



## Newsletter 23: February 2013

### This Edition: Towards systems of social protection

Welcome to the twenty third issue of the [Centre for Social Protection](#) Newsletter. The CSP is a global network of academics, policy-makers, NGOs and others who are working together to mainstream social protection in development policy and build social protection systems and instruments throughout the developing world that are national, comprehensive, long-term, sustainable, and benefit the poor.

#### 'TALKING POINT' on Systems of Social Protection

Most countries of the world, South and North, have social insurance schemes. They are contributory and cover formal sector employees - government employees, workers in large domestic or international enterprises, and members of the military (see ISSA database). Conversely, as is well known, in most low-income countries, only a small - and privileged - fraction of the population is covered by any such forms of established social insurance.

The majority of the world's population, engaged on the informal economy, in agriculture or fisheries, as home-based workers, in invisible services, face enormous economic and social insecurities, income poverty, and systematic social exclusion. They lack any formal social security. But, over the past decade, social assistance programmes geared to address acute poverty or social exclusion have been introduced on an unprecedented scale in many regions of the world, as well-documented and analysed in work of the CSP. They take form of monthly cash transfers, food subsidies, school meals or education stipends, social pensions, or public employment schemes. According to the "Barrientos database", roughly 50 countries today provide some form of non-contributory social assistance, covering an estimated 10% of the world population (Barrientos et al 2010).

Most of the countries which have been proactively introducing these often large but usually fragmented social assistance programmes are increasingly looking at consolidating the programmes, to build a *system* of social protection. Indeed, an international consensus concerning social protection appears to be emerging (ESCAP 2011; Bachelet 2012; EC 2012; ILO 2012; UNICEF 2012; World Bank 2012), favouring a unified system of universal coverage, to be achieved progressively as resources permit, to address poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion; in some countries, social protection systems are also conceptualised as a means to address income inequalities, by directly linking social protection with tax reform. It is conceived of as a legally binding system in terms of entitlements and benefits, with special efforts to reach excluded and vulnerable groups, based on a notion of social solidarity. Many discussions now position social protection as a right, with the government as duty bearer. Other principles include transparency and accountability, and financial, fiscal and economic sustainability. Monitoring and periodic evaluations and complaint and appeal mechanisms need to be built into the system. There is also a general agreement that social protection needs to be in coherence with other social and economic policies, such as high-quality public service delivery and active labour market and employment policies.

But beyond the conceptual consensus, there are many challenges on the ground. In terms of strategy, a system can be built "top-down", by fostering processes of formalising the economy, so that all citizens move from the informal to the formal economy and become eligible for social insurance. However, this is likely to be difficult, since economies are typically becoming more casualised, in North and South, rather than more formalised. The alternative route would be

“bottom-up”, by universalising social assistance to cover all citizens - or even all residents - of a country, and funding this from universal, and progressive, taxation.

At the administrative level, countries have been creating citizens’ registries (India; Indonesia), “single window” access to social assistance (Cambodia; see ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific 2012), and introducing bank transfer modalities (Pakistan). At the managerial level, countries need to determine roles and responsibilities of respective governmental ministries and departments that often each administer separate social assistance schemes, and then create an overarching coordinative body (Cambodia, Myanmar). At the financing level, governments are undertaking actuarial calculations of population trends and the evolution of beneficiary entitlements over time, as well estimating the required budget, revenue collection, and fiscal space to reliably fund social protection over the long term.

But probably the most difficult challenge is political: to build coalitions or a social compact between tax-paying middle and high income groups and those who stand to gain initially from an enhanced and unified social assistance system (Hickey 2008).

So far, empirically documented experiences on creating a unified social protection system in low-income countries are rare. In all these areas, there is a major research gap. The Centre for Social Protection is currently drafting a working paper on Systems of Social Protection. Other policy makers, policy analysts, researchers working on systems of social assistance or social security or social protection are invited to share their papers and pointers.

### Literature

Michelle Bachelet 2011. Social protection floor for a fair and inclusive globalization. Report of the Advisory Group. ILO 2011. [http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS\\_165750/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_165750/lang--en/index.htm)

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ESCAP, 2011. The promise of protection. Social Protection and development in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok

European Commission 2012. Social Protection in European Union Development Cooperation [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/com\\_2012\\_446\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/com_2012_446_en.pdf)

Sam Hickey 2008. Conceptualising the politics of social protection in Africa. In A. Barrientos & D. Hulme (Eds.), Social Protection for the Poor and Poorest: Concepts, Policies and Politics. London: Palgrave. Holmes, R. (2008). Child Poverty: a role for cash transfers?

Sheela Murthy, Natalia Winder and Jennifer Yablonski 2012. Evolution of social protection systems: A comparative perspective of evidence from Indonesia, Ghana, Bangladesh and Ethiopia. Draft awaiting text

Yoshimi Nishino and Gabriele Koehler 2011. Social Protection in Myanmar: Making the Case for Holistic Policy Reform IDS working paper Volume 2011 Number 386. Brighton

World Bank 2012. Resilience, Opportunity and Equity. The World Bank’s Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012-2022. [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

## SOCIAL PROTECTION NEWS AND EVENTS:

### NEWS

#### IDS and Irish Aid Community of Good Practice on Graduation

In January 2013 the CSP and Irish Aid hosted an online discussion event on the topic of graduation, under a partnership agreement between Irish Aid and IDS on 'Hunger Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation'. The debate was extremely lively and thought provoking. One of the discussion convenors, Stephen Devereux, has posted a [blog](#) of his reflections of the discussion, and a full report of the discussion will be available in the coming weeks.

### PROGRAMME UPDATES

[Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium \(SLRC\)](#) is a six year global research programme exploring livelihoods, basic services and social protection in conflict affected situations. Three outputs are now available to view or download:

1. The full working paper - [“Growth and Livelihoods in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations”](#)
2. Briefing paper - [“Growth and livelihoods in conflict-affected situations: what do we know?”](#)
3. Blog post - [“Mind the gap: the fragile state of the impact evidence base”](#) which highlights a major challenge to evidence-based policy making: how do you justify programming choices when the evidence you need simply isn't there?

#### [Transforming Cash Transfers: beneficiary and community perspectives on social protection programming](#)

ODI has released [digital stories](#) from photography workshops run in Kenya and Mozambique where cash transfer beneficiaries shared, through photos and words, how transfers have affected their lives. The project is part of a larger DFID-funded research investigating beneficiary and community perceptions of cash transfer programmes in five countries. Country [reports](#) are now available and forthcoming synthesis report, policy brief and audio visual materials will be released over the next three months.

### EVENTS

#### *Forthcoming*

#### [Rethinking public works and social protection for the 21st century](#)

Overseas Development Institute, London. Wednesday 6th March, 12.30-14.00

The evolving role of Public Works is the theme of a joint ODI/World Bank lunchtime event to launch two books analysing the global application of these popular instruments:

- The World Bank's [Public Works as a Safety Net: Design, Evidence and Implementation](#) by Kalanidhi Subbarao, Carlo del Ninno, Colin Andrews and Claudia Rodriguez-Alas;
- [Public Works and Social Protection in Sub-Saharan Africa: Do Public Works Work for the Poor?](#), by Dr Anna McCord, published jointly by Juta Press and the United Nations University.

#### [Putting resilience into practice - what works?](#)

British Red Cross Conference, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2013, Senate House, University of London

The first British Red Cross conference on resilience provides an opportunity to:

- share experiences and lessons on how resilience building works in practice
- understand how we all can effectively contribute to building resilience

The conference will focus on the principles and practices which build resilience in the UK but international comparative perspectives are also welcome.

### Child Poverty and Social Protection Conference

Jakarta, 10-11 September 2013

This conference is jointly organized by Bappenas, UNICEF Indonesia, and The SMERU Research Institute.

Call for papers: Abstract submission, 28 February 2013

### International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) Annual Thematic Conference

Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, India, September 28-30

The theme of the conference is: *The Roles of Work, Food and Cash in Overcoming Poverty* and the deadline for abstracts is the 1st April 2013.

### *Recent*

### Civil Society Platform for Social Protection Social Protection Conference

Freetown Sierra Leone, 17 July 2012

The theme of the conference was the Campaign for the National Policy on Social Protection in Sierra Leone.

### SOCIAL PROTECTION TRAINING COURSES

#### Africa Social Protection Training Course for European Commission Staff

Addis Ababa 26<sup>th</sup> February - 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013.

The Centre for Social Protection is providing this training course for EC staff across the Africa region.

#### Social Protection in Developing Countries and Qualitative Research Methods

International Summer School 12-25 May 2013 (University of Cape Coast, Ghana)

The International Center for Development and Decent Work at the University of Kassel in Germany and the School for Graduate Studies and Research, University of Cape Coast in Ghana, are collaborating to organise a two-week Summer School on Social Protection in Developing Countries and Qualitative Methods.

Deadline for submitting applications: 22 February 2013.

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Social protection Adviser and National Programme Manager, Nigeria

Save the Children are recruiting for two new roles in Nigeria for a large-scale nutrition and cash transfer programme, the Child Development Grant Programme. The DFID-funded programme will deliver cash transfers to 60,000 pregnant women and women with children under the age of two by 2017 to improve nutritional status, working closely with the state and federal governments. Deadline for applications: 12 February 2013.

Social Protection Adviser who will provide technical leadership to the programme. The post holder will be a social protection expert, with experience in designing and implementing cash transfers programmes at scale.

National Programme Manager to lead and manage the programme overall. The post holder should have experience of designing and/or delivering large scale (in excess of £10m) programmes and proven experience of working in large consortiums.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS:

### Equal Opportunities for All? - A Critical Analysis of Mexico's Oportunidades

IDS working paper 413 CSP working paper 007 December 2012, Martina Ulrichs and Keetie Roelen

This paper examines Mexico's CCT Oportunidades and whether its theory of change on building human capital sufficiently takes into account the constraints indigenous beneficiaries face in overcoming the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

### Migration as social protection - is that really the point?

ODI blog 17 December 2012, Jessica Hagen-Zanker

In the context of declining government and aid budgets and low levels of social protection, this Blog challenges assumptions that labour migration and private transfers will fill the gap caused by patchy or declining public transfers.

### Preparing for an Uncertain Future: Expanding Social Protection for Children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

UNICEF Policy and Strategy Social Protection Series, Social and Economic Policy Working Briefs, August 2012, Deolinda Martins, Elena Gaia

### Strengthening Social Protection for Families and Children in the Republic of Congo

UNICEF working paper November 2012, Anthony Hodges, Clare O'Brien, Lisile Ganga

UNICEF has published a paper by Oxford Policy Management which summarises the nature of poverty and vulnerability in Congo-Brazzaville, outlines the existing social protection system, and carries out microsimulations of the cost and impact of a range of different cash transfer options.

### To condition or not - is that the question? An analysis of the effectiveness of ex-ante and ex-post conditionality in social cash transfer programs

Ph.D. dissertation, Maastricht University 2012, Esther Schüring

This dissertation identifies factors that determine how conditionality and targeting influences the effectiveness of social cash transfers, drawing on uniquely designed experiments, survey and qualitative data.

### Underwriting the Poor: A Global Fund for Social Protection

UN Human Rights Council Briefing Note 07, October 2012 Magdalena Sepulveda and Olivier de Schutter

The Special Rapporteurs call for the creation of a Global Fund for Social Protection (GFSP) with two key functions: a) a *facility branch* which would close the funding shortfall for putting in place a social protection floor in least developed countries (LDCs); b) a *reinsurance branch* to help underwrite schemes against the risks of excess demand triggered by major shocks.

### Walking for nothing

The Kathmandu Post 9 December 2012, Sony KC

This article provides a personal account of the impact of the universal social pension in Nepal.

## SECRETARIAT:

The Centre for Social Protection network now has over 1000 members. If you have events, research, or publications to promote, or are looking for partners or people with particular skills, send us an email and we will look to include it in future newsletters and e-mails. If you know others who you think would want to be part of the Centre, please ask them to email [socialprotection@ids.ac.uk](mailto:socialprotection@ids.ac.uk) to be added to the mailing list.

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