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Scoping Report for the Design of 3ie's Social Protection Window

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I. Introduction

The purpose of this Scoping Report is to guide 3ie and its partners DFID, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank in the design and implementation of a Social Protection Window financed by DFID. The main goal of this thematic window is to help bridge the knowledge gap of what works and why in social protection, and contribute to more informed policy and decision making based on evidence. As will be discussed in this report, there is a growing evidence base in social protection, especially when it comes to cash transfer programs, but there is still great need for more concrete evidence and knowledge on social protection interventions' impacts and contributions to long lasting poverty reduction, as well as which conditions and design characteristics are key determinants of success. The Social Protection Window will be a Thematic Call that will finance studies and evaluations on key and emerging topics which are currently under-researched in social protection with the purpose of contributing to better understanding of what works, why and through which channels.

This Scoping Report bases its recommendations on two main instruments: (i) an Inventory of Social Protection Programs that encompass current projects under design as well as those under implementation from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and DFID; and (ii) a Questionnaire that consulted a series of key stakeholders(including social protection specialists, policy makers, evaluators and academics) to get their feedback on the areas that need further understanding and evidence of their impacts and contributions to poverty reduction.

For this Scoping Report, social protection will be defined as the set of measures that provide security for the poor and vulnerable. Based on the Social Risk Management Framework, such measures must go beyond coping mechanisms during downturns (safety net interventions) and propose greater focus on opportunities for people to move out of poverty¹. Within this framework there are three main types of social protection: (i) risk mitigation mechanisms, that focus on ensuring income to those more vulnerable via old-age security benefits and pensions; (ii) risk coping mechanisms, that focus in mitigating poverty by channeling resources and human capital interventions to the poor, via non-cash and cash transfers, and public works programs; and (iii) risk reduction mechanisms, that focus on investing in new generations with interventions in early childhood development (ECD) and youth training (Table 1). There are also interventions that focus on the development and/or strengthening of social protection systems, which typically include all three risk management mechanisms.

The report is structured as follows: Section II provides information on the current knowledge on social protection; Section III presents current trends, as well as main types of programs that are currently being funded; Section IV identifies areas that have not been covered by existing evaluations and questions that key social protection stakeholders

¹The definition of social protection and its main types of interventions were defined in the Typology of Social Protection Programs developed by 3ie in 2011; such definitions are in line with other strategic documents such as the World Bank's Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012- 2022 "Building Resilience and Opportunity", Concept Note, 2011.

identified as strategic for their work in the design and implementation of social protection programs; and Section V presents the main strategic recommendations for the design of the Social Protection Window and the Thematic Call.

Table 1. Typology of Social Protection Programs

Risk mitigation	Risk coping	Risk reduction
Old-age income security (includes micro-pensions).	Non-cash targeted transfers (vouchers; school-meals; food-packages; seeds to poor farmers etc).	Integrated early childhood development.
Appropriate unemployment benefits.	Public works / work-fare programs.	Interventions specifically targeting youth at risk (youth training and labor insertion programs).
Expanding health insurance to the uncovered.	Unconditional/Social cash transfer programs.	
Micro-insurance, in particular agricultural for small-holder farmers.	Conditional cash transfer programs.	

II. Current Knowledge on Social Protection

This section is intended to summarize current knowledge of what works and why within the three different social protection mechanisms (risk mitigation, coping and reduction), based on recent literature, mostly produced by international organizations and research institutions. It is not intended to provide extensive details on evaluations, but it aims to address the main findings and overall status of current knowledge on social protection interventions and areas that could be strengthened in future research.

A. Risk Coping Mechanisms

Conditional Cash Transfers: Current knowledge about social protection, including what works or doesn't, why and in which contexts and conditions, is highly concentrated in the area of risk coping interventions, primarily in conditional cash transfers. These programs were pioneers in using high quality monitoring and evaluation systems and in applying rigorous evaluation methodologies to measure their impacts. With the growing number of conditional cash transfer programs currently taking place in more than 30 countries around the globe, there is substantial literature on results and effects from several of these interventions, particularly from Latin America.

But even though the evidence base for conditional cash transfers is better than any other social protection intervention, in many cases impact evaluations, in spite of their rigor, have not been designed to understand why programs work or not. Several evaluations have managed to demonstrate the impacts of a package of multiple interventions, but they have

left aside analysis on specific sector outcomes² and on the key incentives and institutional capacities needed for the intervention to succeed³. So this calls for more profound and better evaluations on conditional cash transfers.

The literature on conditional cash transfers covers diverse sets of issues, from their contributions to economic development, growth and long lasting poverty reduction to their contributions to social sector outcomes and different design features. Following are the most relevant debates around conditional cash transfers and the main areas that need further analysis and evaluation:

Contributions to economic development, growth and long lasting poverty reduction: Although there is little evidence to show that conditional cash transfers have had an impact on growth and long lasting poverty reduction⁴, some researchers present growing evidence of conditional cash transfers' positive impacts in reducing short-term poverty by increasing household purchasing power and food consumption⁵, and in promoting the use of basic education and health services⁶. There is also evidence suggesting that these programs have improved labor market participation of poor households and promoted employment⁷.

What it is not so clear yet is whether conditional cash transfers have had an impact on final outcomes in health and education. The main reason for this lack of direct connection between cash transfers and final outcomes is that these programs are more focused on demand-side issues and barriers, such as the costs of schooling and healthcare, than in solving supply-side problems which directly influence the quality of services⁸. In addition, some researchers argue that cash transfer programs do not always address some important constraints at the household level, such as poor parenting practices, inadequate information, or other inputs into the production of education and health, and that is why the effects on final outcomes have been limited⁹.

Contributions to education outcomes: Most conditional cash transfers tend to be evaluated in relation to child schooling and nutrition outcomes. In fact, there is significant evidence that indicates that cash transfers (both conditional and unconditional) tend to improve school enrolment and attendance¹⁰, and may be relevant complementary interventions to direct education investments, as with additional income families can pay fees or other costs associated with attending school. In addition, some researchers explain

²Gaarder, Marie "Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes: Opening the Black Box", Journal of Development Effectiveness, March 2010.

³Kabeer, N. and Ainsworth P. "Findings from DFID-funded social protection research 2003-2010", Draft Version November 2010.

⁴Barrientos, A. and Scott, J. "Social Transfers and Growth: A Review", University of Manchester, 2008.

⁵Kabeer, Naila "Scoping Study on Social Protection: Evidence on Impacts and Future Research Directions", DFID, 2009.

⁶Fiszbein, A. and Schady, N. "Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty" World Bank, 2009.

⁷"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Fiszbein, A. and Schady, N. "Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty" World Bank, 2009.

¹⁰"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

that the education co-responsibilities within conditional cash transfers (requirement of school enrollment and regular attendance), also contributes to reduce child labor practices as children attending school have less time for participating in income-generating activities¹¹.

Contributions to health outcomes: On the effects of conditional cash transfers in nutrition outcomes, there is evidence, especially from Mexico's Oportunidades, showing that transfers to women plus direct nutritional supplements for young children and nutrition education were associated with children's improved growth and motor development¹².

Specifically, on effects of cash transfers in health, there have been few evaluations and the ones that have been done are limited in their scope and findings. On child mortality, recent research has found mixed results on indicators such as reduced incidence of illness, reduced childhood anemia and lower infant mortality¹³. Regarding maternal health, there is also very little evidence on the effects of cash transfers; some researchers point to problems of data collection and that the majority of current evidence is drawn from technical reports that examine maternal health as a secondary outcome, often descriptively¹⁴. More rigorous evaluations need to address these issues and even study in detail the effects of complementary interventions, such as incentives to health service providers, which may also contribute to greater impacts than a cash transfer alone.

Regarding additional effects of cash transfers on health issues, recent research suggests that these programs can have benefits on HIV prevention, treatment and care and support. At the moment, there is evidence on the impact of programs on AIDS-related care and support and less evidence available relating prevention and treatment¹⁵.

Design features: In terms of specific design issues of conditional cash transfer programs, such as value of benefits, duration of programs, coverage of services and effects of complementary services, there are several studies that point to different conclusions and broaden the debate on which are the most effective models. Currently, the issues that generate most debate are the ones related to the **value added of conditionalities and the need for graduation strategies**.

The debate on the value added of conditionalities is still quite candent; many policy makers favor them, especially for Latin American contexts, and some argue that for Africa and the least developed countries, conditionalities are inappropriate as social services are limited in coverage and quality¹⁶. Studies on the value added of conditionalities have focused on

¹¹"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

¹²Kabeer, Naila "Scoping Study on Social Protection: Evidence on Impacts and Future Research Directions", DFID, 2009.

¹³Fiszbein, A. and Schady, N. "Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty" World Bank, 2009.

¹⁴De Brauw, A. and Peterman A. "Can Conditional Cash Transfers Improve Maternal and Birth Outcomes?", IFPRI Discussion Paper, 2011.

¹⁵"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

¹⁶Ellis, Frank et al "Social Protection Research Scoping Report", Overseas Development Group, University of East Anglia, July 2008.

Mexico's Oportunidades, which is probably the most studied conditional cash transfer intervention; several evaluations of this program suggest that conditionalities do contribute to encouraging families to send their children to school and follow the health protocols in vaccination, checkups for children and prenatal care for women¹⁷. But research conducted in other countries presents that conditionalities may create additional burdens to poor families in order to comply with co-responsibilities (like costs of transportation and school materials assumed by beneficiaries)¹⁸. In addition, there is evidence of tensions and irregularities on conditionality compliance, including bribes for good grades in order to meet requirements, which affects the program image and credibility¹⁹.

Conditionalities can also be used by governments as the right justification to provide cash to the poor without anything in exchange, so at least ensuring a co-responsibility allows this type of programs to be more accepted by the general public²⁰. But following up on conditionality compliance is not an easy task, as it involves extensive human and financial resources, as well as great inter-sectoral coordination at the central and local levels, practices that require strengthening and consolidation in most developing countries. For example, in Brazil, the government has just launched a conditionality follow up system and is also allocating large amounts of resources to social assistance teams to help families with the compliance of the BolsaFamiliaconditionalities. It is still too early to tell if these measures have some concrete impact on health and education outcomes, but certainly it will be worth to monitor its results.

The debate on graduation and exit strategies is important. Exit strategies are needed to avoid encouraging dependency on cash transfers programs and creating other negative incentives, such as beneficiaries rejecting formal jobs or other income generating activities due to fear of losing cash transfer benefits, although some studies suggest there is not dependency or not real evidence of it²¹. Discussions on the adequate period beneficiaries should stay in the program and incentives to "graduate" are currently thriving. For example, evidence from some countries including, Bangladesh and Ethiopia, suggests that cash transfer programs need complementary interventions, such as skills training or agricultural extension initiatives to ensure future employability of their beneficiaries once they leave the program²². The possible impacts of complementary services in achieving graduation from cash transfer programs constitute a key forthcoming research area.

Public Works: These programs have been implemented in many countries for more than 20 years, with India and Bangladesh as prime examples. Other countries have adopted short-term public works schemes as a mechanism to deliver assistance after various types of shocks, like the macro-economic crisis that hit Asia in 1997 and Latin America in 2002; or in post-disaster situations, such as after the tsunami hit Asia in late 2004; or in post-conflict

¹⁷Fiszbein, A. and Schady, N. "Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty" World Bank, 2009.

¹⁸"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

¹⁹Porter, C. with Dornan P. "Social Protection and Children: A Synthesis of Evidence from Young Lives Longitudinal Research in Ethiopia, India and Peru", June 2010.

²⁰Fiszbein, A. and Schady, N. "Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty" World Bank, 2009.

²¹Hanlon, J. et. al "Just Give Money to the Poor", Kumarian Press, 2010.

²²"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

contexts, such as in Sierra Leone, Sudan, Liberia, Yemen, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Nepal²³.

Most assessments have found that public works programs have had significant impact in terms of temporary employment creation and in increases in beneficiaries' income²⁴ and in food consumption²⁵. But, evidence of impact on enhanced employability, sustainable income gains and benefits to poor people, is still limited. Some few evaluations have indicated that transfers from short-term schemes are too low and unreliable to affect chronic poverty²⁶. Others suggest the need for more longitudinal studies to really understand long term impacts of such programs²⁷.

Another important issue about public works programs is that in some cases, such as in India and Ethiopia, they may increase labor demands on children, either directly or through children substituting for adults in the household who are involved in the programs²⁸. This aspect calls for more research on the unintended consequences of public work schemes and on their possible mitigation measures.

Additional under-studied issues related to public works schemes are: (i) whether the works supported by the program create actual public goods, and in those cases where this is not confirmed (ii) whether "unconditional" rather than "work-conditional" cash would be a better option, and (iii) even if better option in theory, whether unconditional cash is politically feasible and has no adverse effects on self-worth.

B. Risk Mitigation Mechanisms

Old Age Pensions: The most common risk mitigation interventions are old age pensions. These programs have been well studied in several developing countries, being Brazil and South Africa, the most studied cases. Researchers in these two countries have identified positive impacts of pensions in reducing poverty and vulnerability among older people as individuals, and on aggregate poverty²⁹. In addition, there is small but growing evidence that supports that access to non-contributory pensions by the elderly also can improve the health status of young children in their family, by expanding their food consumption and nutrition, as well as in their access to health care. Other studies have found impacts in

²³Del Ninno et al "How to Make Public Works Work: A Review of the Experiences", Social Protection and Labor Discussion Paper, The World Bank, May 2009.

²⁴"Public Works: An Effective safety Net for the Poor?", Enduring Questions Brief, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), March 2009.

²⁵Kabeer, Naila "Scoping Study on Social Protection: Evidence on Impacts and Future Research Directions", DFID, 2009.

²⁶"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

²⁷Del Ninno et al "How to Make Public Works Work: A Review of the Experiences", Social Protection and Labor Discussion Paper, The World Bank, May 2009.

²⁸Porter, C. with Dornan P. "Social Protection and Children: A Synthesis of Evidence from Young Lives Longitudinal Research in Ethiopia, India and Peru", June 2010.

²⁹Barrientos, A. and P. Lloyd-Sherlock "Non-contributory Pensions and Social Protection" Discussion Paper 12, Geneva: International Labor Organization (ILO), 2002.

anthropometric status of girls when women were the main recipients of pensions³⁰ and in school attainment and the reduction of child labor³¹, although results may vary according to the gender of the benefit recipient.

Currently, there are still some gaps in the literature on old age pensions, especially regarding their sustainability, their complementarity with other social protection programs and, its effects on both, household living arrangements and labor supply.

C. Risk Reduction Mechanisms

Early Childhood Development: There is substantial evidence from developed countries that early childhood development interventions that support caregivers and young children have significant benefits in later life, including higher cognition and school achievement, reduced placement in special education classes, less grade retention, less crime and delinquency, lower rates of teenage pregnancy and increased earnings in adulthood. Regarding the situation in developing countries, a recent study that compiled results from various programs found strong evidence that early stimulation interventions can benefit children's mental development. In terms of maternal outcomes, there is also reasonably strong evidence that mothers' parenting knowledge and skills can improve with early stimulation interventions³².

However, more research is required to identify the relative effectiveness of different modes of delivery, such as group parenting sessions, which may be a cost-effective method of service delivery but has not been properly evaluated. Finally more long-term follow up studies of early childhood stimulation interventions are required with a broad range of measures including child schooling trajectories, academic achievement and economic productivity in adulthood³³.

Nutrition and School Feeding Interventions: There is also growing body of evidence related to the impact of early childhood development programs in developing countries, especially those that involve stimulation combined with nutrition and health interventions. Evidence from Guatemala highlights that adequate supplementation before age 3, has beneficial effects on schooling, reading, and intelligence tests during adulthood. In further research there is evidence that individuals who did not suffer growth failure in the first three years as a product of early childhood development interventions earn higher wages and are more likely to be employed in higher-paying skilled labor and white-collar jobs, are less likely to live in poor households, and, for women, fewer pregnancies and smaller risk of

³⁰Duflo, E. "Granmothers and Granddaughters: Old Age Pension and Intra-household Allocation in South Africa, The World Bank Economic Review 17(1): 1-25; 2003.

³¹Irineu E. Carvalho Filho "Household Income as a Determinant of Child Labor and School Enrollment in Brazil: Evidence From a Social Security Reform,"IMF Working Papers 08/241, International Monetary Fund, 2008.

³²Baker-Henningham, H. and Lopez Boo, F "Early Childhood Stimulation Interventions in Developing Countries: A Comprehensive Literature Review", Inter-American Development Bank Working Paper Series, 2010.

³³Ibid.

miscarriages and stillbirths³⁴. There is also evidence on school feeding programs, especially in Asia and Africa that have helped to increase primary school enrolment among beneficiary children and hunger reduction³⁵. However, there is an ongoing debate among researchers about the impact of school feeding programs and how to make them more cost-effective. This, in particular due to the recognition in many countries that for political reasons these programs are there to stay, and 'tweaking' is hence the only feasible option politically.

Skill Formation and Job Training Programs: There is not so much body of evidence regarding the effectiveness of skill formation and training programs in developing countries, and those that exist, present some inconsistencies. For example, some authors argue that existing evaluations of labor training programs in developing countries do not distinguish between finding a stable job versus finding any type of job (duration of the new job is not generally considered), and this aspect can lead to misleading conclusions about the effectiveness of some training programs³⁶.

A compilation of more than 250 interventions aimed at incorporating young people into the labor market in more than 80 countries, found that labor training programs have a lower incidence of positive employment impact than other types of labor programs oriented to youth³⁷. Such report also calls for major improvements in the quality of evidence available for youth employment interventions which will contribute to better evaluations required in this field.

D. In Summary

Overall, the evidence base of conditional cash transfers is very strong for outcomes and becomes weaker in terms of fewer, less rigorous and/or less conclusive evidence towards impacts on poverty reduction and raising living standards of poor populations³⁸. This also applies to other types of social protection programs that have been less evaluated, including public works, old-age pensions, school feeding and job training programs. It is then clear that: (i) there is still great need for more research and evidence on several key design features of conditional cash transfers; (ii) there is also a great need to expand the evidence base of other social protection interventions besides conditional cash transfers; and (iii) there is an emerging need to expand our knowledge on how different social protection interventions can complement each other and contribute to the consolidation of effective social protection systems³⁹.

³⁴Hoddinott, J. et al "The Consequences of Early Childhood Growth Failure over the Life Course", IFPRI Discussion Paper, March 2011.

³⁵Kabeer, Naila "Scoping Study on Social Protection: Evidence on Impacts and Future Research Directions", DFID, 2009.

³⁶Ibarrarán, P and Rosas, D. "Evaluating the Impact of Job Training Programs in Latin America: Evidence from IDB funded operations". Inter-American Development Bank, 2008.

³⁷Betchrman, G. et al. "Global Inventory of Interventions to Support Young Workers". Social Protection Policy Paper. World Bank, Washington. D.C., 2007.

³⁸"Cash Transfers Literature Review", Policy Division DFID, 2011.

³⁹"Evidence and Lessons Learned from Impact Evaluations on Social Safety Nets", Independent Evaluation Group, The World Bank, 2011.

III. Current Trends and Portfolio of Social Protection Interventions

A. Trends identified in social protection strategies and recent scoping reports

The recent social protection strategies⁴⁰, scoping reports⁴¹, and analytical resources⁴² from the partner institutions involved in this Social Protection Thematic Window are also worth analyzing to find common grounds and trends. From the review of such documentation, it is possible to confirm the shared interest of moving beyond the knowledge on cash transfers and build a greater body of evidence another risk coping interventions, such as public works schemes, and on risk reduction interventions including school feeding interventions⁴³.

Another relevant common aspect among partner institutions is the promotion of stronger program complementarities, especially within risk coping mechanisms and risk mitigation ones. In practical terms, this highlights the need to develop greater links between cash transfers and public works with skill formation and job training programs, as well as with income generating activities. This aspect of complementarity is also relevant for all three partners, especially when it comes to supporting more integrated and coordinated social protection interventions that lead towards the consolidation of social protection systems.

An additional common trend is the explicit commitment to deepening the work in lower income countries (DFID and the IDB maintaining their own regional focus) with the objective of assisting such nations in building and/or strengthening local capacities needed to design and implement effective social protection interventions.

B. Current portfolio of social protection interventions

This section provides a summary of the current social protection programs that are under design (with planned approval in late 2011 or early 2012), under implementation or that were recently completed (from 2010 onwards), which are financed by DFID, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. To be able to elaborate this compilation of programs⁴⁴, an Inventory of Social Protection Programs was prepared based on each organization's records⁴⁵. This Inventory is basically a "snapshot" that constantly varies due to changes in program scope, components and value. It is important to note that the inventory was based on the information provided by focal points from partner organizations,

⁴⁰"Building Resilience and Opportunity" The World Bank's Social Protection and Labor Strategy 2012-2022", Concept Note, 2011.

⁴¹Kabeer, Naila "Scoping Study on Social Protection: Evidence on Impacts and Future Research Directions", DFID, 2009.

⁴² Strategic information from the IDB was obtained at its social protection webpage:

<http://www.iadb.org/es/temas/proteccion-social/publicaciones,1911.html>

⁴³ "Evidence and Lessons Learned from Impact Evaluations on Social Safety Nets", Independent Evaluation Group, The World Bank, 2011.

⁴⁴ Considered interventions include investment and policy based loans; all budget support interventions were excluded as their resources don't necessarily are allocated into the development of social protection programs.

⁴⁵ The main divisions involved in the provision of updated information of loans under design and implementation were: (i) DFID's Governance, Conflict and Social Development Team from the Research and Evidence Division; (ii) the IDB's Social Protection Division; and (iii) the World Bank's Social Protection and Labor Division.

as none of them has this information readily available on their websites or in unified databases, and therefore some projects may have been missed. In addition, there is of course a whole range of additional institutions also involved in some aspects of social protection that were not contacted for this work. Currently, this Inventory has 105 projects, totaling more than US\$14.6 billion (See Annex I for further detail).

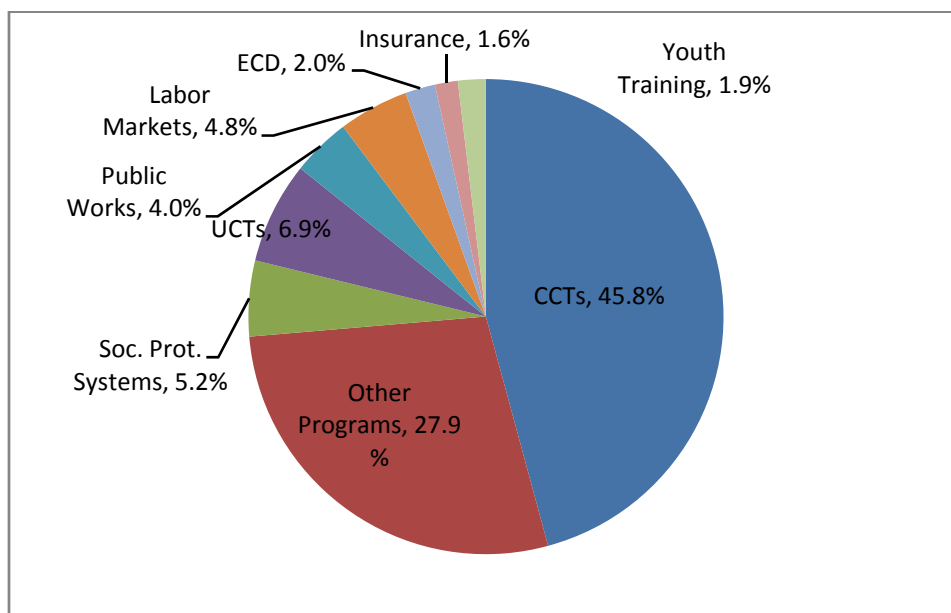
From this Inventory, the World Bank currently allocates US\$7.3 billion in loans to all developing regions of the world; the IDB finances US\$5.6 billion in loans exclusively for Latin America. DFID allocates US\$1.7 billion in grants and technical support, targeted to the least developed countries in Africa and Asia. The geographic distribution of the total pool of resources (including loans from the World Bank and IDB and grants from DFID) are heavily concentrated in Latin America (61% of total resources), followed by Africa (19%), Asia (11%), East Europe (8%), and the Middle East (1%).

**Table 2. Social Protection Loan and Grant Portfolio
(Loans from World Bank and IDB and Grants from DFID)
Values per Donor and Region**

Region	World Bank (US\$ billions)	IDB (US\$ billions)	DFID (US\$ billions)	Total Region (US\$ billions)	% of loans + grant funding total
Latin America	3.3	5.6	-	8.9	61%
Africa	2.0	-	0.8	2.8	19%
Asia	0.6	-	1.0	1.6	11%
East Europe	1.2	-	-	1.2	8%
Middle East	-	-	0.1	0.1	1%
Total	7.3	5.6	1.9	14.6	100%

In terms of the most common social protection interventions, there is great concentration of the portfolio on conditional cash transfers (CCTs), with 45.8% of total resources allocated to these programs (Graph 1). A large group of projects were categorized as "other" (27.9%), as they have mixed components and cannot fit into one single main classification. Some of these projects were also in the "other" category, because they have components that include social funds, peace building activities and attention to the disabled, which do not really belong to a clear category. Additional relevant interventions include unconditional cash transfers (UCTs) with 6.9% of the funding and programs supporting the development or strengthening of social protection systems (5.2%). Programs with less representation include labor market interventions (4.8%), public works programs (4%), early childhood development (2%), youth training (1.9%) and various forms of insurance (1.6%).

Graph 1. Most Common Interventions Funded by the World Bank, IDB and DFID



C. Expected evaluations on the current social protection portfolio

Within the 105 programs that are part of the current social protection portfolio, about 41% contemplate to undertake process evaluations, while 18% do not have any plans to undertake any evaluation⁴⁶. In addition, 17% contemplate undertaking or are in the process of implementing a rigorous impact evaluation, while another 41% of the programs are considering or are implementing other types of evaluations, probably mixing quantitative and qualitative analysis, but many of them are not explicitly defined yet. From the programs that are undertaking a rigorous evaluation, 42% are cash transfer interventions, (being 24% conditional and 18% unconditional cash transfers), 18% are early childhood development initiatives and 18% are classified as "other" types of interventions; the remaining types of programs have very few rigorous evaluations taking place. In terms of geographic location, 41% of the rigorous impact evaluations will take place in Latin America, 29% in Asia, 18% in Africa and 12% in East Europe.

3ie is also contributing to the body of knowledge in social protection and currently around of 10% of its funded studies are dedicated to this thematic area (See Annex IA for further detail).

⁴⁶This section doesn't include monitoring practices. It is understood that each partner institution has set up solid monitoring mechanisms that involve follow up on products and indicators based on each program's log frame.

IV. Perceived Knowledge Gaps, Research Questions and Main Areas of Interest

To better identify knowledge gaps and new research areas in social protection, a questionnaire was developed to ask social protection policy makers and practitioners for their advice and recommendations. The questionnaire contained the following three main questions:

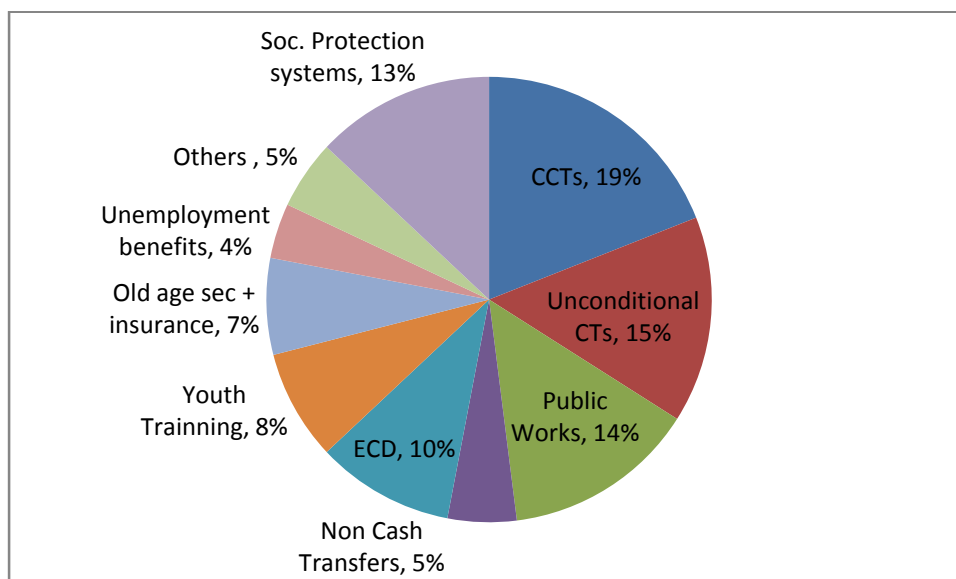
1. How do you know what works in social protection?
2. Based on your experience, what are the current knowledge gaps or areas that need further research and more clear answers?
3. From which geographic area/countries or specific cases would you like to learn more?

The questionnaire was sent to 240 pre-identified contacts (that were suggested by the main contacts from DFID, the IDB and the World Bank), and was fully answered by 65 high level respondents⁴⁷, of which 57% work in international organizations, 23% work in policy making and research in developing countries and 20% are international academics and researchers. Most of the respondents have a focus on Africa (38% of respondents) and Latin America (22%); while Asia (8%) is the least represented. Several respondents work in all continents (21%) and others work in two specific regions, like Africa and Latin America (11%). (See Annex II for complete list of stakeholders).

From this group of respondents, a large majority has worked or currently works in one or various risk coping mechanisms, including conditional cash transfers (19% of all responses), unconditional cash transfers (15%), public works programs (14%) and non- cash transfers (5%). Those who work in risk reduction mechanisms are focused on early childhood development (ECD) interventions (10%) and youth training programs (8%). Some respondents also have been involved or are currently involved in the development or the strengthening of overall social protection systems (13%). The interventions with least representation in this group of respondents are risk mitigation mechanisms, including unemployment benefits and old age security (11%). There were several stakeholders that have participated in other forms of social protection interventions, most of them being social funds (5%)(Graph 2).

⁴⁷There were actually 75 total respondents that submitted the questionnaire, but 10 of them provided partial responses and didn't answer the main questions, so they were left aside.

Graph 2. Questionnaire Respondents' Main Social Protection Areas of Work



The following section introduces the main perceived knowledge gaps and areas of potential interest for further research, which were identified by the questionnaire respondents:

A. Main knowledge gaps

The consulted stakeholders identified three main areas they would like to learn more about, as current research and evaluations have not provided them with enough evidence and knowledge. These three areas **were commonly identified by all groups of respondents.**

Unanimously, the main area of interest among all respondents regards to the **overall impact of social protection interventions in poverty reduction, asset accumulation and economic development.** This is a relevant concern for all those social protection practitioners as there is a need for more evidence on the possible links between social protection interventions and lasting poverty reduction and growth. Another related knowledge gap within this area is concerned with **how social protection interventions improve community relations and social capital,** especially when these programs are implemented in fragile states and in post conflict contexts.

A second area of interest refers to all those **political and institutional aspects** that are required for social protection interventions to be effectively designed and implemented. This area is particularly relevant given the need to understand the political economy of designing and implementing social protection interventions in diverse contexts, political regimes and with different institutional capacities.

Related to the political and institutional issues, there was also interest from the respondents in learning more about how to introduce **innovative social protection interventions**

beyond the traditional models, such as the common combination of cash transfers plus education and health services. The main suggestion was to bring more focus on how to address innovation, change and complementarity within social protection interventions that could bring value added to current interventions or new ones.

A third area of interest, is the one related to **concept and design issues** within social protection interventions, especially matters such as: (i) intervention selection (defining what type of intervention is more adequate to solve a specific problem); (ii) effective targeting and beneficiary selection; (iii) graduation mechanisms and exit strategies; and (iv) relationship and complementarity among programs (including the analysis of positive and negative incentives within social protection interventions, such as within cash transfers and income generating activities).

B. Knowledge gaps within specific social protection interventions

Within specific social protection interventions, most attention was given to risk coping mechanisms, such as cash transfers and public works. Regarding cash transfers, much of the interest was focused on learning **how useful conditionalities are and in which contexts they should be applied**. Another area of interest refers to **the impacts of complementary programs**, with a focus on complementary services and incentives in education and health. Other complementary programs that are of great interest are nutrition initiatives and their impacts on food consumption, school attendance and a reduction of chronic acute and seasonal malnutrition.

Regarding public works programs, there is an overall concern that these interventions are under-evaluated. The main interest is to learn **what are the impacts from public works in creating temporary or permanent employment** and how they can be sustainable.

The following table summarizes the main knowledge gaps and research questions that were identified by the consulted stakeholders:

Table 3. Summary of Perceived Knowledge Gaps and Specific Research Questions

Areas of Knowledge Gaps	Research Questions
1. Overall improvements in society and long term poverty reduction effects	
Impact of different social protection interventions in poverty reduction, asset accumulation, local economic development and improved community relations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which types of social protection interventions contribute to poverty reduction and asset accumulation? Why? - How have social protection interventions improved local economic activity? - Have social protection interventions contributed to improve community relations? Why? - How social protection interventions can contribute to transformative change? Especially in post-conflict locations?
Long term behavioral changes	- Have social protection interventions, in particular

Areas of Knowledge Gaps	Research Questions
	<p>CCTs, contributed to long lasting behavioral changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can social protection interventions promote long term behavioral changes in beneficiaries and in their communities?
2. Political and institutional issues	
Political economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under what political and institutional conditions have different social protection interventions worked? Why? - How can we introduce innovative practices on social protection interventions that go beyond traditional models? - Why do many governments prefer agricultural subsidies to cash transfers?
Local contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which practices facilitate implementation of social protection programs in decentralized contexts? - How to deal with local heterogeneity of management in decentralized settings?
3. Conceptualization and design of specific interventions	
Intervention selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which are the most effective instruments of poverty reduction? How can they complement each other? - What are the relations between mobility and migration and social protection programs?
Beneficiary selection and targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which types of social protection reach which groups, and why? - Which interventions reach the most vulnerable?
Graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the most effective exit strategies, especially for CCTs and public works?
Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How and why do people respond or not respond to the program design/incentives? - Are some social protection programs creating perverse labor market incentives, in particular, among people who have benefited from them for a long period of time? - What is the impact of CT and CCT transfers on labor-leisure margin?
4. Risk mitigation interventions	
Micro insurance and health insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the impacts of micro insurance and health insurance?
Unemployment insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the most effective regimes and types of activation for unemployment insurance?

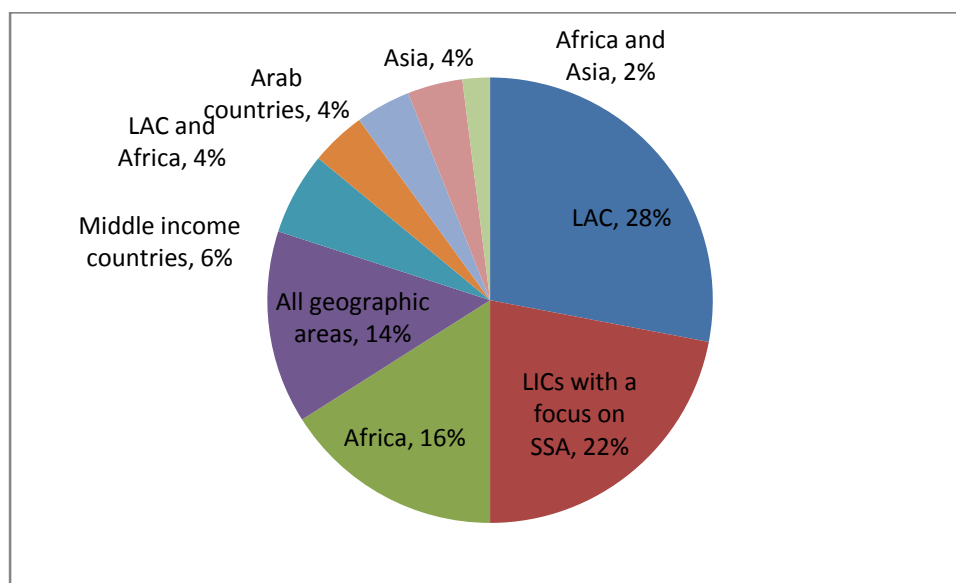
Areas of Knowledge Gaps	Research Questions
5. Risk coping interventions: CCTs and CTs	
Conditionalitys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are monitored conditions worth it in cash transfers? - Are "soft" conditionalities enough in some circumstances?
Complementary supply-side interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which are the most effective complementary programs/ services to traditional health and education conditionalities? - Do complementary interventions of CCTs and CTs have an impact on final health, cognitive and non-cognitive development and education outcomes/ young children? - What specific measures can improve the impact of cash transfers on nutrition? - How to ensure complementarity of social protection programs with productive activities/income generating interventions?
Value of transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the value of the transfer affect the impact of the program? - How to establish links between private and public transfers (remittances, zakat in Muslim societies)?
Gender relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are gender relations affected by who actually receives the transfer? - How do CCTs and CTs impact intra-household relations and bargaining power?
6. Risk coping interventions: Public works	
Public works/ workfare programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the impacts of public works interventions in creating temporary or permanent employment? - What are the longer term effects and sustainability risks of public works programs? - What are the impacts of training, coaching and counseling for the next job have on employment? - Do stricter/ easier hiring and firing procedures have an impact on actual employment levels?
7. Other risk coping interventions	
School Feeding Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How effective are school feeding programs?
8. Risk reduction interventions	
ECD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What modalities of early childhood services are cost-efficient, sustainable and can be scaled up?

Areas of Knowledge Gaps	Research Questions
	- What are the impacts of specific parenting and ECD models on child development?
Youth education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the impacts of youth interventions on cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions? - How do we create (youth) employment? - What really makes these youth education programs work? Are they sustainable?

C. Geographical interests

When stakeholders were asked about their particular geographical area/country interests, the results pointed out two main locations: Latin America, with most of the respondents interested in learning more from this region (28%) and Low Income Countries (LICs), with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa (22%) (Graph 3). There was also a high percentage of respondents that showed no particular interest in a specific area, or were interested in all geographic areas (14%), or that showed interest in a specific group of countries such as middle income countries, particularly India, Chile and Brazil (6%) or a mix of regions, such like Latin America and Africa (4%), and the Middle East and North Africa (6%).

Graph 3. Geographical Interest from Questionnaire Respondents



What is much more enriching to this report are the arguments presented by the questionnaire respondents to focus on each of the priority areas. For example, even though it is highly recognized that **Latin America and the Caribbean is by far the most studied region in terms of social protection**, particularly conditional cash transfers, survey respondents argued that there is still much to be learned. Also, within the region, there are some countries that have not been fully studied, such as Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and some

Caribbean nations; and even the most studied cases such as Mexico and Brazil, still draw quite a lot of interest and are seen as the most **mature models**, that are worth to keep on learning from, especially on how their social protection interventions are integrated into social protection systems. Other respondents also presented the case to keep studying Latin America, as it is the region with the **highest levels of inequality** and many social protection interventions should be better designed to reduce such disparities.

The case for **more focus on the Least Developed Countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa** is built on the importance of finding what works and what doesn't in this particularly poor and fragile region, as **conditions are more demanding** and existing evaluations have not generated reliable findings. There is also interest in the African continent in particular countries such as Tanzania, Nigeria, Mozambique and Ghana, because they are in the process of introducing reforms to their social safety net systems. Some other countries, such as Rwanda, are also in the process of implementing several social protection interventions, which are important to study due to their post-conflict status.

It is also important to note that many questionnaire respondents are not only interested in learning more from their current region of work, but they also expressed explicit interest in expanding their knowledge on other regions. This is particularly evident in respondents that work in Africa who also want to learn from Latin America's experiences. Also, there was a high number of respondents that showed no particular interest to study any specific region, suggesting that **their interest must be more thematic rather than regional** (Table 4).

Table 4. Summary of Questionnaire Respondents' Regional Interests

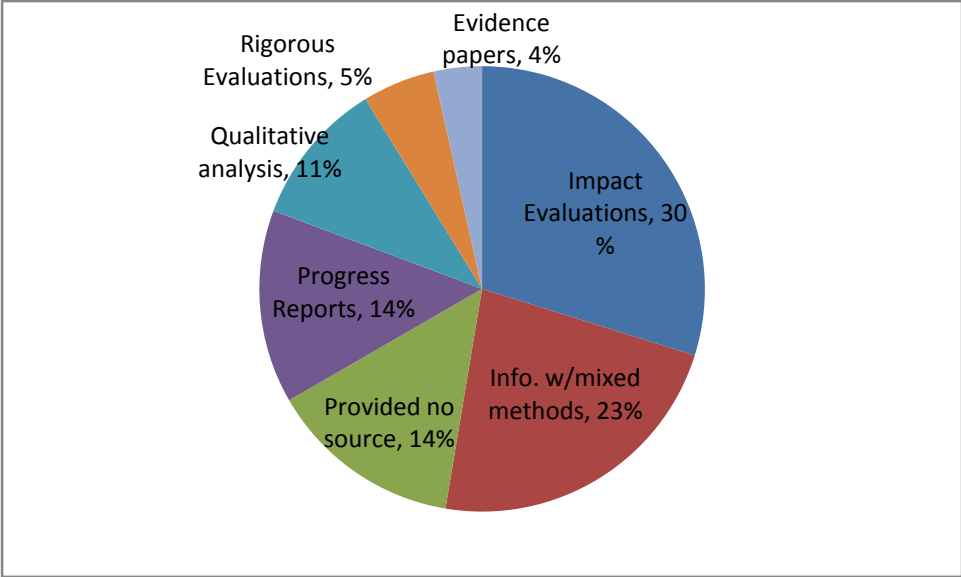
Type of Stakeholder	Main region/s of work	Number of respondents	Interest in their own region	Interest in other regions	No particular regional interest
International Academics and Researchers	Africa	5	-	1 (1 LAC and Africa)	4
	Mix of regions	4	1	1 (1 Africa and Arab Countries)	2
	University-based (no regional focus)	3	-	3 (1 LAC and Africa, 1 LAC and 1 LICs)	-
	LAC	1	-	-	1
Specialists from International Organizations	Africa	19	10	6 (1 LAC, 1 Asia, 3 LIC, 1 Middle Income Countries)	3
	LAC	9	8	-	1
	Middle East and North Africa	1	-	1 (1 Middle East and Middle Income Countries)	-
	HQ	7	-	5 (2 LICs and 3 Sub-Saharan Africa)	2
	Mix	2	-	1 (1 LICs)	1
Policy Makers	LAC	2	1	1 (1 Africa and Eastern Europe)	-
	Africa	5	-	4 (1 India, 2 LAC, 1 Asia and	1

Type of Stakeholder	Main region/s of work	Number of respondents	Interest in their own region	Interest in other regions	No particular regional interest
				Europe)	
	Asia	6	-	3 (1 LAC and Asia, 2 LAC and Africa)	3
	Middle East and North Africa	1	-	1 (1 LAC)	-
TOTAL		65	20	27	18

D. Knowledge and sources of information

When the consulted social protection stakeholders were asked about what information they used in order to know that a particular social protection works or doesn't and why, most respondents referred to impact evaluations (30%). A large majority of respondents (23%) provided some additional information on the methodologies used to get relevant information, such as studies that involved a mix of methodologies, including large scale quantitative impact assessments and econometric evaluations combined with qualitative research and household surveys. Other sources include, progress reports (14%), rigorous evaluations (5%), qualitative analysis (4%), and evidence papers (4%).

Graph 4. Main Sources of Information on Social Protection



Several stakeholders made additional relevant comments regarding their interest not only to learn from the impact of social protection interventions, but to **learn more about the channels through which impacts occur**. There were also comments regarding the need for more comparisons among different programs based on evidence from comparable information.

In terms of methodologies, there were suggestions to **integrate experimental and structural approaches**, as well as incorporating more systematic cost analysis to evaluations in order to acquire more robust results.

E. Highlights and trends

Based on the analysis of the existing social protection portfolio and on the responses from the social protection stakeholders, it is possible to capture a **clear demand for more knowledge on risk coping interventions, such as conditional and unconditional cash transfers and public works schemes**; and although, in general, these interventions are the ones applying more rigorous impact evaluations, it seems there is a need for more systematic and concrete knowledge on what works and why.

In terms of regional focus, Latin America remains quite strong in terms of overall projects that are currently funded by World Bank and IDB; this is not only taking place in “more mature” contexts like Mexico and Brazil, but in several other countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and some low income Central American and Caribbean nations. DFID funding is focused on Africa and South Asia. In terms of respondents, Latin America continues being an area of interest for further investigation, while Africa has become an important geographical interest, especially the least developed countries and fragile states. It was also highlighted that the experiences from some Latin American contexts could be comparable with some African settings. There is also an interest in African countries that have already more advanced programs, such as Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana and Ethiopia.

There is also a general interest in learning more from other regions besides the immediate area where stakeholders work, probably signaling an interest in thematic results on particular topics rather than in particular countries or geographical areas.

V. Strategic Recommendations

A. Level of Prescription/ Openness of the Window

In terms of specific social protection interventions, it is recommended to include the evaluation of unconditional and conditional cash transfers, as they are currently the most applied programs worldwide and there are still many questions about their effectiveness as well as which design characteristics and complementary programs lead to more successful results. It is also recommended to promote expanding the knowledge on public works programs and how sustainable they are, as they are also applied in various countries, but have been under-researched and there is little knowledge on its success and sustainability.

Although a **focus on risk coping mechanisms** is suggested, the Social Protection Window may also **consider complimentary interventions in the area of risk prevention (unemployment benefits, pensions and insurance) and opportunity promotion initiatives, like job creation and training**. This would allow capturing some linkages

between “protection” and “promotion” roles in social protection and would fill a perceived evidence gap.

B. Regional Focus

It is recommended that the Social Protection Window has an **open regional focus** in terms of where studies can take place. Although Latin America and Africa, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, have a great concentration of social protection programs in different stages of maturity, it is important to consider relevant experiences from Asia as well. **Priority should be given in all cases to study low income countries or the study of middle income countries that demonstrate that lessons are of relevance to low income countries.**

The Social Protection Window can also promote studies and evaluations that bring some comparisons between regions and among countries that share similar contexts (population, post-conflict, rural/urban conditions), experiences and have comparable data and information. To address this particular aspect, the Social Protection Window **can call for proposals that analyze cross-regional and cross-country trends and successful methods to deal with a specific issue.**

C. Level of Maturity of Eligible Projects

Recent literature suggests the importance to focus more on national scale programs and less on small scale pilots, especially for the Africa context⁴⁸. It is then recommended to **focus on mature interventions**, meaning those programs that: (i) have been under implementation for some time; (ii) have significant relative coverage/scale; and (iii) are focusing on inter-sectorial linkages (productive activities and health and education sector strengthening). **Pilots may also be evaluated**, but in this case, it will be essential to: (i) have clear evidence that such pilots have the capacity and intention to scale up and become permanent programs, and (ii) have active involvement from their local implementing agency.

D. Thematic Focus

Based on this Scoping Report’s main reflections, it is suggested that the Social Protection Window finances studies and evaluations in the following three main areas:

Area No. 1: OVERALL IMPACT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS & LONG TERM EFFECTS. It will allow focusing on the links between social protection and poverty reduction, asset accumulation, local economic development and community wellbeing. The main question to be addressed for this particular area will be:

How has a specific social protection mechanism contributed to:

⁴⁸“Social Protection in Africa: Where Next?”, Centre for Social Protection at the Institute of Development Studies, June 2010.

- **Asset accumulation**
- **Local economic activity**
- **Poverty reduction**

For this area, it is suggested to finance impact evaluations, possibly in combination with general or partial equilibrium, and simulation models. It is also suggested that all these evaluations use a theory-based approach, giving priority to identifying context and implementation aspects, and include cost effectiveness or cost benefit analysis to increase policy usefulness.

Area No. 2: POLITICAL ECONOMY AND INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS. It will allow focusing on political and institutional analysis of social protection programs. Within this area it could be useful to have insights in how the financing of social protection programs occurs and how to ensure sustainability of interventions. In addition, it will be important to study the mechanisms needed to ensure the strengthening of overall social protection systems. The following are the main questions for this area:

Under what political and institutional conditions has a specific social protection intervention worked well? Why? Consider the following variables:

- **Sustainability**
- **Complementarity of programs**
- **Capacity to adjust to evidence and emerging needs (response to crisis)**
- **Integrate social protection programs into a social protection system**

It is also recommended that for this specific area of research, priority is given to the study of mature programs or those that have significant relative scale, time of implementation and available data, in order to better capture relevant insights. For this particular area, it may not be possible to do a rigorous impact assessment but a series of reviews which examine evidence systematically, possibly in systematic reviews could be financed taking advantage of several ongoing studies 3ie, DFID and the World Bank are promoting.

Area No. 3: DESIGN ISSUES. The study of this area will allow learning more on specific program design not only from risk coping, but also on risk mitigation and prevention mechanisms. The suggested key questions for this area of research include the following:

- **Which are the most effective complementary programs/ services?**
- **What are the most effective exit/graduation strategies?**
- **What are the most effective targeting mechanisms?**

For this particular area of study, cross- country and cross- regional studies could be encouraged. It is suggested to finance a series of systematic reviews taking advantage of several ongoing studies 3ie, DFID and the World Bank are promoting.

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23. 3ie Typology of Social Protection Programs, 2011.

Annex Key Stakeholders That Undertook the Questionnaire

	Name	Organization	Position
1	Sarah Baird	George Washington University	Assistant Professor
2	Carolyn J. Heinrich	University of Wisconsin	Associate Professor
3	Lia Fernald	University of California, Berkeley	Associate Professor, School of Public Health
4	Karen Macours	Paris School of Economics	Associate Professor
5	Fabio VerasSoares	IPC	Senior researcher
6	Ingrid Woolard	University of Cape Town	Associate Professor
7	Armando Barrientos	BWPI, University of Manchester	Professor and Research Director
8	John Maluccio	Middlebury College	Assistant Professor
9	Rachel Sabates-Wheeler	IDS	Director of the Centre for Social Protection
10	EdoardoMasset	Institute of Development Studies	Research Fellow
11	Alan de Brauw	International Food Policy Research Institute	Senior Research Fellow
12	OrazioAttanasio	UCL & IFS	Professor
13	Howard White	3ie	Executive Director
14	Ismael Abdillahi	University of Djibouti	Assistant Professeur
15	ValentinaBarca	Oxford Policy Management	Consultant
16	Miguel Szekely	Instituto de Innovación Educativa, Mexico	Director
17	John D. Musale	Office of the Prime Minister, Kenya	Chief Economist
18	ElisifaKinasha	Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF)	Operations Manager
19	Hoang KienTrung	Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA), Vietnam	Researcher
20	Jose Nicomedes A. Castillo	Department of Social Welfare and Development, Philippines	PantawidPamilya
21	SileshiGetahun	Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia	State Minister
22	Ricardo Gomez Amorocho	Accion Social, Colombia	Multilateral Banking adviser
23	Quyên Do Dang	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Vietnam	Advisor
24	Rhodora G. Alday	Department of Social Welfare and Development, Philippines	Deputy Project Manager
25	RasendraRatsima	Fondsd'Intervention pour le Developpement - FID, Madagascar	Directeur
26	Harry Mwamlima	Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation, Malawi	Director, Poverty Reduction and Social Protection
27	NaserQatami	Palestinian Ministry of Labor	Deputy Minister
28	Arjan de Haan	IDRC, Canada	Team Leader SIG
29	Nsamba Michael	The Second Northern Uganda Social Action Fund	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

	Name	Organization	Position
30	Kate Tench	AfDB/DFID	Special Economic Advisor to Governance Dept
31	Anna Taylor	DFID	Sr Nutrition Adviser
32	Paul Wafer	DFID	Poverty & Vulnerability Team Leader
33	IndranilChakrabarti	DFID	Social Development Adviser, Zimbabwe
34	Lina Payne	DFID	Evaluation Adviser
35	Kelley Toole	DFID	Vulnerability and Food Security Adviser Zambia
36	Samantha Yates	DFID	Social Development Adviser Rwanda
37	Matthew Greenslade	DFID	Economic Adviser, Policy Division
38	Ada Mwangola	DFID	Social Development Advisor
39	Pamela Pozarny	FAO	Rural Sociologist
40	PanagiotisKarfakis	FAO	Economist
41	Katia Covarrubias	FAO	Economist
42	Benedicte L. de la Briere	FAO	Social Protection Economist
43	Carlo Azzarri	FAO	Consultant
44	Leslie Stone	IDB	Sr. Social Protection Specialist
45	Donna Harris	IDB	Sector Specialist Jamaica
46	Patricia Jara	IDB	Social Protection Specialist
47	Ferdinando Regalia	IDB	Chief, Social Protection and Health Division
48	Luis Tejerina	IDB	Economist
49	Maria CaridadAraujo	IDB	Senior Social Protection Economist
50	Emma Naslund-Hadley	IDB	Senior Education Specialist
51	Maria Deni Sanchez	IDB	Social Protection Specialist Honduras
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53	Luca Pellerano	OPM/IFS	Consultant/Research Economist
54	Julie Lawson-Mcdowall	UNICEF	Social Protection Specialist
55	JennYablonski	UNICEF	Social Protection Specialist
56	Carlos Alviar	UNICEF	Social Protection Specialist Ghana
57	Sophia Shawa	UNICEF	Social Protection Specialist
58	Mohammad Farooq	UNICEF	Chief Social Policy
59	George Laryea-Adjei	UNICEF	Chief of Social Policy
60	ElaynSamon	UNICEF	Child Protection Specialist Zimbabwe
61	Charlotte Harland	UNICEF	Chief of Social Policy & Economic Analysis Zambia
62	AnushBezhanyan	World Bank	Lead SP Specialist/Cluster Leader for Southern and East Africa
63	Manuel Salazar	World Bank	Sr. Social Protection Specialist

Name		Organization	Position
64	Patrick Premand	World Bank	Economist
65	RebekkaGrun	World Bank	Senior Economist