



Newsletter 24: May 2013

This Edition: Nutrition and Social Protection

Welcome to the twenty fourth 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'

Social protection programmes can have a significant impact on the nutrition of families and vulnerable groups within families. The way this happens depends on what is known about how income and other resources brought to families can be directed to the nutritionally vulnerable, and this usually requires special design factors in the programme. There is a 'window of opportunity' that opens during pregnancy and closes at about two years of age, and the consequences of poor nutrition during this period are severe and largely irreversible - consequences that are physical in terms of growth, resistance to infection and intellectual performance. Social protection programmes through their design, nature of resource transfer and targeting have to be fashioned to recognise how resources are distributed in communities and families.

The evidence shows that this can be done with significant success, thereby setting up a social protection system which addresses the intergenerational transmission of poverty. There is a growing appreciation that properly designed social protection programmes can be a powerful instrument in reducing poverty and improving nutrition of vulnerable groups. Here are some key issues:

- Social protection programmes can enhance income and its control and if directed largely towards mothers, this increased income can improve nutritional status. Income or in-kind transfers are often not enough: they need to be augmented by ways which direct the resources towards vulnerable groups (by income, nutritional status or age group). Size, type and frequency of transfer are key issues.
- Conditional and unconditional have differing impacts: conditional in-kind transfer such as school feeding, take-home rations and school based health and nutrition programmes all have different impacts.
- Various existing types of social protection programmes such as public works, community development and social funds, microfinance and insurance can all have nutrition benefits if designed with vulnerable groups and their carers in mind.
- Social protection programmes can also encourage linkages with health programmes and also with specific nutrition related activities such as education and micro nutrient supplementation.

There are several large social protection programmes that incorporate nutrition objectives: most are in Latin America but there is a growing number in Africa and Asia. Mexico's *Oportunidades* includes health checkups for all family members twice a year with pregnant women and malnourished children under two having monthly health education sessions. Brazil's *Bolsa Familia*, Bolivia's *Bono Juana Azurduy*, Dominican Republic's *Solidaridad* and Colombia's *Familias en Accion* all have similar features, while Guatemala's *Mi Familia Progres*a also incorporates growing monitoring, deworming, folic acid and vitamin A supplementation. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India has been to increase spending on food. Cash for work programmes in Bangladesh have showed significant gains in height and weight of young children. Many of the Latin America programmes mentioned above have showed improved growth of children.

Nutrition and social protection resources:

Nutrition indicators that can be used for monitoring and evaluating social protection programmes include: anthropometric measures of status (e.g. weight for height, height for age); food consumption, (various measures that show the nature of intake), dietary diversity (various well tested family level methods) and the engagement with primary health care services, health and nutrition education campaigns.

Details of the work on social protection and nutrition for the Transform Nutrition project (of which IDS is a partner)

<http://www.transformnutrition.org/research/indirect-interventions/social-protection/>

A recent issues paper drafted by FAO for on SP and nutrition for the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wa_workshop/docs/SocialProtection-Nutrition_FAO_IssuePaper_Draft.pdf

The role of social protection in tackling food insecurity and under nutrition in Vietnam (ODI)

<http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/6185-social-protection-food-insecurity-undernutrition-vietnam>

Social Protection and Child Malnutrition in Ethiopia (SCF)

http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/social_protection_Ethiopia_briefing.pdf

SCF: A Life Free From Hunger - see Chapter 3

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/life-free-hunger-tackling-child-malnutrition>

[World bank: Improving Nutrition through Multi-sectoral Approaches](#) (pdf)

SOCIAL PROTECTION NEWS AND EVENTS:

NEWS

[The Government of The Gambia and United Nations join forces to strengthen Social Protection systems in the country](#)

In March 2013 a wide-ranging Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Social Protection was signed between the Government of Gambia and nine UN institutions who have committed themselves to intensify their partnership in order to support the adoption of inclusive and integrated social protection systems - the set of public and private policies and programmes aimed at preventing, reducing and eliminating economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation.

BLOGS

[Povertics blog](#)

Recent posts from members of the Centre for Social Protection at IDS include:

[Can Social Protection Floors guarantee food security?](#) By Stephen Devereux

[Towards Systems of Social Protection](#) by Gabriele Koehler
[Transformative Graduation?](#) By Stephen Devereux

Pension watch blog

Recent blog posts: Dr Damilola Olajide asks whether the social pension in Ekiti State is effective, Janet Duffield introduces HelpAge and IESE research in Mozambique, Andie McPherson explores the transformative impacts of Uganda's social pension and Smart Daniel reports on a recent study tour by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Government of Zanzibar to Mauritius.

PROGRAMME UPDATES

Concern Worldwide DR Congo

In 2011-2012 Concern Worldwide in DR Congo, funded by UNICEF, piloted a small scale cash transfer as part of a wider programme delivering emergency assistance to displaced communities and host families through voucher fairs. Working in collaboration with Jenny Aker of Tufts University, Concern investigated the effectiveness of cash transfers versus voucher fairs for responding to the needs of displaced communities and host families in eastern DRC. The [final research report](#) can be found here along with a [working paper](#) (pdf) published by Centre for Global Development

From Protection to Production (PtoP)

The From Protection to Production project is studying the impact of social cash transfer programmes on household economic decision making and the local economy in 7 sub-Saharan countries. The Project is led by FAO and implemented in collaboration with UNICEF, with funding from UK Department for International Development (DFID) and additional support from the European Union. Three country reports on [Kenya](#) are now available and forthcoming policy briefs will be released in the next weeks

Progress of the Inter-American Social Protection Network Knowledge Platform

The IASPN Knowledge Portal was launched seven months ago with the objective of making available to the Latin America and the Caribbean Social Protection Community a tool to share up-to-date and relevant resources on social protection, promote their work, discuss current issues with peers, and facilitate interaction between different social policy actors in the hemisphere. The Knowledge Platform now includes members from 23 countries of the Americas and the Caribbean region, and has incorporated more than 500 resources -between documents, links, videos, etc.- which represents the largest open-source of knowledge on social protection in the southern hemisphere.

Inter-American Social Protection Dialogues (IASPDs): "Social Protection from the perspective of the Social Charter of the Americas"

The IASPDs are a quarterly series of webinars and virtual discussions, sponsored by the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN), which seek to promote the exchange of ideas and solutions on social protection in the Americas. The 2nd and 3rd editions held on February 28 and April 18 in [Spanish](#) and [English](#) respectively, provided a space to discuss the importance of the Social Charter's principles in the development and implementation of comprehensive social protection policies, as well as the implications of its Plan of Action.

The [Expanding Social Protection Programme in Uganda](#) has just published the April 2013 newsletter. The newsletter (pdf) can be accessed [here](#).

SOCIAL PROTECTION TRAINING COURSES

Forthcoming:

Rwanda Training of Trainers Social Protection course

Kigali, Rwanda May 2013

Members of the Centre for Social Protection will be in Kigali to deliver a "training of trainers" social protection training course. The course will build the capacity of Government officials, to help them deliver future social protection training courses at the national and district levels.

Assessing the feasibility, fiscal cost and impact of national social protection floors

International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin, Italy 8-12 July 2013

This advanced quantitative course is designed to help governments in making informed decisions and developing fact based rationale for their social protection extension strategies.

Academy on social security

International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin, Italy, 23 September - 4 October 2013

The Academy on Social Security offers an opportunity to benefit from a diversified training package on social protection policy, governance, financing and extension of social protection systems.

Recent:

European Commission Africa Social Protection Training Course

In February, the CSP provided a training course for 25 members of the EC working across delegations in Africa.

OPPORTUNITIES

Senior Social Protection Specialist, Laos

Maxwell Stamp are seeking expressions of interests from senior social protection specialist for an upcoming Ausaid program in Indochina. For full job description please refer to pdf link above.

NEW PUBLICATIONS:

Banking on Food: The state of food banks in high-income countries

IDS Working Paper 415 CSP Working Paper 008 Ugo Gentilini

Food banks provide food to charities and other grassroots organisations for supporting vulnerable populations. As such, they tend to complement more institutionalised, state-provided safety net programmes. This paper is a first attempt to estimate the total number of people supported by food banks in high-income countries (HICs).

Bolsa unfamiliar

Pathways' Perspectives #9: Stephen Kidd and Karishma Huda

The paper assesses the evidence on Brazil's social security system and reveals that the real hero driving down poverty and inequality in Brazil is the old age pension paid at the level of the minimum wage.

Common Ground: UNICEF and World Bank Approaches to Building Social Protection Systems

UNICEF- World Bank January 2013

UNICEF and the World Bank recently launched a joint note outlining their "integrated approach" to building and strengthening social protection systems. The note outlines common ground between the World Bank and UNICEF, and is intended as an invitation to other stakeholders and development partners to engage collaboratively in this agenda. It explains how systems can provide a coordinated portfolio of interventions to address different dimensions of poverty and deprivation, thereby reducing vulnerability across the life-cycle and ensuring cumulative benefits across generations.

Evaluating Social Protection Policies: Lessons from Brazil

IDS Policy Brief Issue 34 April 2013, Rômulo Paes de Sousa

This policy brief examines the pioneering approaches to evaluating social protection policies that were taken by Brazil's Secretariat of Evaluation and Information System and provides some key lessons for the development of effective M&E systems.

Gender and Social Protection in the Developing World: Beyond Mothers and Safety Nets

Zed Books, March 2013, Rebecca Holmes and Nicola Jones

This new book by ODI's Rebecca Holmes and Nicola Jones presents the progress made in the social protection sector in incorporating objectives of voice and agency, and the significant challenges that remain in moving the social protection poverty agenda beyond a focus on income and "traditional" gender equality goals.

Holding Cash Transfers to Account: Beneficiary and community perspectives

Overseas Development Institute April 2013, Nicola Jones, Fiona Samuels, with Agnieszka Malachowska

Synthesis report from **Transforming Cash Transfers**, a DFID-funded study that investigates beneficiary and community perspectives on unconditional cash transfer programmes in five countries - Kenya, Mozambique, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Gaza and West Bank), Uganda and Yemen. The report summarises key features of the cash transfer programme in each country and the extent to which programme objectives address empowerment, social justice, social cohesion and citizenship alongside economic vulnerability.

Making the Most of Resilience

IDS in Focus Policy Briefing 32 Chris Béné, Andy Newsham and Mark Davies

This briefing explores how policy makers can make the most of resilience including: defining the concept to make it more relevant to a wider range of development practitioners; building on the concept's strengths but also recognising its weaknesses; addressing these weaknesses by complementing resilience with other relevant concepts.

Predicting the cost and impact of cash transfer programmes: The power of microsimulation tools

OPM Briefing Note, February 2013, Clare O'Brien

Cash transfers to households are becoming an increasingly common policy instrument for reducing poverty, particularly in some countries of sub-Saharan Africa. However pilot schemes are not always modelled at their design stage to estimate whether the cash transfers would have an affordable impact on poverty if scaled up. A new OPM Briefing Note explains how to overcome this problem by using a simple microsimulation tool.

Social protection for older Kenyans: options for implementing the National Social Protection Policy

HelpAge International Pension watch briefing no 10 2012 Charles Knox-Vydmanov, Rhiannon Leon and Andrea McPherson

With the importance of social protection gaining recognition in Kenya this briefing aims to add to the debate, with a focus on income security in old age and options for implementing the National Social Protection Policy. It describes how a universal pension would provide a practical and efficient way to rapidly increase coverage while avoiding fragmentation in the pension system.

Social protection floors and pension systems: the role of a "citizen's pension"

HelpAge International Pension watch briefing no 9 Charles Knox-Vydmanov

There is growing recognition that developing countries need to prioritise extending national floors of social protection. But, what are social protection floors, and what link do they have to the pension system?

Trajectories of social protection in Africa

Development Southern Africa, 30:1, 13-23, Stephen Devereux

This article argues for a 'social contract' approach - recognising the right to social protection, empowering passive beneficiaries to become entitled claimants, and introducing social audits to hold duty-bearers accountable for effective and equitable delivery of citizen-driven social protection policies.

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 to be added to the mailing list.

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