Welcome to the fourth issue of the quarterly Newsletter from the Centre for Social Protection, a global network of academics, policy-makers, NGOs and others who are working together towards achieving social protection for all in the foreseeable future.

To coincide with the publication of the World Bank’s World Development Report (WDR) 2008 on ‘Agriculture for Development’, this issue of the CSP Newsletter examines the linkages between social protection and agriculture.

Although agriculture’s dominant role in pro-poor economic growth in countries with large, poor rural populations is recognised, investment in agriculture has been declining and the sector is stagnating in many of the world’s poorest countries. On the other hand, there is a growing policy focus on social protection interventions to address risks and insecurity affecting poor people. However, current policy debates and formulation make limited attempts to integrate agricultural and social protection policies.

Also in this edition of the Newsletter: new research; new publications; new resources; what’s coming up and outputs from recent events. Our mailing list is growing all the time, so do keep us informed of any developments in the area of social protection that you would like to have publicised.

~ Armando Barrientos, Stephen Devereux & Rachel Sabates-Wheeler ~
(Co-Directors, Centre for Social Protection)

“Talking Point”: Agriculture: From protection to promotion

How far can (and should) social protection programmes go beyond protecting vulnerable livelihoods to promoting improved livelihoods? This debate is brought into sharp focus this month with publication of the World Development Report 2008 on Agriculture, which demonstrates the potential for social protection to go beyond its core role of enabling or smoothing household consumption. Examples from Ethiopia, India, South Africa and elsewhere show that employment guarantee schemes, or food and cash transfers provide support during ‘hungry months’ before harvest and help farming households to avoid selling off productive assets to meet their consumption needs. Innovative instruments (such as weather-based risk insurance) help build rural households’ resilience against shocks such as drought or flood. There is some evidence too that even small transfers can result in investments in productive activities, particularly in agriculture.

Despite these positive findings, caution might be necessary. Are we asking too much of social protection? At a Future Agricultures Consortium meeting titled ‘Developing agriculture while protecting people’ on 13 November, Stephen Devereux and Rachel Slater argued that there is significant scope for combining social protection and agricultural promotion objectives, but that our expectations of simple instruments such as cash, food or inputs transfers might be too high. Given that the poorest households spend a large proportion of their income on basic consumption, especially food, and are often labour constrained, transfers are unlikely to result in more than small-scale investments in agriculture. The real scope for social protection to contribute to agriculture lies in linkages to other programmes, that increase the asset portfolios of poor households and reduce agricultural risks. Examples include the Chars Livelihood Programme in Bangladesh which transfers livestock to extremely poor households, linking agricultural credit packages to the Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia and the purchase of Options for Maize in Malawi that help to stabilise prices and supply and enable farmers to enter riskier but more remunerative markets.

At a policy level, linking protection and promotion raises a very difficult question for countries with high poverty levels and very limited resources. Will the best outcomes for agricultural growth and poverty reduction be achieved by targeting the very poorest households whose consumption is unacceptably low but who have limited potential to improve their asset status - or by targeting other poor households with greater potential to improve their asset portfolios?
New Research

Lessons from Ethiopia on a scaled-up national safety net programme

This brief examines the lessons that can be learnt from Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP) which was implemented by the Government of Ethiopia in January 2005 with technical and financial support from a joint donor group that includes DFID and the World Bank. Through synthesising three linked reports which were undertaken as part of the PSNP – each of which examines various aspects of the programme, from targeting procedures and economic trends, to policy and institutional linkages – this brief aims to draw lessons on running a scaled-up national safety net programme in other parts of Africa.

To find out more, go to http://www.wahenga.net/uploads/documents/briefs/Brief_14_PSNP.pdf


Agriculture’s major role in pro poor economic growth in countries with large, poor rural sectors is increasingly recognised. There is also a major focus on social protection interventions to address risks and insecurity affecting poor people. However current policy debate and formulation makes limited attempts to integrate agricultural and social protection policies. A recent Future Agricultures paper ‘Promoting Agriculture for Social Protection or Social Protection for Agriculture?’ describes broad patterns of change in agricultural development and social protection policies and in relations between them in developing countries. It outlines paradigm shifts in policies affecting both fields and highlights issues arising from interactions between them. An integrated framework is proposed for analysing agricultural and social protection policy needs at different development stages.

http://www.future-agricultures.org/publications.html


Risk and vulnerability play important roles in keeping poor rural people poor. Both agricultural and social protection policies can help growth benefit the poorest and most vulnerable people. In this second briefing paper on Agriculture and Social Protection we outline important interactions between social protection and agriculture development policies. Four strategic approaches addressing (with differing success) these interactions are described, together with the main policy instruments associated with them, and design and implementation issues or these instruments discussed.

http://www.future-agricultures.org/publications.html

Linking Growth and Social Protection: The Agriculture Case

We know that promoting growth in productive sectors such as agriculture has direct poverty reduction effects. In addition, social protection is now being promoted for the safety net it can provide, both to those engaged in productive activity, and to those who (because of sickness, old age and ‘caring’ commitments) are labour- or time-constrained and cannot easily participate in farming or other work.

This study explores how positive interactions between social protection and growth can be promoted and negative ones minimised. On the positive side, we already know that some interventions, such as low risk agricultural technologies, lend themselves to uptake by the more vulnerable, and, on the negative, that some forms of social protection, such as free or subsidised food distribution, can adversely affect agriculture. Other interactions, whether positive or negative, are less obvious, and may be rooted in the building and protection of assets of various kinds, or even in apparently unconnected spheres such as the regulation of trade and investment.

In a context where social protection and the promotion of growth are often administered by different agencies, and where structural change is putting some production systems and social relations under pressure, this study asks – using agriculture as an example – how positive and negative interactions can best be identified and policy responses designed.

To find out more about this project, go to http://www.odi.org.uk/plag/PROJECTS/lg_sp.html
New Publications


This book re-evaluates the importance of social policies in shaping well-being and combating exclusion, and enhances understanding of how these policies are formed in a globalizing world. It emphasises the context- and path-dependence of patterns and policies of inclusion and exclusion, and provides a framework for supporting social policy making.


This paper, based on a collaboration between the ODI and the UK Department for International Development’s (DFID) Renewable Natural Resources and Agriculture Team, sets out current practice and future prospects in respect of how social protection and agriculture (broadly defined to include crops and livestock) relate to each other, and offers some conclusions on how social protection can support poor people in the agriculture sector to take advantage of emerging opportunities, and also protect them when their livelihoods are threatened by change.


Vulnerability and human suffering are major challenges facing large sections of Kenyan society who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Policy reforms have failed to adequately address social protection issues afflicting particularly the most vulnerable groups. This paper discusses ways in which social protection policies can be used to address the key sources or aspects of this vulnerability, and to promote agricultural and economic growth.


This paper is based on a study undertaken to critically understand the dynamics of policy making and processes under the auspices of the Future Agricultures Consortium’s (FAC) sub-theme on politics and policy processes hosted by IDS.


In 1995 sociologist and social researcher Francie Lund was asked to chair a national investigation into aspects of social welfare. Specifically, the investigation was to look at how welfare support for children could be extended and improved. The Lund Committee for Child and Family Support recommended the introduction of a new cash grant designed to reach poor children, and to replace a broader family benefit for mothers and children. It also advocated the reform of the private parental maintenance system. Currently, eight million children and their caregivers benefit from the new policies that were recommended by the Lund Committee.

The book documents the process of policy development that led to a major change in the social welfare system. While based on the official Report which summarised the Committee’s work, Lund here provides a fuller picture of the policy context and pertinent issues. As such, Changing Social Policy has interest across disciplines. It confronts intriguing technical and administrative issues, and shows what happens when policy intent has to be matched by resources and capacity. It has relevance for those in South Africa and in other countries who are interested in the dynamics of policy reform, and in social policy sectors such as health, housing, education and social services.

HelpAge (2007) *Age Demands Action*
Older people’s organisations and groups from 27 countries joined together as part of Age Demands Action, the first-ever global coordinated action by older people to bring about change. They called for recognition of the vital role of older people in society, a package of universal non-contributory pensions, free healthcare and anti-discriminatory legislation. The Age Demands Action campaign launched on 1 October, UN Day for Older Persons, has shown that older people have an important contribution to make to society and to shaping ageing policies and practices for future generations. Delegations who met with government ministers received firm commitments of increased pensions, improved healthcare and better access to basic needs such as food, water and credit.

The campaign has signalled a change in how older people’s issues will be viewed in the future. For highlights of Age Demands Action activities and achievements visit http://www.helpage.org/Researchandpolicy/AgeDemandsAction

Ugo Gentilini (2007) Cash and Food Transfers: A Primer WFP.

Interest in cash transfers as a food security instrument has grown remarkably- even within the World Food Programme. The objective of this paper is to unpack the various aspects of the “cash versus food” debate, to map out where the controversies lie and to demonstrate the need for a more pragmatic, balanced and context specific approach.

New Resources

UNICEF Global Study

UNICEF is currently undertaking a Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, carried out in 40 countries and seven regions in 2007-2008, using MICS, DHS and other available data. The Global Study focuses on poverty through a progressively specific analytical lens. First, the study considers gaps and opportunities in national poverty reduction strategies, and then it focuses in on the poverty and disadvantage faced by families with children - a crucial agenda to address. Finally, the study looks in detail at how public policies could more effectively reduce child deprivations by providing better services and protection for all children and for all families caring for children, including measures that promote gender equality. The purpose of the study is to strengthen the profile of children at the national policy table and to identify ways that poor children and families could better benefit from national efforts and international commitments. The conceptual framework, methodology and data templates are detailed in the Global Study Guide, available online at www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com.

CIARIS

The ILO has recently launched a knowledge sharing and capacity-building tool called CIARIS, (www.ilo.org/ciaris). CIARIS Learning and Resources Centre on Social Inclusion CIARIS is a knowledge development system aiming at supporting the actors to develop their capacities of design, planning, management, follow-up and evaluation of their actions on the fight against social exclusion at the local level. It allows in particular a better consideration of the relations between social protection and the fight against exclusion. CIARIS offers an overview of the concepts and strategies used at international level about the fight against social exclusion. It also provides a practical framework to improve the approaches set up in the fight against exclusion and discusses some key principles (partnership, participation, integrality and territoriality) to be considered in the various stages of the action cycle (design, installation, follow-up and evaluation).

Extensao da Proteccao Social

The future clearinghouse on the extension of Social Protection is about to be launched. http://www.extensao-protecsocial.com/index.php

The clearinghouse is a collaboration and agreement between the ILO (Lisbon Office), the STEP programme and the CPLP (the community of Portuguese-speaking countries). Through the CPLP, all 7 Portuguese-speaking countries will directly participate and use the information, and hence benefit to policymakers in the countries
World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development

The theme of the World Bank's World Development Report (WDR) 2008 is Agriculture for Development. A reconsideration of agriculture’s role in development has been long overdue. Developing country agriculture is caught up in the far-reaching changes brought by globalization, the advent of highly sophisticated and integrated supply chains, innovation in information technology and biosciences, and broad institutional changes—especially in the role of the state and in modes of governance and organization.

Food Security, Hunger and Social Protection

Livelihoods Connect – an online information sharing platform around sustainable livelihoods have a new hot topic on Food Security, Hunger and Social Protection, funded by Irish Aid. The hot topic includes key readings, links to organisations working on social protection, and related news and events. Sub-themes of include climate change, nutrition, rural economy and famine relief. It also links across to other relevant hot topics, such as agriculture.

Governments at the 1996 World Food summit defined food security as existing “when all people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. Food scarcity hits many regions of the world every year. Food insecurity can range from temporary, localised food shortages to protracted and large-scale famine. Chronic, widespread poverty in some regions means millions of people are permanently vulnerable to famine.

Food security ensures reduction of that vulnerability. But people vulnerable to food shortages and famine cannot wait for longer term development programmes to bring them out of poverty. Addressing food insecurity means increasing food production and addressing the root causes of vulnerability through a range of interventions, including rural development, agricultural research, building livelihoods and social protection. It also means addressing shortfalls now, in the form of famine relief.

http://www.livelihoods.org/hot_topics/FoodSecurity/FoodSecurity.htm
To keep on top of new additions to Livelihoods Connect, please subscribe at: http://www.livelihoods.org/emailupdate/emailupdate.html#2

Coming up…

Future agricultures: From broad themes to practical policy

Early in the new century a consensus on agricultural and rural development emerged. This provided renewed impetus to efforts to boost both agricultural development and the rural non-farm economy, in a context of ever closer rural-urban linkages and globalisation. Governments and donors have committed themselves to support this, but the challenge has been to translate themes into practical policy.

For two years the Future Agricultures Consortium, supported by the UK Department for International Development, has been investigating how to do this, primarily in Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi.

This series of meetings, hosted by ODI, will present the results of this work. It will also include the launch of the World Bank’s 2008 World Development Report (WDR) entitled 'Agriculture for Development', as well as two sessions on the way forward and whether or not emerging challenges from bio fuels, climate change, and the growth of China and India imply that the agenda needs radical revision.

If you would like to attend any of the meetings in this series, please register using ODI's online events booking system at: http://apps.odi.org.uk/events

‘Farmer First Revisited’

The Future Agricultures Consortium in association with the STEPS Centre at Sussex are hosting an international workshop, ‘Farmer First Revisited', at IDS from 12-14 December 2007 to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the original ‘Farmer First' event. This website (http://www.future-agricultures.org/farmerfirst/index.html) presents information for participants and other interested readers on this major workshop and related efforts that aim to put farmers first.
Social Protection and Ideologies of Welfare in Southern Africa


The workshop will examine the pressures and challenges facing social protection systems in Southern Africa, and will assess current strategies addressing poverty and inequality in the region. The organisers particularly welcome papers which examine income transfer schemes as a mechanism for realising social protection; consider these schemes in the context of the evolution of social policy in the region; and assess their contribution to developing sustainable, and long-term, social protection institutions in the region. The workshop’s comparative and interdisciplinary approach will promote examination of the emerging results and trends across regions and policy sectors and strengthen collaboration and learning among the different applied social science fields involved in social protection research and analysis.

Completed papers or extended abstracts should be submitted to the organisers electronically by November 5th, 2007: Armando Barrientos (a.barrientos@manchester.ac.uk) or Rebecca Surender (rebecca.surender@socres.ox.ac.uk). More information can be found at http://www.devstud.org.uk/studygroups/soc-protection.htm

Call for Proposals for Phase II of a Research Program on Social Protection in Asia

The Ford Foundation has provided support for a second phase of a research programme on Social Protection in the Asia Region. A research consortium led by IDS, Sussex and IHD, New Delhi is responsible for managing this 3 year program of research and related activities.

Proposals are now invited in the form of concept note from reputed institutions (or groups of institutions) working in this field. Projects will be for up to 2 years, starting in April 2008.

The Social Protection in Asia (SPA) research program will support research and related policy analysis, advocacy and networking activities in the Asia region on various themes related to social protection. These are described in detail in the Call for Proposals attached.

Interested research organisations or consortia may respond through submission of an initial concept note (see format below) which will be evaluated by a panel of program advisors. Short-listed organisations will be invited to develop a complete proposal for final approval. Members of the selected research project teams would also be required to participate in research design and methodology workshops for all program participants. Details of the activities and timetable are given below.

Concept notes must be submitted by November 15th, 2007 to mailto:socialprotectioninasia@ids.ac.uk

Call for Proposals - Background and Guidelines for Submission (PDF 141 KB)

Outputs from recent events

The development impact of social transfers: Lessons from the South African experience
18 October 2007, ODI
Evidence from South Africa suggests that social protection contributes to the achievement of larger development objectives, including economic growth and the MDGs. As many African countries consider introducing social transfer programmes, learning from the South African experience is essential.

At this ODI and Grow Up Free From Poverty Coalition event, Dr Zola Skweyiya, South African Minister of Social Development spoke about how protecting vulnerable groups produces development outcomes; Prof Charlotte de Toit from the University of Pretoria presented on the effectiveness of economic growth policy in meeting the challenges of poverty; and Dr Michael Samson from EPRI in Cape Town spoke about targeting versus universalism and other key questions in the implementation of social transfer programmes.
The Grow up Free from Poverty Coalition is made up of 24 NGOs, faith groups and civil society organisations. Its work currently focuses on the role of cash transfers in both the reduction of poverty and facilitating access to other essential services.

Other News

**ActionAid request: Experienced social protection advisors needed to input into ActionAid’s administration component of a DFID Hunger Safety Net Programme, Kenya.**

ActionAid Kenya is looking for experienced social protection enthusiasts who would be interested in advising on their design of the administration component of the DFID Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) in Kenya. The overall goal of the HSNP is the reduction of chronic hunger in Kenya. The purpose of the administrative component of the HSNP is to identify effective targeting methods; clearly spell out how each of these methods will be operationalised; plan and employ appropriate registration, targeting (or not), enrolment and case management systems; and provide capacity building services to government, communities and other stakeholders to facilitate the transition to a nationally implemented programme in phase 2.

ActionAid Kenya is holding a workshop, in Nairobi, on the 6th and 7th November to discuss how this project might be implemented. The workshop will also provide an opportunity for learning around social protection. ActionAid welcomes comments, partnership and advice on the programme design, which will emerge from the workshop.

We very much hope you’ll be able to come on board. Please contact Tulika Byce if you are interested in being part of this exciting venture: mailto:tulika.byce@actionaid.org

**PhD Studentship -‘Old age, wellbeing and development’**

Brooks World Poverty Institute, The University of Manchester

Applications are invited for an 3 year ESRC PhD Studentship tenable in the Brooks World Poverty Institute at the University of Manchester, as part of a research project on ‘Old age, wellbeing and development: A comparative study of Brazil and South Africa’. The project has received funding under the UK’s cross council programme on ‘New Dynamics of Ageing’. This a collaborative project led by Dr. Armando Barrientos, Senior Research Fellow at BWPI, and Dr. Peter Lloyd-Sherlock from the University of East Anglia, and including HelpAge International, the Institute for Ageing in Africa at the University of Cape Town and the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Rhodes University in South Africa, and the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. The project will run for three years beginning in January 2008.

Closing date for applications is 5th December 2007. The successful candidate is expected to register in January 2008.

http://www.bwpi.manchester.ac.uk/postgraduate/studentships/index.html

**Civil Society Consultations in Africa**

Following on from the regional conference in Johannesburg in March on the role of civil society in national social protection policy processes plans to develop ‘intra Africa’ learning initiatives and a network to build the case for social transfers are now going ahead. The Grow up Free from Poverty Coalition and RHVP, supported by DFID, are preparing a detailed and fully costed proposal for a regional platform to support national dialogues on the development of social protection systems in African countries. A series of national consultations are now being held in a number of African countries to gather views on what civil society groups need in terms of human and financial resources to ensure their involvement in the development of comprehensive national social protection policies and the implementation of programmes. This would include engagement in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and would help to ensure lesson learning, national ownership, transparency in policy making and budget setting and government accountability.

Contact: info@grow-up-free-from-poverty.org
Information: www.grow-up-free-from-poverty.org and www.wahenga.net
Next edition..

In future editions of this newsletter we will feature CSP partners’ approaches to social protection and Climate Change. If you would like to contribute please contact Debs

How can I get involved?

If you know others who you think would want to be part of the Centre, just forward this newsletter, and ask them to get in touch by email (socialprotection@ids.ac.uk) and I will add them to the mailing list.

If you have events, research, or publications to promote, or are looking for partners or people with particular skills, send me an email and I will include it in future newsletters and post it on the Centre website.

If you would like to unsubscribe please send an email to the address below.

Thanks.

Debs

Deborah Shenton
Centre Co-ordinator
Centre for Social Protection
Institute of Development Studies
Direct Tel: 01273 877223
Email: socialprotection@ids.ac.uk
Website: Centre for Social Protection