



# Assessing National Action on Children's Standard of Living



The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) commits nations to guaranteeing civil, political, social, and economic rights to children. This fact sheet series by the WORLD Policy Analysis Center examines the extent to which countries have enacted or passed laws and policies consistent with CRC commitments.

## Background

- The CRC emphasizes the importance of a standard of living that enables all children to survive, develop, and thrive (Article 27).
- The CRC further specifies that it is the responsibility of parents and guardians to secure adequate conditions of living and the responsibility of States Parties to assist in the implementation of this right by providing direct support and assistance to parents and children in need (Article 27). The CRC also explicitly recognizes children's right to social security (Article 26).
- Despite global declines in extreme poverty, approximately 400 million children still live in extreme poverty. These children lack access to basic resources such as adequate food, safe drinking water, secure shelter, decent sanitation, electricity, health care, and education. They are also at significantly greater risk of experiencing child labor and child marriage.
- Well-developed legislation and social policies can lift children and their families out of poverty.
  - Decent jobs and wages are fundamental to ensure adequate resources for caregivers to meet their children's needs.
  - Unemployment benefits provide caregivers with necessary income support to maintain an adequate standard of living for children.
  - Family benefits are another way countries can ensure access to basic resources for children, particularly in countries where many parents are employed in the informal economy.

## Findings

### Progress towards adequate minimum wages

- 12% of States Parties have no policy in place that guarantees working adults a minimum wage.
- An additional 23% of States Parties have a minimum wage that is less than \$2 per day in purchasing power parity adjusted dollars for a working adult and their dependent child, the commonly recognized global poverty line.

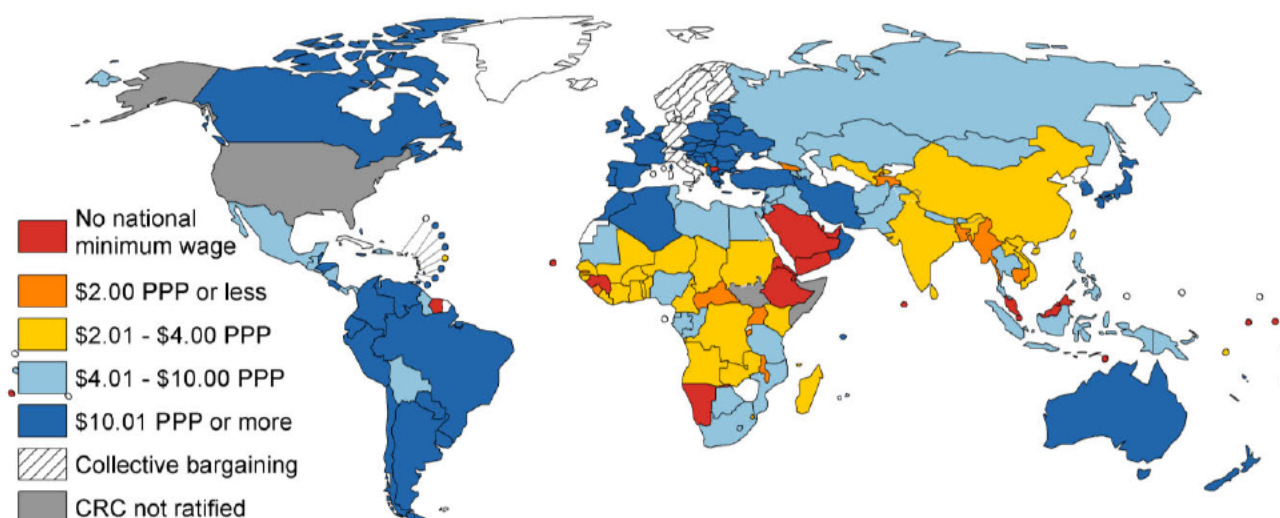
### Progress towards income protection during unemployment

- 90% of States Parties guarantee at least some form of income protection during unemployment.
- However, nearly half of States Parties (46%) only require employers to pay severance pay and do not provide for any unemployment through social insurance thus leaving out options to cover the informal economy.
- Only 16% of States Parties explicitly extend unemployment benefits to the self-employed, a group that includes some of the poorest parents in the world.

### Provision of cash benefits for families

- The majority of States Parties (57%) provide some form of family cash benefits that offer direct financial assistance to households. However, it is commonly small, underscoring the importance of wages for poverty exit.

## Map: At what level are minimum wages set per day?



Source: MACHEquity Poverty Reduction Database, 2013

### Table 1: Level of income protection during unemployment

Level of Protection	Countries
No income protection	18 (10%)
Severance pay only	82 (46%)
Government unemployment benefits, but self-employed excluded	52 (29%)
Government unemployment benefits with coverage available to the self-employed	28 (16%)

### Table 2: Provision of family benefits by level and country income group

Provision of Benefits	Low-income States Parties	Middle-income States Parties	High-income States Parties	Total States Parties
No known family cash benefits	19 (61%)	46 (48%)	13 (25%)	78 (43%)
Provided only in certain circumstances	1 (3%)	11 (11%)	5 (9%)	17 (9%)
Provided subject only to a means test	0 (0%)	19 (20%)	12 (23%)	31 (17%)
Provided without a means test	11 (35%)	20 (21%)	23 (43%)	54 (30%)

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