated Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning systems driving adaptive management
- Multi-year social protection financing framework linked to fiscal transfers and donor co-financing
- Secure data-sharing protocols and privacy protections across institutions

## Annex 3

### Funding Options for Social Protection Strategies in Sri Lanka

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#### PILLAR 1: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

##### 1. Establish a Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR)

###### Government Funding Responsibility:

- Core funding for system development, hosting, and maintenance via national ICT budget.
- Operational costs for data integration and staff across involved ministries and agencies.

###### Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:

- Donor grants and technical assistance (World Bank, UNDP).
  - Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) with ICT firms for cloud services and cybersecurity.
  - User fees from private sector users (while ensuring free access for vulnerable groups).
  - Social Impact Bonds attracting private investors for social outcomes.
- 

##### 2. Develop and Strengthen Graduation Pathways

###### Government Funding Responsibility:

- Budget allocation for cash transfers, asset distribution, training, and program coordination.

###### Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:

- Microfinance institutions co-funding loans and savings for graduates.
  - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding for skills training and mentoring.
  - Results-based financing from donors linked to graduation achievements.
  - Support from community savings groups and cooperatives.
- 

##### 3. Implement Lifecycle-Based Targeting

###### Government Funding Responsibility:

- Funding data integration for lifecycle targeting systems and inter-agency coordination.
-



#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- International technical cooperation (UNICEF, WHO, UN Women).
  - Small contributory premiums or co-payments for formal sector beneficiaries.
  - Voluntary sponsorships from Sri Lankans living abroad and private donors.
- 

### **4. Build Shock-Responsive Social Protection Systems**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Maintain emergency social assistance reserve funds at multiple government levels.
- Support coordination and data integration with disaster management agencies.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Climate adaptation and humanitarian funds (Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund).
  - Insurance instruments like catastrophe bonds and regional risk pools.
  - Community-based mutual aid funds and private sector contributions.
- 

### **5. Establish Robust Monitoring and Exit Strategies**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Staff training and platform development for monitoring and case management.
- Funding appeals mechanisms and audit processes.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor grants for capacity building and tech improvements.
  - Civil society organizations supported by grants or crowd-sourcing for community monitoring.
  - Monetizing anonymized data analytics under strict privacy.
- 

### **6. Promote Integrated Graduation and Community Empowerment**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Funding local government, GN officers, and estate sector tracking activities.
-

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Estate companies and RPCs co-finance welfare programs through CSR or levies.
  - NGO and INGO grants for elder care and psychosocial support.
  - Volunteerism and in-kind community contributions.
- 

## **PILLAR 2: SOCIAL CARE**

### **1. Establish a Comprehensive National Care System**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Budget for care policy implementation, regulatory oversight, and infrastructure development.
- Support integration of health and social care services at provincial and local levels.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor grants targeting elder and disability care (e.g., WHO, HelpAge).
  - PPPs with private providers and NGOs for care service delivery.
  - User fees or co-payments on non-poor clients to subsidize care infrastructure.
  - CSR contributions supporting care facility upgrades and training.
- 

### **2. Strengthen Caregiver Training and Certification Systems**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund National Caregiver Training Institute (NCGTI) establishment and curriculum development.
- Provide subsidies for caregiver training and certification.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Tuition fees from trainees able to pay.
  - Donor-funded training scholarships and capacity building (e.g., GIZ, ILO).
  - Employer contributions through wage deductions or levies.
  - Philanthropic support for awareness campaigns.
-

### **3. Strengthen Care Economies and Support for Informal Caregivers**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Allocate resources to provide capacity-building, mentoring, and psychosocial support for informal caregivers within public service programs.
- Maintain caregiver registries and referral systems.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Community fundraising and local NGO partnerships.
  - Private sector CSR programs focused on caregiving support.
  - Microfinance and social enterprise models supporting caregiver income.
  - Volunteer networks providing respite and peer support.
- 

### **4. Develop Community-Based Care Networks**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund DS-level Social Care Units and training for GN-level care agents.
- Support digital tools for care tracking and referral management.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Local government annual budgets for operational costs.
  - Donor ICT grants for digital platform development.
  - Estate sector contributions via PHDT and RPCs.
  - Volunteerism and community in-kind support.
- 

### **5. Expand Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Social Care**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Administer grants, tax incentives, and quality oversight of private care providers.
- Manage PPP implementation units.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Private sector investments and CSR funding for care infrastructure.
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- NGO partnerships delivering community care services.
  - Co-financing from religious and community organizations.
- 

### **PILLAR 3: SOCIAL INSURANCE**

#### **1. Promote Inclusion of Informal Sector Workers in Social Insurance**

##### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund development of mobile/web platforms and co-contribution schemes.
- Support outreach and registration efforts via Department of Labour.

##### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Telecom partnerships providing subsidized connectivity and payments.
  - Donor technical assistance and awareness campaign funding.
  - Small voluntary contributions and premiums from informal workers.
  - Trade unions and NGOs mobilizing participation.
- 

#### **2. Consolidate Social Insurance Schemes for Greater Efficiency**

##### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Allocate resources for NSIA establishment, system integration, and regulatory reforms.
- Support change management and stakeholder engagement.

##### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Provide funding to support institutional development and strengthen IT systems.
  - Cost-sharing with existing schemes during transition.
  - Private sector IT providers offering subsidized or phased service delivery.
- 

#### **3. Ensure Universal Risk Protection for Vulnerable Populations**

##### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Finance subsidized/free insurance products and Paid Parental Leave schemes.
  - Support inter-ministerial coordination and monitoring.
-

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor-funded pilot programs and expansions (e.g., ILO, WHO).
  - Small co-payments from beneficiaries where feasible.
  - Employer contributions to shared parental leave funds.
  - International climate and health funds for disability and maternity coverage.
- 

#### **4. Implement Digital Registration and Benefit Portability**

##### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund NIC-linked platforms and cybersecurity measures.
- Support multi-channel registration infrastructure.

##### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor-funded digital literacy and capacity building programs.
  - PPPs with telecom and tech firms for platform hosting and maintenance.
  - User service fees on non-poor beneficiaries.
- 

#### **5. Expand Social Protection Coverage for Emerging Worker Groups**

##### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Develop regulatory frameworks and fund outreach to gig economy workers.

##### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- MOUs with gig platforms to share costs of enrolment and contribution collection.
  - Private sector funding for awareness and tailored scheme design.
  - Worker associations supporting education and peer networks.
- 

#### **6. Strengthen and Modernize the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) System**

##### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Finance digital modernization of EPF systems and staff training.
  - Support MSME compliance programs.
-

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Public-private partnerships for IT infrastructure and digital payment solutions.
  - MSME associations co-funding outreach and compliance incentives.
  - Service fees for premium account features.
- 

## **7. Enhance Accessibility and Impact of the Employment Trust Fund (ETF)**

### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund ETF system digitization and product expansion.
- Support awareness campaigns and partnerships.

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Financial institutions co-financing loan products.
  - Donor grants for capacity building and platform development.
  - Private sector CSR funding for skills training and housing loans.
- 

## **8. Strengthen and Expand the Social Security Board (SSB) Schemes**

### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Provide budget for scheme administration and digital platform maintenance.
- Finance public awareness and enrollment drives.

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- NGO partnerships and community group contributions.
  - Donor funding for digital enrollment systems.
  - Voluntary contributions from beneficiaries where possible.
- 

## **9. Enhance Role of National Insurance Trust Fund (NITF) in Social Protection**

### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Allocate funds for product development and integration with social insurance platforms.
  - Support emergency social shock benefit disbursements.
-

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Public-private partnerships for microinsurance scheme delivery.
  - Donor funds targeting disaster risk financing.
  - Sectoral organizations co-financing outreach and enrolment.
- 

## **10. Modernize the Department of Pensions for Digital Efficiency and Service Quality**

### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund digital pension management systems and cybersecurity.
- Support capacity building and change management.

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor support for digital transformation.
  - Private sector contracts for IT services and helpdesks.
  - Modest administrative fees on certain pension services.
- 

## **PILLAR 4: LABOUR MARKET & PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION**

### **1. Implement Integrated Activation Services**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Allocate budgets for activation teams, training, and digital case management systems.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor grants for platform development and outreach campaigns.
  - NGO partnerships providing job counseling and social work.
  - Private sector employer engagement for job placement support.
- 

### **2. Promote Public Works and Green Job Opportunities**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Fund wages, materials, and supervision for public works programs.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Environmental grants and climate funds (GCF, GEF).
  - Community co-financing and in-kind contributions.
  - Private sector CSR investments in green infrastructure.
- 

### **3. Strengthen Enterprise Development Support**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Provide seed capital, incubation center funding, and coordination.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Microfinance institutions and impact investors.
  - Corporate sponsorships and CSR funding.
  - Digital marketplace platforms sharing revenue.
- 

### **4. Expand Skills Development and Reskilling Programs**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Finance TVET infrastructure, trainers, and apprenticeship.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Employer co-investment in apprenticeships and curricula.
  - Donor funding for priority sector skill programs.
  - Trainee fees for non-poor participants.
- 

### **5. Strengthen Migration Support and Reintegration Services**

#### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- ~~Fund reintegration centers, grants, and~~ counseling services.

#### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Support through philanthropy and remittance-linked resources.
  - NGO partnerships delivering psychosocial and business support.
  - Financial institutions providing microcredit products.
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## **6. Empower Community-led Development Villages for Local Development**

### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Budget for council training, data management, and community activities.

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Local government co-funding and community contributions.
  - NGO and donor grants for rural development programs.
  - Volunteerism reducing paid staff needs.
- 

## **7. Strengthen Support for Migrant Workers and Their Families**

### **Government Funding Responsibility:**

- Finance pension scheme expansions, support platforms, and bilateral agreement management.

### **Alternative Funding Sources to Reduce Burden:**

- Donor funds supporting migrant welfare programs.
- Private sector partnerships for remittance and insurance services.
- Community-based family support services

## Annex 4: Summary Table of Social Protection Strategy for Sri Lanka with Globally-Informed Best Practices

Pillar & Strategic Direction	Global Good Practice Example	Key Features / Results	Sri Lankan Adaptation
<b>PILLAR 1: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE</b>			
1.1 Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR)	Brazil – Cadastro Único	Centralized digital registry, household interviews, linked to national ID, eligibility tracking	Integrate Aswesuma, Elderly Allowance, disability, children, and disaster relief programs into one digital registry with DS/GN-level access
1.2 Graduation Pathways	BRAC – Graduation Model (Bangladesh)	Cash support, skills, asset transfers, mentoring, savings; >95% lifted out of extreme poverty	2–3 year graduation track for Aswesuma families & urban informal workers; link to microfinance, TVET, enterprise grants
1.3 Lifecycle-Based Targeting	South Africa – Social Grant System	Age-specific benefits for children, elderly, disabled; 18+ million beneficiaries	Structured age-specific schemes beyond Aswesuma: universal/near-universal elderly pensions, child nutrition grants, disability allowances
1.4 Shock-Responsive Systems	Philippines – 4Ps + Emergency Top-Ups	Scalable cash transfers, digital/mobile payments, geographic targeting	Shock-response module in Aswesuma; mobile transfers; coordinate with DMC & Meteorology
1.5 Monitoring & Exit Strategies	Chile – Chile Solidario	Cash transfers + psychosocial support, home visits, family plans	Train Social Development/Samurdhi Development Officers as “case managers” to

Pillar & Strategic Direction	Global Good Practice Example	Key Features / Results	Sri Lankan Adaptation
			monitor progress and plan dignified exits
1.6 Integrated Graduation & Community Empowerment	BRAC + Chile Solidario Models	Household-level + community initiatives	Enhance local resilience, inclusion, social cohesion via community-driven projects alongside graduation programs
<b>PILLAR 2: SOCIAL CARE</b>			
2.1 Comprehensive National Care System	Japan – LTCI	Nationwide institutional & home-based care, payroll-tax funded	Unified care policy framework with service packages, public-private partnerships, budget allocations
2.2 Caregiver Training & Certification	Germany – National Care Training Framework	Structured vocational training, multi-level certification	National Caregiver Institute under NVQ; career pathways in elder, disability, early childhood care
2.3 Support for Informal Caregivers	Finland – Family Caregiver Support Scheme	Provide caregivers with access to respite care, health services, and mental health support	Counseling and other support for caregivers of bedridden elderly/disabled, especially rural/estate
2.4 Community-Based Care Networks	Thailand – Village Health Volunteers	Community volunteers support elderly/chronic illness; integrate with primary health	Recruit and train care coordinators with training/stipends
2.5 Public-Private Partnerships in Social Care	Singapore – Eldercare Centre Model	NGOs/charities deliver day care & health services with government co-financing	Fund NGOs, religious institutions, private providers for residential/day care,

Pillar & Strategic Direction	Global Good Practice Example	Key Features / Results	Sri Lankan Adaptation
			especially urban & estate areas
<b>PILLAR 3: SOCIAL INSURANCE</b>			
3.1 Inclusion of Informal Workers	India – eShram + PM-SYM	Digital registry, contributory pension, mobile/CSC registration	Mobile-based micro-pension & insurance schemes for farmers, domestic workers, fishermen, gig workers
3.2 Consolidate Social Insurance Schemes	Indonesia – BPJS Ketenagakerjaan	Health, pension, maternity, workplace injury; integrated platform	Harmonize EPF, ETF, farmers' pension, Agrahara schemes under National Social Insurance Platform
3.3 Universal Risk Protection	Thailand – UCS	Tax-funded health insurance; outpatient/inpatient/maternity coverage	Universal maternity & health insurance linked to NIC/Aswesuma
3.4 Digital Registration & Portability	Rwanda – Smart ID + Community Health Insurance	Mobile registration & premium payment; portable benefits	Portable digital social insurance ID tied to NIC for pensions, maternity, unemployment
3.5 Coverage for Emerging Worker Groups	Kenya – Gig Worker Social Protection Pilots	Platform-based contribution for ride-hailing/delivery workers	Partner with PickMe, Uber for auto-enrollment of gig workers into voluntary social insurance
3.6 Strengthen EPF System	Singapore – CPF	Multi-tier retirement savings; promotes formal savings	Strengthen EPF management & integrate digital platforms
3.7 Enhance ETF/EPF Accessibility	Malaysia – ETF/EPF Models	Centralized contributions; welfare support; flexible withdrawals	Digitally streamline ETF/EPF & integrate with social insurance platforms

<b>Pillar &amp; Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Global Good Practice Example</b>	<b>Key Features / Results</b>	<b>Sri Lankan Adaptation</b>
3.8 Strengthen SSB Schemes	India – SSB & State Models	Insurance for informal/self-employed/migrant workers	Expand SSB coverage to informal sector & returning migrants
3.9 Enhance NITF Role	Philippines – Integrated Government Insurance Systems	Affordable insurance, reinsurance support	Utilize NITF products (Agrahara, SRCC&T, crop insurance) to expand coverage
3.10 Modernize Department of Pensions	Estonia – e-Pensions	Fully digital, ID-linked, cyber-resilient	Digital modernization of pensions; ensure continuity & security
3.11 Paid Parental Leave & Work-Life Balance	Australia – Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme	Up to 18 weeks government-funded leave at minimum wage for eligible primary carers; can be shared between parents; linked to work history	Introduce a contributory national paid parental leave scheme, initially covering informal workers & SMEs; pilot maternity/paternity allowances to reduce workforce drop-out among women & support early childhood development
<b>PILLAR 4: LABOUR MARKET &amp; PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION</b>			
4.1 Integrated Activation Services	Chile – Chile Solidario	Conditional transfers + job training, mentoring, social services	Link Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programme recipients to NVQ training & local activation teams
4.2 Public Works & Green Jobs	India – MGNREGA	Public Works Employment Opportunities with a Climate and Rural Focus	Public works in rural/disaster-prone areas; climate resilience, caregiving, eco-tourism

<b>Pillar &amp; Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Global Good Practice Example</b>	<b>Key Features / Results</b>	<b>Sri Lankan Adaptation</b>
4.3 Enterprise Development Support	Ethiopia – Productive Safety Net + Enterprise Support	Grants, skills, mentoring for youth/female-headed households	Startup kits, interest-free loans, market linkages for youth, women, returnee migrants
4.4 Skills Development & Reskilling	Germany – Dual Apprenticeship System	Classroom + on-the-job training; nationally recognized certification	TVET + employer partnerships for care work, IT, tourism, construction
4.5 Migration Support & Reintegration	Philippines – Reintegration Program for Overseas Workers	Business support, livelihood training, psychosocial services	District-level reintegration units with enterprise support, counseling, training
4.6 Praja Shakthi Villages / Community-Led Development	India – AMUL Cooperative Model	Farmer-owned cooperatives; profit-sharing; women’s participation	Cooperative-led village enterprises; strengthen Cash Transfer Programmes CBOs; technical & market support
4.7 Support for Migrant Workers & Families	Philippines & Thailand – Comprehensive Migrant Support Programs	Financial, social, psychosocial services; family support	Extend services to migrant workers’ families; integrate with Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes/SSB; counseling, training, enterprise assistance

## Annex 5: Use of Global Good Practices to Inform the Strategy

The development of Sri Lanka’s social protection strategy began with a comprehensive review of global good practices in social assistance, social insurance, and social care. These international experiences offered valuable lessons on what works in designing inclusive, efficient, and integrated systems. Rather than replicating models, the process focused on identifying adaptable elements relevant to Sri Lanka’s institutional landscape, demographic trends, and development priorities. By grounding the strategy in globally recognized innovations—such as unified registries, life-cycle-based program design, digital delivery systems, and integrated care models—the framework ensures relevance, feasibility, and alignment with long-term national goals. This benchmarking exercise provided a foundational lens through which the strategy was shaped, ensuring it builds on tested ideas while remaining responsive to local realities.

### PILLAR 1: SOCIAL ASSISTANCE – GOOD PRACTICES BY STRATEGIC DIRECTION

#### 1. Unified Beneficiary Registry

*“Create an integrated, digital registry for all beneficiaries to improve targeting, transparency, and coordination.”*

##### Good Practice: Brazil’s Cadastro Único (Unified Registry)<sup>19</sup>

- **What:** A centralized, digital database of low-income households used across over 20 federal social programs.
- **Features:**
  - Collected through household interviews.
  - Continuously updated by municipalities.
  - Linked to national ID and used for eligibility, monitoring, and audits.
- **Relevance to Sri Lanka:**
  - Sri Lanka can replicate this by integrating **Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer, Elderly Allowance, Institutionalized/Street Children, Disability Assistance,** and disaster relief into one **digital social registry** with **DS/GN-level access**.

<sup>19</sup> /<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/integrating-data-information-management-social-protection-a1-brazil.pdf>

## 2. Graduation Pathways

*“Implement time-bound empowerment programs combining cash support, skills training, and enterprise development.”*

### ✓ Good Practice: BRAC’s Graduation Model (Bangladesh)<sup>20</sup>

- **What:** A proven program combining consumption support, skills training, productive asset transfer, mentoring, and savings support.
- **Results:** Lifted over 95% of participants out of extreme poverty across 10+ countries.
- **Relevance to Sri Lanka:**
  - Could be adapted for **Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programme families** and urban informal workers—especially in estate and rural areas—through a 2–3 year **graduation track** linked to microfinance, TVET, and enterprise grants.

## 3. Lifecycle Targeting

*“Design benefits tailored to specific stages and vulnerabilities (children, youth, working-age poor, elderly).”*

### ✓ Good Practice: South Africa’s Social Grant System<sup>21</sup>

- **What:** Provides different non-contributory benefits at key lifecycle stages:
  - Child Support Grant (under 18)
  - Foster Care and Disability Grant
  - Older Person’s Grant (60+)
- **Coverage:** Over 18 million beneficiaries; strong impact on reducing poverty and child malnutrition.
- **Relevance to Sri Lanka:**
  - Sri Lanka can shift toward **structured, age-specific assistance schemes** beyond Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes—for instance, universal or near-universal **elderly pensions**, child nutrition grants, and disability allowances.

## 4. Shock-Responsive Systems

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<sup>20</sup> <https://bracupgi.org/about-the-graduation-approach/#:~:text=Income%20Generation-,Income%20Generation,support%20to%20start%20a%20microbusiness.>

<sup>21</sup> <https://hsf.org.za/publications/hsf-briefs/what-the-south-african-state-does-for-the-poor-i-social-grants#:~:text=On%20average%2C%20the%20economy%20grew,of%20the%20child%20support%20grant.>



***“Introduce pre-defined mechanisms to expand benefits rapidly during crises.”***

**✓ Good Practice: Philippines’ 4Ps + Emergency Top-Ups<sup>22</sup>**

- **What:** The *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps)* can be temporarily scaled up during emergencies (e.g., typhoons, COVID-19).
- **Features:**
  - Digital cash transfers
  - Mobile money disbursement
  - Geographic targeting using disaster data
- **Relevance to Sri Lanka:**
  - Develop a **shock-response module** within *current or future Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes* using:
    - **Mobile cash transfers**
    - Triggered expansion in flood/drought zones
    - Link with **Disaster Management Centre (DMC)** and Meteorological Department

## 5. Monitoring and Exit Strategy

***“Use social contracts and progress tracking to ensure accountability and smooth exits from support.”***

**✓ Good Practice: Chile Solidario (Ethical Family Income Program)<sup>23</sup>**

- **What:** Combines cash transfers with **psychosocial support**, regular home visits, and a **family development plan**.
- **Features:**
  - Social workers support families to achieve agreed milestones (schooling, job search, health access).
  - Time-bound benefits with tracked improvement.
- **Relevance to Sri Lanka:**

<sup>22</sup> [https://pantawid.dswd.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/08152022\\_4ps\\_OM\\_print.pdf](https://pantawid.dswd.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/08152022_4ps_OM_print.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> [//efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/Chile Solidario \(Ethical Family Income Program\)](https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/Chile%20Solidario%20(Ethical%20Family%20Income%20Program))

- Sri Lanka can deploy trained **Social Development Officers** or **Samurdhi Development Officers** as “case managers” to monitor family progress and plan exits from Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfers into training, jobs, or micro-enterprise.

## **PILLAR 2: SOCIAL CARE**

*“Ensure dignity, support, and inclusion for dependent populations such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable children.”*

### **1. National Care System**

*“Build a nationally coordinated care system with defined entitlements, service standards, and shared financing mechanisms.”*

#### **Good Practice: Japan – Long-Term Care Insurance (LTCI)<sup>24</sup>**

- **What:** Nationwide long-term care system offering a mix of institutional and home-based services.
- **Features:**
  - Funded by a combination of payroll taxes and government subsidies.
  - Individual care plans assessed by professionals.
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Establish a **unified care policy framework** with defined service packages, public-private partnerships, and budget allocations for elder and disability care.

### **2. Caregiver Training and Certification**

*“Professionalize the care economy by standardizing training and creating career ladders in care work.”*

#### **Good Practice: Germany – National Care Training Framework<sup>25</sup>**

- **What:** Offers structured vocational training for professional caregivers.
- **Features:**
  - Multi-level certification (3-year nursing care degree, short-term courses).

<sup>24</sup> <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7533196/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/euryperia/germany/national-qualifications-framework#:~:text=The%20signing%20of%20the%20Joint,and%20laws%20relating%20to%20remuneration.>

- High employment rates and professional recognition.
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Create a **National Caregiver Institute** under NVQ system in partnership with MoH and MoSDW.
  - Offer career pathways in **elder care, disability care, and early childhood care.**

### 3. Support for Informal Caregivers

*Recognize and support informal caregivers as vital contributors to long-term care systems.”*

#### **Good Practice: Finland – Family Caregiver Support Scheme<sup>26</sup>**

- **What:** Municipalities pay stipends to informal caregivers caring for elderly or disabled relatives.
- **Features:**
  - Respite care services
  - Health check-ups and mental health support
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Offer a **monthly allowance** and counseling to caregivers of bedridden elderly and disabled persons, especially in the rural/estate sector.

### 4. Community-Based Care Networks

*“Build grassroots care ecosystems through trained, community-embedded actors.”*

#### **Good Practice: Thailand – Village Health Volunteers (VHVs)<sup>27</sup>**

- **What:** Community health volunteers support the elderly and persons with chronic illnesses in rural areas.
- **Features:**
  - Integrated with primary health care and local governments
- **Sri Lankan Application:**

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.redcross.fi/get-help-and-support/coping-as-a-family-caregiver/#:~:text=Coping%20as%20a%20family%20caregiver,-Photo:%20Eeva%20Anundi&text=Every%20day%2C%20the%20Finnish%20Red,Welcome!>

<sup>27</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/village-health-volunteers-unsung-heroes-thailands-health-crisis>

- Train care coordinators and provide them with ongoing support.

## 5. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

*“Leverage private and civil society capabilities to expand access to affordable, quality care.”*

### **Good Practice: Singapore – Eldercare Centre Model<sup>28</sup>**

- **What:** Day care and health services provided by NGOs and charities with government co-financing.
- **Features:**
  - Community-based elder support hubs
  - Publicly funded but privately managed
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Fund **NGOs, religious institutions, and private providers** to expand residential and day care centers for the elderly, especially in urban and estate areas.

## **PILLAR 3: SOCIAL INSURANCE**

*“Protect individuals and households against income loss due to lifecycle and work-related risks.”*

### **1. Informal Sector Inclusion**

*“Extend social insurance to all workers regardless of formality or contract status.”*

### **Good Practice: India – eShram + PM-SYM<sup>29</sup>**

- **What:** eShram digital registry and Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan pension scheme for informal workers.
- **Features:**
  - Voluntary contributions matched by government
  - Registration via mobile or CSCs (Common Service Centres)
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Develop **mobile-based micro-pension and insurance schemes** for farmers, fishermen, domestic workers, and gig workers.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.moh.gov.sg/newsroom/implementation-of-new-baseline-service-at-eldercare-centres-for-all-seniors>

<sup>29</sup> <https://labour.gov.in/pm-sym#:~:text=Matching%20contribution%20by%20the%20Central,Government%20as%20per%20the%20chart.>

## 2. Scheme Consolidation

*“Reduce fragmentation by building an integrated social insurance platform covering multiple risks.”*

### ✓ Good Practice: Indonesia – BPJS Ketenagakerjaan<sup>30</sup>

- **What:** Integrated employment insurance covering health, pensions, maternity, workplace injuries.
- **Features:**
  - Compulsory for formal workers, optional for informal
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Establish a phased roadmap, through broad stakeholder consultation, to harmonize EPF, ETF, farmers’ pension, and Agrahara schemes under a coordinated National Social Insurance Platform—ensuring cross-subsidization, institutional continuity, and system-wide efficiency

## 3. Universal Risk Protection

*“Guarantee essential health and income protections across the life cycle, especially for women and the poor.”*

### ✓ Good Practice: Thailand – Universal Coverage Scheme (UCS)<sup>31</sup>

- **What:** Tax-funded public health insurance for all, especially informal workers and the poor.
- **Features:**
  - Covers outpatient, inpatient, and maternity care
  - Linked with national ID
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Introduce **universal maternity and health insurance** for women, children, and informal workers, possibly linked to NIC and Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes databases.

## 4. Digital Registration and Portability

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.bpjsketenagakerjaan.go.id/>

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/Media.action;jsessionid=6JwatDJgFiS0LPK\\_z9bug5VbqT07fsTlkLGcOs6j7tx2QO-tXY1u!1905679859?id=15747](https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/Media.action;jsessionid=6JwatDJgFiS0LPK_z9bug5VbqT07fsTlkLGcOs6j7tx2QO-tXY1u!1905679859?id=15747)

*“Ensure continuity of protection by linking benefits to individuals rather than locations or employers.”*

✓ **Good Practice: Rwanda – Smart ID + Community Health Insurance<sup>32</sup>**

- **What:** Mobile-based registration and premium payment for Mutuelle de Santé.
- **Features:**
  - Integrated ID and mobile payment systems
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Build a **portable, digital social insurance identity** tied to NIC and used across pensions, maternity, and unemployment benefits.

## 5. Coverage for Emerging Worker Groups

*“Adapt social protection frameworks to evolving labor markets and digital platforms.”*

✓ **Good Practice: Kenya – Social Protection for Gig Workers<sup>33</sup>**

- **What:** Pilots to register ride-hailing and delivery platform workers into national insurance.
- **Features:**
  - Platform-based deduction of social security contributions
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Work with **platform companies** (e.g., PickMe, Uber) to facilitate **auto-enrollment** of gig workers into voluntary pension and health schemes.

## 6. Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance

*“Support labor force participation—especially among women—through paid parental leave and flexible work arrangements.”*

✓ **Good Practice: Australia – Paid Parental Leave (PPL) Scheme<sup>34</sup>**

<sup>32</sup> <https://support.irembo.gov.rw/en/support/solutions/articles/47001199252-how-to-apply-and-pay-for-community-based-health-insurance-mutuelle->

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.dlapiperafrica.com/en/kenya/insights/2024/protecting-labour-rights-for-gig-workers->

<sup>34</sup> [https://socialprotection.org/sites/default/files/publications\\_files/Social%20Protection%20Landscape%20in%20Australia.pdf](https://socialprotection.org/sites/default/files/publications_files/Social%20Protection%20Landscape%20in%20Australia.pdf)

- **What:** Provides up to 18 weeks of government-funded leave at minimum wage to eligible primary carers of newborns or newly adopted children.

- **Features:**

- o Linked to work history (330 hours in 10 of the 13 months before birth/adoption)
- o Can be shared between parents
- o Supplements employer-based leave

- **Sri Lankan Application:**

- o Introduce a contributory national paid parental leave scheme (initially for informal workers and SMEs), supported by social insurance funds.
- o Pilot with maternity and paternity allowances to reduce drop-out rates from the workforce among women and support early childhood development.



## **PILLAR 4: LABOUR MARKET & PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION**

*“Enable the poor and vulnerable to move into sustainable employment and income-generating opportunities.”*

### **1. Integrated Activation**

*“Combine income support with personalized activation to promote economic inclusion.”*



#### **Good Practice: Chile – Chile Solidario / Ingreso Ético Familiar<sup>35</sup>**

- **What:** Conditional transfers plus access to job training, family mentoring, and social services.
- **Features:**
  - o Personalized activation plans
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - o Link **Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programme recipients to NVQ training and job placement**, supported by Divisional activation teams.

### **2. Public Works and Green Jobs**

*“Provide predictable income and build community assets through public works tailored to climate and care needs.”*

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.chileatiende.gob.cl/fichas/20055-ingreso-etico-familiar-ief>

✓ **Good Practice: India – MGNREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act)<sup>36</sup>**

- **What:** Guarantees 100 days of wage employment for rural households.
- **Features:**
  - Focus on rural infrastructure and environmental assets
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Launch **employment guarantee programs** in rural and disaster-prone areas focused on **climate resilience, caregiving, and eco-tourism.**

### 3. Enterprise Development Support

*“Foster sustainable self-employment through targeted enterprise support and financial inclusion.”*

✓ **Good Practice: Ethiopia – Productive Safety Net + Enterprise Support**

- **What:** Offers business grants, skills, and mentoring to youth and female-headed households.
- **Features:**
  - Graduation through entrepreneurship
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Provide **startup kits, interest-free loans, and market linkages** to youth and returnee migrants.

### 4. Skills Development and Reskilling

*“Align skills systems with labor market demand, especially in care, construction, and services.”*

✓ **Good Practice: Germany – Dual Apprenticeship System<sup>37</sup>**

- **What:** Combines classroom instruction and paid on-the-job training.
- **Features:**

<sup>36</sup> <https://haryanarural.gov.in/mahatma-gandhi-national-rural-employment-guarantee-scheme-mgnregs/#:~:text=The%20Government%20of%20India%20passed,to%20do%20unskilled%20manual%20work.>

<sup>37</sup> [edefop.europa.eu/en/tools/apprenticeship-schemes/country-fiches/germany#:~:text=Apprenticeships%20are%20generally%20understood%20as,%20vocational%20education%20and%20training!](https://edefop.europa.eu/en/tools/apprenticeship-schemes/country-fiches/germany#:~:text=Apprenticeships%20are%20generally%20understood%20as,%20vocational%20education%20and%20training!)



- Nationally recognized certification
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Scale up **work-integrated training models** (TVET + employer partnerships), especially in care work, IT, tourism, construction.

## 5. Migration and Reintegration

*“Support returning migrants with livelihoods, counseling, and social insurance re-entry.”*

### ☒ **Good Practice: Philippines – Reintegration Program for Overseas Workers<sup>38</sup>**

- **What:** Business support, livelihood training, and psychosocial services for returning migrants.
- **Features:**
  - One-stop migration centers
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Create **Reintegration Units** at district level to support returning migrant workers with **enterprise grants, training, and housing finance**.

## 6. Cooperative-Based Productive Inclusion

*“Promote cooperative models to generate income and resilience among rural and vulnerable populations.”*

### ☒ **Good Practice: India – AMUL (Anand Milk Union Limited)<sup>39</sup>**

- **What:** A farmer-owned dairy cooperative that empowers small-scale producers, especially women, by providing fair prices, input support, and assured market access.
- **Features:**
  - Three-tier cooperative model (village → district → state)
  - Transparent profit-sharing, training, and capacity building
  - Women’s participation and income enhancement
- **Sri Lankan Application:**
  - Develop cooperative-led enterprise models in **dairy, spices, fisheries, floriculture, and crafts**, especially targeting **estate communities, Cash Transfer recipients, and female-headed households**.

<sup>38</sup> <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/system/files/practices-repository-files/5.-reintegration---reintegration-services-for-overseas-filipino-workers.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> <https://amul.com/index.php>

- Strengthen **Community-Led platforms** and other poverty alleviation community-based organizations with technical and marketing support.
- Facilitate market linkages and cold-chain/logistics infrastructure through public-private partnerships.

## Global Good Practices Summary Table for Sri Lanka's Social Protection Strategy

Pillar	Strategic Direction	Good Practice Country/Program	Key Features	Sri Lankan Adaptation Idea
<b>1. Social Assistance</b>	Unified Beneficiary Registry	Brazil – Cadastro Único	Centralized registry across programs, linked to ID	National digital registry integrating Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes, elderly, disability benefits
	Graduation Pathways	Bangladesh – BRAC Graduation	Cash + assets + skills + mentoring	Time-bound Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes' graduation linked to microfinance and skills
	Lifecycle Targeting	South Africa – Grant System	Grants for each life stage (child, disability, elderly)	Expand lifecycle-based support: elderly pensions, child grants
	Shock-Responsive Systems	Philippines – 4Ps + Emergency Scale-up	Scalable cash aid in disasters via mobile	Emergency top-ups during floods or inflation
	Monitoring & Exit Strategy	Chile – Chile Solidario	Social contract, case managers, tracked family plans	Case management for Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes with graduation plans
<b>2. Social Care</b>	National Care System	Japan – Long-Term Care Insurance	Universal, mixed-model care (home & institutional)	National elder/disability care system via mixed providers
	Caregiver Training	Germany – Certified Care Training	National curriculum &	Caregiver Training Institute with NVQ-

			certification levels	recognized courses
	Informal Caregiver Support	Finland – Family Caregiver Scheme	Allowances and respite care for informal caregivers	Monthly stipends and support for family caregivers
	Community-Based Care	Thailand – Village Health Volunteers	Volunteers integrated into primary care	Trained officers recruited and deliver community care services
	Public-Private Partnerships	Singapore – Eldercare Centres	Government-funded, NGO-run centres	Support PPPs for care centres in underserved areas
<b>3. Social Insurance</b>	Informal Sector Inclusion	India – eShram + PM-SYM	Voluntary micro-contributions with govt match	Mobile-based pensions/insurance for informal sector
	Scheme Consolidation	Indonesia – BPJS	Unified employment insurance platform	Integrate EPF, ETF, farmer pensions into national system
	Universal Risk Protection	Thailand – UCS Health Scheme	Universal tax-funded coverage	Subsidized maternity and health insurance
	Digital Registration	Rwanda – Smart ID + Community Health	Mobile-based ID-linked enrolment	NIC-based insurance with SMS payment options
	Emerging Workers Coverage	Kenya – Gig Worker Inclusion Pilots	Platform-based social security contributions	Partner with PickMe/Uber for social protection schemes
	Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance	Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance	Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance	Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance
<b>4. Labour Market &amp; Productive Inclusion</b>	Integrated Activation	Chile – Ingreso Ético Familiar	Transfers + case management + activation plan	Link Poverty Alleviation Cash Transfer Programmes to employment programs
	Public Works/Green Jobs	India – MGNREGA	Rural job guarantee, eco projects	Public works in climate resilience, caregiving
	Enterprise Support	Ethiopia – PSNP + Enterprise Grants	Business support for youth, women	Startup grants, market access for returnee migrants

	Skills & Reskilling	Germany – Dual Apprenticeships	Work-integrated vocational training	Industry-aligned TVET for key sectors
	Migration & Reintegration	Philippines – OFW Reintegration	Loans, skills training for returnees	District centers for migrant reintegration support
	Cooperative Enterprise Model	India – Amul Dairy Cooperative	Member-owned rural cooperatives with value chain links and income security through collective sales.	Promote agro/dairy cooperatives with cold storage, market access, and support via District/Divisional Secretariats.