

CONFERENCIA DE CLAUSURA

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Social protection in the End TB strategy: Action on the social determinants of tuberculosis

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Social protection corresponds to the package of social assistance and insurance coverage to reduce poverty, inequality, exclusion and barriers to accessing basic services by most vulnerable members of the society.

Social protection, a key component of the WHO's End TB strategy, has been upheld by Member States as an essential part of the response to TB in the Moscow Declaration to End TB (2017) and the political declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the fight against TB Overall, the majority of social protection schemes existing in countries are designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability of poor people. The purpose, target groups, scope of benefits and coverage provided by the various social protection programmes in each country vary widely, and reflects the existing social policies, the resources available, the weight of Social protection programmes include programmes focusing on alleviating poverty and inequality; programmes increasing access to essential services such as health and education; housing programmes; programmes targeting poor and vulnerable people, such as orphans and other vulnerable children, adolescent girls and young women, transgender

people and elderly people; and programmes that transform the social, political and economic environment in which people live.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC), defined as affordable access to effective care for all, is a crucial element of the package of services to address the needs of vulnerable people, and it is also critical to ensure access to quality TB diagnosis and treatment without facing financial hardship, interventions designed to defray or mitigate non-medical costs and income loss (beyond medical expenses) are equally key.

A promising role for social protection in the context of the TB epidemic is to prevent TB-affected households from incurring catastrophic costs, and ensuring equitable access to TB care, all this aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and appreciating that TB disproportionately affects poor households.

A variety of case of social protection case studies in low and middle-income countries are proving the feasibility to programmatically address food insecurity, job security and income for TB affected people. These programmes requires coordination within and beyond the health sector, with full engagement of civil society.