



**SOCIAL
PROTECTION
SYSTEMS**

TYING THE KNOTS

Documentation of the Symposium on Social Protection Systems

September 5 & 6, 2016

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Programme

- **Welcoming remarks**

- Jürgen Bode, Vice-President for International Affairs, HBRS

- **Keynote speeches**

- Ingrid--Gabriela Hoven, Director--General Global Issues- Sector Policies and Programmes, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Susanne Hoffmann, Director--General European and International Labour and Social Policy, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS)

- **Panel 1: International Challenges for System Building**

Chair: Michael Cichon, Professor of Social Protection, Maastricht University, and former Director of the ILO Social Security Department

Panelists:

- Christina Behrendt, Senior Social Protection Policy Specialist, ILO
- Timo Voipio, Director, EU Social Protection Systems Programme (EU--SPS) -
- Catalina Gómez, Social Protection Specialist, UNICEF -
- Marco Knowles, Economist, FAO -
- Tina George, Senior Public Sector Management Specialist, World Bank

- **Panel 2: Country Experiences with a Systems Approach and Realistic System Design**

Chair: Esther Schüring, Professor, Department of Social Security Studies, HBRS

Panelists:

- Germany: Wolfgang Scholz, former Under-Secretary, BMAS -
- Brazil: Helmut Schwarzer, Social Protection Specialist, ILO, and former Secretary for Social Security, Brazil -
- Kenya: Vera Mweu, Social Protection Secretariat, Kenya
- Iran: Vahideh Negin, President, Institute of Social Security & Welfare Applied Science Higher Education

- **Panel 3: Analytical Tools for System Assessment**

Chair: Johanna Knoess, Head of Sector Initiative Social Protection, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Panelists:

- Veronika Wodsak, Social Protection Specialist, ILO and ISPA Coordinator -
- Nguyen Thi Lan Huong, former Director, Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs, Vietnam -
- Setiawan Novianto, Consultant, GIZ Social Protection Programme, Indonesia
- Alessandra Heinemann, Coordinator EU-SPS, OECD
- Ruslan Yemtsov, Lead Economist, Social Protection & Labor, World Bank

- **Panel 4: Effective Linkages, Feasible Graduation Mechanisms & Partner Support**
 Chair: Cécilie Schildberg, Project Coordinator, Global Policy and Development Department, Friedrich--Ebert-Stiftung
 Panelists:
 - Ebenezer Adjetey--Sorse, Chair, Africa Platform for Social Protection -
 - Tessa Khan, UN Women's Major Group -
 - Keetie Roelen, Co--Director, Centre for Social Protection, Institute for Development Studies -
 - Carolina Dantas, Technical Advisor Social Protection, Trade Union Confederation of the Americas -
 - Inge Baumgarten, Head of Section, Health, Education & Social Development, Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH -
 - Syed M. Hashemi, Senior Advisor, Graduation and Vulnerable Segments, Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP)

- **Paper Session 1: System Variation -- Conceptual Variations of SP systems**
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 Lessons from Senegal. Jan van Ongevalle, Sarah Vaes, Bénédicte Fonteneau (HIVA -KU Leuven)
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- **Closing Session**
- **Closing Remarks**

Introduction

There has been an increasing focus on system-building and strengthening when it comes to social protection in the past years. Both UNICEF and the World Bank have developed strategy papers on social protection systems, the UN initiative on social protection floors is another attempt towards more systematic policy-making in the area of social protection, and the G20 Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board work on system analytics is yet another testimony of the increased importance.

While there is a greater demand for more systematic-policy-making with social protection interventions being well-coordinated and working in a holistic manner, there is still limited evidence as to the factors of success for system-building. This symposium provided the floor for academics, practitioners and politicians to exchange and discuss advances and challenges in social protection system building. While the first day of the symposium started off with keynote speeches and panel discussions, the second day gave room to practitioners and academics to present their findings and ideas around system-strengthening. Selected speakers presented their research around the themes of conceptual variations of social protection systems, effective linkages between social protection interventions and analysis of social protection systems.

Day 1

The first day of the symposium in Bonn started off with keynote speeches and panel discussions, reflecting on the importance of flexible and adaptive systems for low- and also for high-income countries and the international challenges that these systems have to respond to. Individual country experiences from Brazil, Kenya, Iran and Germany discussed the challenges encountered as well as factors of success in various country contexts. Tools for assessing the performance of systems and the corresponding programmes and delivery mechanisms were introduced and critical questions around effective linkages and graduation were raised.

Introductory remarks

Jürgen Bode, Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg Vice President for International Affairs and Diversity, was the first to take the stage and introduce the event. The focus of the Symposium, he said, could be summarized in the word “system”. The aim of system of social protection was to prevent hardships of people, he said. While the objective was clear, the challenge lay in the linkage between measures, while at the same time preventing overlaps between measures. In

this view, the objective of the Symposium was to exchange views and develop solutions using a scientific approach to social protection.

Keynote Speech by Ingrid-Gabriela Hoven



The introductory speech held by Ingrid-Gabriela Hoven stressed the importance of getting together to further discuss and think about social protection at this particular point in time. Hoven underlined the relevance of shaping a new conceptualization of social protection systems, a work that is also currently being done within the ministry.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Agenda 2030 both emphasize the need to reach the bottom billion. The good news is that the past has brought about great achievements in the reduction of poverty, yet much more still needs to be done, Gabriela Hoven said. Inequalities in society remained a challenge even in emerging economies. Employment and economic growth were still considered common tools to address inequalities.

In order to reach the SDG and deal with emerging and new social issues such as migration and climate change, state and social action is needed. Social protection is required and also needs to be considered in terms of its potential to strengthen resilience.

Social protection can ensure a minimum standard of living and a life in dignity, Hoven remarked. According to her, its positive effects on health, food security, employment promotion and economic growth are wide spread. Furthermore, it is of relevance in the international discourse of development, being mentioned several times in the SDGs. However, there is a need for more coordinated approaches, which implies establishing a comprehensive system with other institutions, she said.

Hoven pointed out five major areas the ministry is currently tackling. The first addresses the negative consequences of climate change that hit the poorest the hardest. For Hoven, the G7 countries' agreement in expanding climate risk insurance presents a significant step towards achieving the goals of the Agenda 2030. Second, illness should no longer lead to poverty. The work of the ministry supports good quality health care services and underlines its engagement through so called road maps – healthy system, healthy lives. Ending poverty and hunger is the third challenge addressed. The ministry aids in empowering governments and supports interlinkages of social policies with other policy areas. A fourth and rather new aspect is the promotion of adaptive social protection in humanitarian crisis. Social protection systems need to be designed in a way that allows for effective delivery and payment systems. Additionally, public works programmes can help to increase the resilience of the poor. The last aspect tackled is the protection of workers across the global value chain.

Further importance needs to be given to sustainable financing mechanisms. Hoven highlighted that there is a variety of options to choose from and a context specific mix of tools needs to be considered.

Finally, Hoven affirmed Germany's role for social protection as a strong supporter and founding member of many social protection initiatives and networks. This symposium brought together expertise, partnerships and different institutions and allowed to better coordinate and discuss the approaches being used, Hoven noted. This way ideas can be exchanged and current approaches used improved. She further underlined that social protection has gained momentum and has become much more prominent today than five years ago. Hoven ended her speech by reminding everyone that we need to grasp this symposium as an opportunity to place social protection even more to the fore.

Keynote Speech by Susanne Hoffmann

In her keynote speech, Susanne Hoffmann emphasized the crucial role of social protection systems and social protection floors for the eradication and prevention of poverty. She stressed the need to link social protection with other policy areas such as employment.



Germany played a prominent role in promoting the Social Protection Floors Recommendation 2012 (No.202), as it supported this idea from the initial stage of collecting ideas up to its realization. According to Hoffmann, the social protection floors facilitate the transition towards a formal economy and constitute the foundation to maintain the stability of society. However, only 27% of the world's population has access to good social protection systems, and 73% remain only partially or not covered at all. This despite the fact that social protection is not a matter of charity, but a human right.

As social protection is a matter of rights, the Recommendation 202 calls on the member countries to install social protection floors by law. While Hoffmann welcomed the ongoing activities to implement the recommendation in practice, she also underlined that social protections floors were only a first step and need to be extended. This was also the reason of having this symposium, in particular to discuss how the design of systems should look like and what challenges exist in different countries.

Hoffmann also gave an overview of the added value of the German social protection system. Although seeing the system as not fully developed, she emphasized as a main advantage that the system as a whole, since the introduction of the health insurance in the 1880s, had always been maintained by a spirit of adaptability. This allowed its survival through historical events. Hoffmann also cited the German social protection system as one reason why the German economy weathered the financial crisis of 2008/9 well. However, she identified challenges such as globalization, demographic change and digitalization. Social protection is necessary both in the developed and developing world and social policy should be considered as a productive factor. Thus, the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs advocated for social protection systems during the G7 presidency. The topic was also taken up by the G20. Despite this commitment, Hoffmann pointed out that financing is still a big issue. Here, she quoted former ILO Director-General Juan Somavia who had stated that the world does not lack resources, but the right priorities. She underlined: Theoretically we are ready to implement social protection, but what we really need is to identify how to really build the system, what tools of assessment do we have, what needs to be developed. Lastly, Hoffmann concluded that social protection floors could become a reality if political will is there, taking into account the notion of financing and investing as well as endurance.

Panel 1 International Challenges for Systems building

Chair: Michael Cichon, Professor of Social Protection, Maastricht University and former director of the ILO Social Security Department

Panellists:

- Christina Behrendt, Senior Social Protection Policy Specialist, ILO
- Timo Voipio, Director, EU Social Protection Systems Programme (EU--SPS) -
- Catalina Gómez, Social Protection Specialist, UNICEF -
- Marco Knowles, Economist, FAO -
- Tina George, Senior Public Sector Management Specialist, World Bank

*The first panel focused on the challenges experienced with a systems-building approach in social protection. Social protection systems function within a variety of different existing schemes which ideally work together. **Michael Cichon** pointed out that in practice a number of internal challenges exist in terms of systems-building, corruption, financing and a mismatch in communication. Simultaneously, exogenous factors, such as the global economy and climate change, have a shared influence on social protection systems. Advice given by recognized international institutions may be an advantage or disadvantage; however these institutions may also diverge in their responses. With regards to all the above, Cichon asked the panel the following questions: What are the most prominent endogenous challenges systems are facing today? How can they be addressed in a sufficient way and how can they be overcome? What is the role of inter-agency collaboration? What are the means one has to support social protection schemes? And is there a role for solidarity?*

Christine Behrendt's response highlighted the importance of universal social protection coverage as a key objective. She advocated a life-cycle approach by which people are protected at every moment of their lives through adequate social services and benefits whenever they need it. Behrendt stressed the commitment to universal social protection coverage in the Human Rights Act, which is at the core of recommendations embedded in the Social Protection Floor Initiative, the Sustainable



Development Goals and the Agenda 2030. Behrendt pointed out key challenges countries face in terms of fragmentation, coverage gaps, good governance, financing and equity. According to Behrendt the focus of reflective efforts with regards to universal social protection coverage should be placed on five major aspects: First, on how we think about the different components of social protection systems, looking for broader instruments, how they interlink, are embedded and can be combined with other instruments. Second, linking the practice to ongoing debates, for example in terms of graduation. Rather than focusing on how individuals and households

can get out of social protection programmes, the focus should be on how to get them into social protection programmes. In addition, ongoing debates on finding fiscal space may inspire and aid the effectiveness of national tax systems and change how resources are distributed, potentially redefining the role of the social contract. The third major aspect is to consider rights and entitlements of social protection which has significant implications for legislative action and financing methods. Transparency and adequacy of social protection benefits need to be guaranteed. The fourth aspect is to link social protection to other policy areas, for example to employment, investment and housing policies. This way challenges, such as informality of work and social inequalities can be addressed in a more holistic manner. Finally, Behrendt emphasized the need to work more closely together, an approach deeply embedded in the structure of the ILO. A strong dialogue needs to occur not only on national and international level but also within and between governments, employers and workers. Such a dialogue between the different actors can give insights to what is feasible in a specific country-context. ILO's engagement in the South-South dialogue presents a first step into the right direction. However, Behrendt stressed much more still needs to be done.



Catalina Gómez identified three challenges around the field of policy design and management. She specifically looked at what is preventing systems around the world from becoming more coherent. The first challenge Gómez observed is the lack of a common vision of social protection in many countries. As a reason for this she named the multi-sectoral character of social protection, whereas she finds a lack of understanding of what the term multi-sectoral in the context of social protection means, since due to sometimes competing mandates, social

protection institutions do not necessarily engage with each other. Hence, Gómez suggested to reflect on incentives for institutions to work together. In addition, making the case for social protection institutions appears more difficult than for other institutions in other policy areas. This is why social protection institutions often struggle to mobilize finances. The second challenge focused on the design of social protection systems, specifically how systems are built and can be strengthened. There appears to be a great lack of understanding in the process involved in building a system, also a lack of identifying drivers and enablers of a system. Gómez related this shortcoming to the complexity of social protection systems developed in a non-linear process. There is no straightforward process, nor specific entry- or exit point. Thus, an understanding for the sequence of entry and exit points may shed light into the dark. In this case, she pointed out that no one size fits all but the country-specific context needs to be understood more clearly. The last challenge Gómez highlighted is in the field of management. Herein lies a lack of understanding of what having a system entails. To her, a system is not only a collection of programmes, but includes a range of policies, structures and responses, for example not only through means of cash transfers.

To combat these challenges Gómez suggested working on a collective and long-term vision of social protection, envisioned not only from one institution but also reaching across to other institutions. For instance, by investing more into human resources and their professionalization. Gómez further suggested to promote inter-sectoral coordination and reduce fragmentation. UNICEF's social protection framework is embedded within a systems approach. From this framework UNICEF is working on guidelines and how-tos, which not only act as a tool kit but also raise certain questions and considerations based on different country experiences. Finally, Gómez recommended to promote collaboration on the global level, particularly with regards to evidence generation and humanitarian responses. Gómez pointed out that such collaborations have already been initiated in the SPIAC-B platform and in the South-South exchange, as well as in collaborative work in knowledge exchange and dissemination of information with the World Bank. Overall Gómez emphasized that UNICEF's main effort is trying to bring together the social protection sector with the humanitarian sector and thus learning about each other's work.

Marco Knowles brought a different perspective into the panel by linking social protection with agriculture. Instead of focusing on challenges of a system's approach, Knowles decided to focus on what already has been achieved based on his experience in Malawi, Lesotho and Zambia. It is in these three countries that he sees a clear vision and an increase in commitment and fiscal space for social protection. For example, in Zambia reliable and predictable payments are ensured, even though concepts and priorities in social protection may diverge. In Malawi, Knowles observed a tension between social protection and the humanitarian sector, where efforts to adapt to differences in conceptualization and priorities still need to be overcome. Knowles pointed out that interlinkages with other policy areas might currently be overlooked. There appears to be insufficient involvement of agriculture with social protection, since agriculture is mainly identified to act within the economic sector.

The FAO developed a social protection framework which aims to adapt support to country requirements and views social protection from an economic perspective, namely as an investment. FAO thus provides support in generating evidence and developing human capacities at the national level through training. Knowles acknowledged that the FAO lacked sufficient involvement with social protection, but now considers itself a new player in the field, also partnering with other institutions such as the World Bank and the ILO. One



of FAO's priorities is to support coordination. In Zambia a joint programme for social protection with the UN was developed which allows five different agencies to coordinate their support to the government not only through social assistance but also through social insurance.

Knowles perceived a need to bring together economic and social sectors in order to continue developing evidence and evidence-based dialogue. National systems needed to engage at different levels, he said. Knowles key message was to consider agriculture as an active part in social protection.



Rather than taking on the difficulty to change others, **Timo Voipio** stressed the importance of changing ourselves. He took Germany as an example of a reliable partner and as a country that promotes investments in capacity building not only for northern organisations and professionals but also for southern ones. In his view, capacity development is one of the key drivers of social protection systems.

From prior experience working with countries, international cooperation of social protection is much thinner at country-level than Voipio assumed. Most of the institutions have only few people working in the field of social protection in few countries, an issue UNICEF has been addressing in its social protection framework and its working policy.

Over the past 20 years social protection experts have been trained and schooled, creating a rich pool of experts. Voipio found that there may be a focus on capacity development in international organisations, though established in the form of short courses rather than providing regular trainings. Exceptional cases can be seen in academic programmes emerged in Mauritius, the Netherlands and in Germany. Voipio encouraged to think of other paths to integrate social protection capacity development, learning and training as is the case for current curricular courses in university and in technical vocational educational training programmes. Aside from dedicated social protection specialists, a multidisciplinary skillset by practitioners is further needed. Social protection requires linkages to other disciplines as well, for example in nutrition, population studies, social work or economics.

With regards to system-building, Voipio stepped away from an assumed linear process logic. Systems-building can never be comprehensive and systematic. However, development partners are often tied to resources and management processes, thus a change in cooperation management is needed.

Voipio highlighted existing opportunities and challenges, such as the Africa Platform for Social Protection, the SPIAC-B coordination network and SPIA, a regional training module for social protection in Africa that does research on informal contributory social insurance.

Taking delivery systems as an example, **Tina George** presented the challenges of integrated interoperable and dynamic systems. Working within the recently developed working group in social protection delivery systems, George stressed the practical implications for how different kinds of benefits and services of social protection are delivered to the poor. George's stated that processes usually begin with outreach methods, which imply assessment of needs and conditions leading to intake and registration. The role of central information systems is essential according to George. Contrary to such a system, fragmented approaches represented a major challenge for the delivery system's framework. George opted for a shift towards more integrated and interoperable systems instead of duplicity in programmes, sectors and administrative work of separate social programmes, causing inefficiencies and major challenges for coordination. She suggested re-evaluating coordination not only from the front-end but also from the back-end in terms of social protection channelling. Difficulties lie in fixed and static systems and steps towards more dynamic and adaptable systems need to be put to the fore. George's considered

social registries that were rather static for registering beneficiaries to determine eligibility. Such static lists fail to take vulnerable characteristics of households into account, hindering an easy entry into the system. In contrast, she took the citizen's service side approach as an example for a continuous and dynamic process of registration which allows households to assess and register themselves. From the institutional side, tools and protocols for assessment, as well as grievance mechanisms could aid dynamic processes.



George stressed the concept of adaptability, raising the question what shopping malls, Airbnb and social registries had in common. The answer lies in the usage and character of unique intermediaries between the product and customers. In shopping malls merchants are the intermediary between the product and the customer, whereas Airbnb's invisible engine system's platform intermediates between renters and landlords through human trust and information. Social registries take information on potential beneficiaries and link them to relevant institutions, similar to the Cadastro Único in Brazil.

Notions of adaptability remain, stated George. Questions need to be raised towards issues of scaling up and down and how a programme could be integrated and interoperated between different systems. George concluded by adding challenges associated with enforcing such dynamic delivery systems which lie in the field of monitoring and measuring performance. For more information please refer to **George's Prezi**.

Questions raised to the panel: In terms of coherence of social protection systems, what specific components need to be better coordinated between sectors? What is the specific role of local government and do we need to rethink our notion of current social welfare and acknowledge its weaknesses? And what should be prioritized – extending coverage or strengthening capacity?



Gómez addressed current notions of social welfare highlighting their diversity in interpretations of what the scope of their work entails. Also pointing out the role of local government as an extended one, where additional services aside from cash are provided. In terms of coherence Gómez stressed that institutional jargon needs to be avoided and further considerate different government time levels. Gómez placed emphasis on the role of the ISPA tools aiding in achieving more coherence which enables to identify advantages and disadvantages of different actors contributing efforts into the different processes.

Knowles suggested it to be best to expand coverage first, before focusing on capacity building. He emphasized how the FAO increases their involvement with ministries of agriculture, simulating impacts and figuring out how to allocate financial resources to different agricultural programmes. Herein information systems may allow for linkages between agriculture and social protection.

George stressed the central role local governments' play especially in terms of delivery mechanisms. As an example she took life-case studies undertaken in Indonesia, Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

Agreeing with George, Voipio added the important role of local workers, their need of training and capacity building, and their commitment to the social contract. Behrendt in contrast, is more cautious with tendencies to decentralize the responsibility of social protection completely to local government. This challenges equity and redistribution because when resources are allocated at

the local level without interlinkages to the national level, it becomes increasingly difficult because poorer regions have fewer resources at their disposal.

Cichon closed the panel by reminding everyone that the major investment needs to be made in people.

Panel 2: Country Experiences with a Systems Approach and Realistic System Design

Chair: Esther Schüring, Professor, Department of Social Security Studies

Panellists:

- Germany: Wolfgang Scholz, former Under-Secretary, BMAS -
- Brazil: Helmut Schwarzer, Social Protection Specialist, ILO, and former Secretary for Social Security, Brazil
- Kenya: Vera Mweu, Social Protection Secretariat, Kenya
- Iran: Vahideh Negin, President, Institute of Social Security & Welfare Applied Science Higher Education, Iran



The main focus of the second panel was on country experiences with a systems approach. Professor Schüring pointed out that the country experiences from the panel all shed light on the challenges faced in various country contexts. Oftentimes countries talk about social protection systems building as a natural process. More emphasis should be placed on how countries exactly go about adopting such an approach and how different potential solutions are

discussed. Though all the panelists were economists, their different country experiences diverged, and each panelist advanced social protection differently in their respective country.

Having previously worked in the ministry for social development in Brazil, **Helmut Schwarzer** reported on Brazil's systems approach. Brazil paved the way for its innovative and developed social protection system in its constitution in 1988, with a more specific constitutional framework and law enacted in 1993. This presented a moment of transition for social development in Brazil, overcoming a charity model of social assistance by introducing the principle of the universal right to social assistance. A prominent programme became Bolsa Familia, which by now has been running for more than ten years, as Schwarzer underlined. Schwarzer described the upscaling of the system as a constant learning process particularly for coordination over a time frame of ten to fifteen years of institutional



development. Setting up a single registry, developing human resource capacity, as well as a culture for development is a long-term process which needs to develop over decades. Schwarzer pointed out the challenges of building a consensus among national networks. In the beginning, pilot projects were important and necessary for testing, but they were by no means sufficient, nor were they reliable in the long-run. Schwarzer emphasized to take the different country-contexts into careful consideration, citing the failure of Latin American countries to copy Chile's privatized pension system. Schwarzer addressed the need to continuously negotiate and refine a system, as a society and its needs constantly change.

Schwarzer saw no definitive answer as to what works in Brazil. Current challenges to the system are related to the establishment of a new government, as well as reductions in different policy areas and financing in social protection. Finally, Schwarzer anticipated a change in priorities of social protection in the future.

Vera Mweu from the Kenyan Social Protection Secretariat presented the status of implementation of social protection programmes in the country. Embedded in the constitution, social protection takes a rights based approach in Kenya. The three major components of social protection are health insurance, social security and social assistance. Mweu illustrated the Vision 2030, which aims to reduce poverty through investing in vulnerable groups. Final steps into this direction are currently being planned with the establishment of a Consolidated Social Protection Fund, estimated to roll out in 2016/2017. Prior to these steps Kenya's Cabinet approved the Kenya National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) in May, 2012 which ensures a

common understanding among different stakeholders. Mweu explained how the NSPP was strengthening and scaling up existing schemes and setting an institutional framework to ensure consistency and adequacy on different levels of support. Mweu mentioned that the steps taken also incorporate strategic collaborations and synergies between programmes.

Kenya has a range of programmes in social assistance and social security in place. Unique programmes Mweu showed were the Kenya Economic and Social Empowerment programmes, health and education related interventions, as well as a range of different cash transfer programmes for vulnerable groups.

Mweu emphasized the challenges to the social protection system, the largest being its fragmentation and the lack of funding, of administrative capacity and of coordination and information sharing between programmes, which leads to duplicative work. Furthermore, poor infrastructure, insecurity and the short duration of programmes hinder targeting, payment and monitoring efforts and limit outreach to vulnerable groups. In addition, the large number of poor, their identification, registration and enrolment processes increase operational costs of programmes and strain institutional capacities. Benefit levels are inadequate and often delayed, challenging the integrity of implementing institutions.



In light of the aspects mentioned above, Mweu highlighted the importance the NSPP has to address these challenges and facilitate reform. It was designed to create a framework for harmonization, specifically for the five government led cash transfer programmes . To also facilitate performance tracking of the programme, effective targeting of beneficiaries and reporting information to key stakeholders, a management information system with a Single Registry was established. Mweu stressed its potential to consolidate and harmonize fragmented schemes, also allowing for scaling up operations. An essential characteristic of the Single Registry is its linkage to the Integrated Population Registration System, which increases transparency, efficiency and accountability especially in cash delivery. Plans for the future are to include all beneficiaries of all programmes in one single registry, Mweu stated. Further steps into this direction are taken by developing a communication strategy which aims to enhance the capacity of an integrated and harmonized communications management of Kenya's national safety net programme. This strategy increases awareness, visibility, understanding and preparedness of programmes, particularly in crisis situations. Moreover, Mweu said that the engagement with the different programme stakeholders may be strengthened.

Kenya's social protection system is planned to undergo a strategic review of the entire social protection sector in order to fill in analytical gaps and to set a foundation for informed policy decision-making in social protection. Mweu provided the panel with an outlook of future endeavors of social protection, namely in comprehensive poverty graduation programmes and Cash Plus programmes.

For more information, please refer to **Mweu's presentation**.



Vahideh Negin from the ministry of cooperative, labour and social security and social protection gave the panel an insight into social protection in Iran. Iran presents an interesting case, aside from the “usual suspects”, Schüring noted.

Negin began her presentation by providing an overview of the economic situation of Iran. Reducing the inflation rate and increasing economic growth

are important social protection measures in Iran Negin stated. With a population of approximately 78.14 million the male labour participation rate amounts to 66%, which is more than three times that of the female participation rate with 13.8%. In great contrast to these numbers, Negin highlighted the high percentage of female actively working in the informal sector.

Negin further elaborated on the historical developments that took place in Iran, beginning in 1922 with the adoption of the first National Employment Law which formulated the first Iranian retirement system and the social security law adopted in 1952. From that point onwards a range of different schemes were adopted and ministries developed, Negin explained.

With the ratification of the comprehensive Welfare and Social Security System Structure act in 2004, the final foundations for the following three tiers in social protection were set with the constitutional law, principle 29: social insurance mechanisms (ISSO and social insurance funds), social assistance mechanisms (state welfare organisation, Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation and Charities) and rescue and relief mechanisms (state, non-state and international aid).

Negin mentioned that little international experience guides Iran in managing the different funds. Few non-governmental institutions with the administrative and financial independence execute and manage the different programmes. Iran's insurance financing methods are based on a partially funded, pay-as-you-go scheme with a defined benefit for the insured. As of 2014 insurance coverage for the total population was estimated 77.86%. In the future Iran's

dependency ratio remarkably decreases, forcing Iran to address the problems of an ageing population. To address the lack of a centralized insurance system for non-wage earners, the strong dependence on insurance funds and the lack of a comprehensive safety net, as well as insufficient resources and liabilities of insurance and funds, Negin shared Iran's intentions to move towards a multi-pillar social security system. The first pillar refers to social assistance and reflects the need of partial and full assistance for those able and unable to rehabilitate, through health assistance services. The second pillar comprises of basic social insurance that includes compulsory social and health insurance. Additionally, a comprehensive national social and health insurance exist. The third and final pillar is associated with complementary social insurance on individual accounts linking it to commercial and private insurance.

For further information, please check **Negin's presentation**.

Wolfgang Scholz started off by recounting the history of the German welfare state. His starting point was in the 1880s, when a social protection system evolved in the German nation state. Consistent discussions were held in the Reichstag, already developing a common language for social protection, about when and in what sequences programmes should be introduced. The first programmes implemented were unemployment, pension and health insurance. Operating under common law, each system has reporting obligations which meant they had to collect data and report it to the centralized institution in place. The statistical information retrieved from the data collection made policy makers back then realize that workers did not want to go to hospitals because they were scared of getting sick in the hospital themselves. From this information the first hospital reform was initiated, Scholz explained. If one did not care for local communities, one would not discover these problems, Scholz pointed out, thus one would also not be able to formulate policies which react to local needs and activities.



Scholz articulated that a major achievement in Germany is the accident insurance which got rid of employer's liability schemes and proved very successful. This triggered a process of improving worker safety.

After the 1950s, a range of social insurance policies were established and the Bismarckian system was constantly improved and refined. Scholz estimated the completion of social insurance policies in the 1990s, when systems appeared to work well. They are perfectly administered, widely consistent and can rely on non-corrupt civil servants.

Today, several problems are on the rise with regards to the German pension system, stated Scholz. Germany is already facing an ageing society resulting in benefit cuts and an increase in the retirement age over the last decades. Scholz sees the pension system in great need for reform. Assuming that the German pension system maintains its redistributive mechanism in the system, some of its bismarckian characteristics will be lost in the name of intergenerational equality, such as the pension benefit representing one's position in society during working age. To conclude, Scholz took a critical perspective towards the German government as it appears to neglect addressing the need for pension reform.



Andrew Mitchell from UNHCR asked Scholz about the role of evolving social protection systems for displaced people. Scholz explained that the German system covers refugees and displaced under the umbrella of social assistance. However, the government tries to minimize the amount

of people falling under social assistance by facilitating their participation into the labour market, rather than allowing entry into the social assistance scheme.

Kenya and Brazil are also affected by migration flows and shared their country experiences. Refugees in Kenya are sometimes better off than local vulnerable groups according to Vera Mweu, which is why repatriation efforts were initiated. Brazil on the other hand is considered a country of transit for migrants, whereas only a smaller part of those are refugees from wars. The discussion in Latin America currently sees the necessity to move away from the idea of building walls and other security measures to a more social and labour policy approach which acknowledges the rights of migrants.

The question was raised to Negin as to what measures exist in Iran that address the livelihood risks of women. Negin pointed out that empowerment measures for women headed households exist for example through the provision of vocational education and other learning measures. Assessments in this regard are often difficult because many organisations provide services to women, yet little is known about the total effect of all interventions and programmes in place.

Mweu responded to the question what role local governments play in Kenya and what mechanisms are in place by underlining the concept of the Single Registry and local governments involvement in it. It allows for quick scaling up and enables synergies across local governments. Mweu also informed the panel that more conceptual underpinnings of social protection and its perception by local officers and the demand side are taken into account. This occurs for example by widening grievance mechanisms.

Panel 3: Analytical Tools for System Assessment

Chair: Johanna Knoess, Head of Sector Initiative Social Protection, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Panellists:

- Veronika Wodsak, Social Protection Specialist, ILO and ISPA Coordinator -
- Nguyen Thi Lan Huong, former Director, Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs, Vietnam -
- Setiawan Noviarto, Consultant, GIZ Social Protection Programme, Indonesia
- Alessandra Heinemann, Coordinator EU-SPS, OECD
- Ruslan Yemtsov, Lead Economist, Social Protection & Labor, World Bank

This panel session looked at the tools that are available for assessing the performance of social protection systems. Most prominently, the Interagency Social Protection Assessment (ISPA) tools were discussed. After an introduction of the tools by Veronika Wodsak, Nguyen Thi Lan Huong and Setiawan Noviarto presented experiences from the usage of the tools in Vietnam and Indonesia. Alessandra Heinemann gave an overview of alternative tools, followed by an overall comment on lessons learned so far by Ruslan Yemtsov. The consensus among the panellists was that assessment tools such as ISPA can help move towards a systems approach

to social protection, which is generally seen as necessary. However, the tools face limitations, for example in terms of data availability, and still have to stand the test of time.



The ISPA tools are a set of tools developed by experts from more than 20 agencies, as **Veronika Wodsak** explained in her introductory presentation. ISPA tools can be used for various purposes: Firstly, it is possible to assess entire systems, their policy options and financing methods. Secondly, ISPA tools allow for the assessment of single programmes. Finally, single delivery methods can be evaluated, such as identification mechanisms, eligibility assessments, complaints or payment procedures and others. Multiple stakeholders will benefit from the tools, according to Wodsak: Countries and their governments, but also international partners and, ultimately, households. Tools come with a “What matters” guidance note that lays



the technical foundation for the assessment, provides instructions and outlines how the assessment will be organized. Furthermore, they include a questionnaire for conducting the assessment. Results are presented in a summary matrix and a detailed country report.

Wodsak also reported on the process of designing the tools: The classification of social protection programmes was a contentious issue, with some actors taking a

“life-cycle” approach and others dividing up the policies into social assistance, social insurance and labour market intervention. It was also unclear how programme findings can be used on a systems level and vice versa.

Several country pilots have been conducted to test the ISPA tools: The ISPA ID Tool for identification and registration in Peru and Morocco, the Public Works Tool in El Salvador, Liberia and Senegal, the Payments Tool in Tanzania and Indonesia and the Core Systems Diagnostic Instrument Tool (CODI) in Vietnam and the Philippines.

From the Senegal Pilot, Wodsak presented lessons learned: She emphasized the importance of clear assessment objectives in light of the variety of objectives that social protection systems can have. In any case, the systematic, standardized data framework proved to be useful. Wodsak noted that the tool could be used for a baseline assessment as well as for results tracking. It could also serve as a checklist for planning and designing new programmes. Adaptation to the country context was crucial, however. In the implementation process, government ownership and stakeholder involvement should be secured. Moreover, the tool was found to enhance the coordination among development partners, opening channels for policy dialogue. One of the major limitations is the capacity of local administration to use this data, which should be overcome by training.

For further information, please check **Veronika Wodsak’s presentation**.

In the second presentation, **Nguyen Thi Lan Huong** reported on the **experiences from the CODI pilot in Vietnam**. In 2012, Vietnam adopted a social protection development strategy that aims to achieve universal coverage in 2020. Vietnam revised its constitution to include the right to social protection in 2013. Its social protection system is divided into four characteristics - employment, social insurance, social assistance and basic social services - and encompasses around 30 policies.



In social protection systems such as Vietnam’s, CODI can be used to map key elements of the social protection system, analyze its policies and serve as an evidence base for a country-wide dialogue. It is, however, not used for cross-country comparisons. CODI contains three components: The social protection system policy and legislative framework, its programmes design and implementation, and its performance assessment.

In the context of Vietnam, CODI was used to assess three of the pillars of Vietnam’s social protection system: employment, social insurance, and social assistance.

In line with Wodsak, Nguyen stressed that CODI could not only help assess Vietnam's social protection system but also could be a monitoring tool and provide an evidence base for policy-making processes. It could also be used identify gaps in the country's data collection system. She suggested that the tool's questionnaire could be adapted to fully fit the country context and capture both programme-level results and system-wide information.

As CODI's strengths, Nguyen identified the clarity, detail and completeness of the tool. She said that the process of using the tool facilitated the coordination between policy makers, improved the evidence base and showed interlinkages between social protection programmes and the overall system. Yet it also revealed overlaps, inconsistencies and financing problems. New tools could strengthen analytical capacities and provide information to development partner agencies. On the other hand, she criticized the tools were too complex, making them difficult to use. She also said that the tool did not sufficiently take the country context into account, as many questions were inappropriate to the context of Vietnam. She also suggested the tool was too ambitious and too static to apply to to all programmes.

For further information, please check **Nguyen Thi Lan Huong's presentation.**

Setiawan Noviaro's presentation on the **assessment of the payment system in Indonesia** began with an outline of the country's long-term development prospects. He highlighted that demographic growth, ageing and - despite recent economic growth - poverty still are challenges to Indonesia. He presented a reform programme leading to a national social protection system with three parts by 2025: Regular social assistance for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the disabled and the children; temporary social assistance for victims of natural disasters, social conflict and economic shocks; and health and social welfare insurances. For national social assistance programmes, the government of Indonesia maintains a database (BDT).



In the context of its social protection system reform, the government of Indonesia is currently selecting the most suitable payment instruments for its social protection schemes. It views payment mechanisms as key delivery aspects of social protection systems and as entry points for financial inclusion. The ISPA Payment Tool is a framework for assessing the payment delivery mechanism and the general payments environment for the delivery of cash or near cash social protection transfers. The ISPA assessment was conducted by the Indonesian

Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS) in collaboration with the GIZ and the Bank Indonesia.

Noviarto described the ISPA tool as very practical and comprehensive and indicated that the international recognition of the tool was an advantage. However, he criticized that there was no overview of the programme results that the process was time-consuming and that instructions were difficult to understand for non-experts. Noviarto suggested making the ISPA payment tool more usable for government officials who are not experts. In addition sample cases for guidance could be included. He also highlighted the necessity of capacity building and coaching in order to improve an understanding of the tool and to raise awareness. In connection to this, he said the sense of ownership and commitment should be raised and inter-agency coordination improved.

For further information, please check **Setiawan Noviarto's presentation**.

The last presentation was given by **Alessandra Heinemann**, who spoke about the **variety of tools** that are available. Namely, she cited the UNICEF and ILO tool for an assessment of fiscal space, the Commitment to Equity (CEQ) Institute's assessment tool that assesses policy in terms of equity and tools on public expenditure developed by the ILO and the World Bank. Heinemann argued that the multiplicity of tools was a reflection of differences in country contexts, the ISPA tools could serve as an inspiration and documentation of a consensus view on what social protection assessment tools should look like. The OECD tools that were currently being developed reflected country demands, said Heinemann.

Discussant **Ruslan Yemtsov** raised a number of additional points in his comments on the current state of assessment tools worldwide. He began by listing issues connected to the tools. A major challenge for him was that the concept of need is still underdeveloped and has to be improved through joint efforts. The tools, he said, didn't have a mechanism to monitor their usage. Furthermore, revisions and change in priorities within SPIAC-B were difficult according to him. Lastly, he advocated for increased commitment to collect programme data and improve



transparency of the programmes at the same time since without the data the tools cannot work. Yemtsov also added two motivations to use the ISPA tools: The tools, he said, helped building a consensus view. Also, countries wanted recognition for their efforts in the field of social protection and therefore demanded assessments.

Discussion chair **Johanna Knoess** closed the session with a wrap-up. She summarized the results of the panel, stressing once more that country demand will prove the usefulness of the ISPA and other tools. However, she also emphasized the importance of a political momentum to promote the standardized assessment of social protection systems. She concluded by saying that while social protection system assessment tools can be important, they are only part of a puzzle. A lot more has to be done in order to design comprehensive social protection systems that leave no one behind.

Panel 4: Effective Linkages, Feasible Graduation Mechanisms & Partner Support

Chair: Cäcilie Schildberg, Project Coordinator, Global Policy and Development Department, Friedrich--Ebert-Stiftung

Panellists:

- Ebenezer Adjetey--Sorse, Chair, Africa Platform for Social Protection -
- Tessa Khan, UN Women's Major Group
- Keetie Roelen, Co--Director, Centre for Social Protection, Institute for Development Studies
- Carolina Dantas, Technical Advisor Social Protection, Trade Union Confederation of the Americas
- Inge Baumgarten, Head of Section, Health, Education & Social Development, Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH -
- Syed M. Hashemi, Senior Advisor, Graduation and Vulnerable Segments, Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP)

Panel 4 was a moderated discussion on linkages between different social protection interventions - in particular on the graduation approach - as well as on the respective roles of different actors in a development context such as countries in the north and south, international organisations and the civil society. Linkages were found to be necessary, but involving complex considerations, including gender issues. Furthermore, graduation approaches were presented as promising in terms of poverty reduction.



Panel chair **Cäcilie Schildberg** first steered the discussion towards the factors that need to be taken into account when linking social protection interventions. In response, **Keetie Roelen** described challenges concerning staffing and human resources. She first stressed the importance of building

capacities with implementing staff. However, she also cautioned policymakers to consider the roles of the implementing staff. From her experience in sub-saharan Africa, she described different models of seeing the staff's role. For example, she saw social workers who have a mandate to deal with complex family situations. Consigning them to deal with poverty and inequality issues can overload social workers, particularly when administrative tasks do not allow them to follow their mandate, warned Roelen, recounting an example from Botswana. Similar frustrations could arise when implementation is done through community mechanisms, she said. The needs of those implementing social protection programmes had to be taken into account, Roelen said.

The discussion also touched upon the the role of the SDGs in promoting a systems approach.

Inge Baumgarten confirmed the importance of a holistic approach in the context of the SDGs in contrast to previous fragmented approaches. Social protection, she said, is one of the important threads that can connect many goals and targets in the SDGs. Baumgarten stressed the importance of sustainably financing social protection on one hand and of capacity building and human resource development on the other. She also underlined that it is essential to use evidence on different social protection interventions when thinking of linkages and system building. This was crucial in order to give sound technical advice, she said.



In the face of financial and other limitations, Schildberg challenged her panellists to think of ways to ensure that social protection systems go beyond a minimal approach. In response, **Carolina Dantas** drew a strong connection between social protection and decent work: She saw the creation of work opportunities with fair conditions as a prime way of eliminating poverty and advocated taxation and redistribution of funds. Dantas also placed the issue of social protection and poverty reduction in the wider context of the neo-liberal world economy and the transnationalization of capital. She complained that low-income countries had no control of the supply chains that they are part of and said the global south should have access to the management of resources. Dantas advocated a consolidation of the state capacity to organize taxation and redistribution. For Dantas, workers and trade unions should play an active part in promoting this agenda.



The debate then shifted to a discussion of the graduation approach, with **Syed. M. Hashemi** giving an introductory presentation to the topic. He introduced the topic by recounting the pilot project implemented by the Bangladeshi NGO BRAC that sought to reduce poverty among the extremely poor. Graduation approaches are sequenced sets of interventions, often starting with cash transfers, but also including services pertaining to health, financial inclusion, livelihood creation and other issues as well as asset transfers. They often focus on the very poorest of society and aim at providing them with a sustainable pathway out of poverty.

Hashemi presented the results of randomized control trials and research conducted in eight countries around the world: He pointed out that programme participants experienced increases in earnings, consumption, saving and investment in most of the pilots, and that the programmes were cost-effective everywhere except in Honduras. Contextual issues, however, are of utmost



importance according to Hashemi. The existence of markets, health care, education, infrastructure, as well as climatic and macro-economic factors played a large role, he said. One challenge he identified was scaling up the programmes: In India, this is done through targeting different groups of poor by specific programmes.

Overall, Hashemi saw graduation approaches as holistic and as consistent but flexible set of interventions that can and should be adapted to different contexts. He emphasized the importance of empowering the poor as well as categorizing them in order to tailor the interventions to their needs.

Graduation approaches, Hashemi stressed, were not about getting people out of social protection. They create pathways to sustainable livelihoods. But even when having escaped poverty, participants still need to be protected from life cycle risks through social insurance. As participants graduate out of poverty and thus move out of social assistance, this frees up resources that can then be reallocated. Graduation approaches can thus contribute to dealing with resource constraints.

For more information, please refer to **Syed Hashemi's presentation**.



Ebenezer Adjetey-Sorsey commented that the macroeconomic environment was a crucial determinant of the success of graduation programmes. While acknowledging that graduation promotes linkages between different government programmes, Adjetey-Sorsey also highlighted the competition among government institutions for scarce funds. From his experience in Ghana, he reported that rather than promoting social protection as a right or as a way to social justice, it can also be seen as a way to organize beneficiaries, to involve them and to empower them to take their fate in their own hands. Furthermore, two crucial points were highlighted: Firstly, social protection is not just about poverty reduction, but can also help increase growth and induce development. Secondly, “the gains shouldn’t be reversed”: Graduation should not be detrimental to those in need of social assistance, Adjetey-Sorsey said.

The possibility of making graduation sustainable was further elaborated on by Keetie Roelen. She pushed for taking a micro-level perspective on the success of sustainable graduation, putting households in the focus of the analysis. First, she stressed the importance of appropriate targeting. Then, she advised taking additional care when dealing with participating households that have dependents. They were slow movers, she said, taking more time to reach graduation thresholds, if at all. Improving their productive inclusion takes time from them to care for their dependents. Households with many dependents might need additional help in order to graduate, especially women. Taking up Ebenezer Adjetey-Sorsey's dictum of “the gains shouldn’t be reversed”, Roelen promoted an intergenerational perspective on graduation. Truly



sustainable graduation, she said, meant that the next generation benefits from the graduation process. Therefore, one needed to look at what was happening to the children in beneficiary households, whether they were benefitting in terms of their development and education, or whether they might have to substitute for their parents' care responsibilities.

The discussion then moved towards making graduation programmes gender-sensitive. **Tessa Khan** spoke about the importance of acknowledging that social protection always touches on gender issues. Women still faced systemic inequality and disadvantages, she said, often working more than men while receiving less pay. Contextual responses to this were necessary, Khan explained, for example by linking conditional cash transfers to women's empowerment or education for girls. On the other hand, conditional cash transfers can increase the burden of household and care work as well as reinforce gender stereotypes by attributing reproductive work as the responsibility of women. According to Khan, it is important that this framework is challenged.

Khan cited several lessons learned: Gender considerations, to her, are essential in efforts to meet the goal of universal social protection. Rather than focussing on transfers alone, she advocated the provision of affordable and high quality social services, which have a larger effect on poverty reduction than cash transfers. An active partnership between citizens and the state as an equitable form of responsibility is important was another point she mentioned. Women should be seen as independent partners in relation with the state. An Egyptian conditional cash transfer programme can serve as an example for this: The financial support was transferred to a bank account, giving women more influence on the money. Social workers visited the families to ensure the compliance with the conditions such as child school attendance, visits to the health

clinic and attendance at awareness sessions on nutrition, finances and health. After one year, women were in better jobs, participation in education by the children had increased and there was less domestic violence - the cash had taken the tension out of the relationships.

In a later contribution to the session, Khan emphasized the role of women's movements in promoting women's rights. She cited research that had found the existence of women's autonomous activism as an important driver of gender equality.

Other than on gender issues, the discussion also concerned the relation between the graduation approach and the idea of universalism and rights-based approaches. Carolina Dantas presented the trade unions' standpoint in this regard. She reported on their experiences with structural reforms in Latin America in the 1980s that were imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and the privatisation of pensions that caused increases in poverty. Restating Hashemi's opinion that graduation programmes should not replace social protection, she called for a vertical expansion of social protection and warned that the targeting through graduation programmes could mean minimal policies and down-scaling of systems in times of fiscal austerity. She emphasized that the poor must not have differential rights to the others in society.



Schildberg then asked how governments can be pushed towards universalist policies and at the same towards embracing graduation mechanisms. In response, Hashemi conceded that universal social protection was an exciting idea, but with right-wing parties gaining traction, it might not be possible. Rather, graduation programmes could be seen as a way to work within the budgetary limitations and the political circumstances, he said.

Development partners play an important role in reducing inequality and operationalizing the concept of “leaving no one behind”, said Inge Baumgarten. She reported on the pilot project on graduation that the GIZ is running in Malawi, where beneficiaries are provided a one-off lump sum and monthly payments as well as business management training. The programme is conducted as a randomised control trial to assess its success.

On the other hand, the role of the civil society should not be underestimated, said Ebenezer Adjetey-Sorsey. Civil society organisations should be included in all parts of the decision-making process. In this context, he made clear that the donor community has a lot of responsibility for the success of graduation programmes. If graduation approaches are presented as ideology, he said, they are bound to fail. Rather, they should be evaluated and reevaluated as they are implemented. As civil society capacities are strengthened, donors should also change their attitude and see civil society organisations as partners to avoid

paternalism. Adjetey-Sorsey also attested donors a harmful competition amongst each other, by which they rather care about making a point in their countries of origin than effectively helping programme participants.

The discussion sparked numerous remarks and questions from the audience. Michael Cichon in his contribution viewed graduation from poverty as an important goal, but also said that many countries would not be able to implement sufficient programmes by themselves. Therefore, he brought a global fund for financing social protection into the discussion. Bernd Schubert remarked that graduation had a “dangerous” connotation, pushing implementing officers to make people leave social protection programmes. In response, Hashemi reiterated that graduation programmes should not be implemented without also creating social protection systems. Another participant remarked a lack of measured spillovers from graduation pilots. He also raised ethical questions about creating treatment and control groups when conducting randomized control trials. Eddy Walakira enquired about the kind of skills that should be put emphasis on to effectively implement social protection programmes. Keetie Roelen as well as Ebenezer Adjetey-Sorsey underlined the importance of tailoring trainings to country contexts. As their final statement, Tessa Khan restated that social protection mechanisms were not benign, but rather might lead to an entrenchment of gender inequality.

Schildberg offered concluding remarks in which she reaffirmed the complexity of the issue and the importance of linkages, but also the difficulties in the design of integrated programmes. An important point for her was that the international community should be an example for the cooperation partners by coordinating its approaches.



Day 2

The second day gave room to practitioners and academics to present their latest research findings around system-strengthening in the form of papers and posters. Selected speakers presented their research around the themes of conceptual variations of social protection systems, effective linkages between social protection interventions and different ways of how to analyse the performance of social protection systems.

Paper Session 1: System Variation -- Conceptual Variations of SP systems

Session 1A

Paper 1:

The Role of Civil Society Organisations in the Advancement of Social Protection Systems

Sarah Vaes, Jan Van Ongevalle, Bénédicte Fonteneau (HIVA KU Leuven)

This first paper was a collection of ongoing research on: Current evidence related to the impact of civil society organisation involvement in social protection systems; the levers civil society organisations use to exert influence across different stages of the policy cycle; and the factors that contribute to their success or failure.

The authors did not identify any research that established – or looked for – a statistical causal relationship between the involvement of civil society organisations and the quality of social protection systems. Consequently, the authors based their research on around forty qualitative case studies providing more insight on how CSOs are involved in building social protection systems. Their analysis was structured around the analytical framework of the policy cycle. Civil society organisations engage with social protection policies at all stages of the policy cycle and use a variety of strategies at different points in the process. The presentation detailed one of them: The agenda setting stage. Here, civil society organisations can act through public campaigns, strikes, lobbying and advocacy, experiments and grassroots initiatives. Their influence extends to the political will, the speed of policy change and the underlying ideas in society. Success of the organisations' activities was influenced by both internal factors (such as membership base, visibility or financial capacity) and external ones (such as economic context, political regime and democratisation or general proliferation of organisations).

The authors identified finding indicators of impact of CSOs, the role of politics in social protection systems development and matching indicators of social protection and civil society as possibilities for future research.

Discussant Eddy Walakira suggested taking into account a number of further issues, such as the impact of foreign NGOs in the global south and corresponding questions of ownership. He also said a more clear definition of social protection systems was necessary.

Questions and remarks from the audience included comments on the influence of international NGOs and the role of civil society organisations not only in social protection systems building but also in maintaining social protection systems. Furthermore, the risk that civil society organisations take on responsibility that should really be borne by the government, and thus may hinder reforms, was pointed out.

For more information, please refer to **Vaes, van Ongevalle and Fonteneau's paper**.



Paper 2:
Power Play Behind the Scene of Redistributive Social Protection Systems? Lessons from Senegal

Jan van Ongevalle, Sarah Vaes, Bénédicte Fonteneau (HIVAKU Leuven)

The socio-political dimension of redistributive social protection was in the focus of this second paper. The authors tested an analytical framework on how social protection is shaped at the example of the Senegalese health coverage.

The context of this analysis was the objective set by the Senegalese government to reach a 75% health coverage by 2017. The government has decided to work towards this goal by promoting decentralized voluntary health insurance through subsidized mutual health organisations (CMU-DECAM).

Looking at different stages of the policy cycle, agenda setting turns out to be the most straightforward. The strong international emphasis on social protection and president Macky Sall's election promise to extend health insurance pushed health coverage to the top of the Senegalese political agenda.

During policy formulation, small sectors of existing mutual health organisations supported by a few influential champions of mutualism were able to use the window of opportunity and consolidate a strong role for mutual health organisations in the elected policy. Trade unions, on the other hand, were less involved: The health coverage expansion mainly targeted the informal sector, in part because government feared that negotiations with trade unions about the formal sector would take too long. Another interesting feature of policy formulation was the influence of bilateral donors: While USAID supported the implementation of mutual health organisations at the community level; the Belgian development cooperation piloted an alternative approach towards professional mutual health organisations at department level (UDAM). Finally, the issue of financing was kept completely behind closed doors, leaving the civil society unaware of decisions taken.

The success of policy implementation still needs to be assessed. However, the time-frame is so short that it jeopardizes the quality of the process.

The presentation concluded that the power play within and between different actors involved has to be taken into account to understand the policy process. Hence the response to fragmentation is not just be technocratic, like coordination, but should also involve power analysis and coalition building.

The presentation was followed by various comments on the differentiation between fragmentation and power play. Discussant Anaïs Dangeot highlighted the need to clarify the purpose of the research and the linkages between the theoretical framework and the case.

For more information, please refer to **van Ongevalle, Vaes and Fonteneau's paper**.

Paper 3:

Institutional Factors and People's Preferences in Social Protection

Vincenzo Vinci, Franziska Gassmann, Pierre Mohnen (UNU-Merit MGSoG)

The third paper assessed the impact of institutional quality and people's preferences on social protection expenditure in a country.

Existing literature, according to the authors, focuses on affordability and political factors as determinants of social protection systems. This paper sought to contribute to the literature by testing two additional factors. Government social protection expenditure was used as the dependent variable, whereas institutional quality and people's preferences were independent variables, with past economic performance, demographic characteristics as well as legal and historical factors being used as controls.

Simple OLS showed that social protection expenditure increased with the quality of institutions and that people's preferences matter too. In order to exclude reverse causality, the authors also tried an instrumental variable approach, using latitude and trade freedom as instruments for quality of institutions. These yielded weaker results, but the direction of the effects were consistent with those obtained by OLS. As robustness checks, the authors tested different definitions for the quality of institutions as well as social protection expenditure and conducted an analysis only with a subsample of low- and middle-income countries. The results were found to be robust. Furthermore, the authors introduced additional controls, finding both the maturity of social protection programmes and government revenues to have positive and significant effects. The common assumption that countries with French colonial history have more generous social protection systems was not corroborated by the research.

Discussant Mundia Libati mentioned further challenges to social protection expenditures such as changes in government, insufficient tax collection as well as insufficient staffing, misallocation of human resources and cultural norms.

Further comments concerned interactions between preferences and institutions and controls for election cycles.

For more information, please refer to **Vinci, Gassmann and Mohnen's paper**.

Session B

Paper 4:

Political Regimes and Pro-poor Transfers in Developing Countries

Marina Dodlova (Passau University), Jann Lay (GIGA Hamburg)

This paper takes a closer look at the politics of conditional transfers in developing countries as part of a research project funded by the EU Commission.

Over the past decades a large expansion of cash transfer programmes in developing countries could be observed, covering more than 65% of all countries. 35% of all developing countries adopted at least one conditional cash transfer programme. Many studies discuss the technicalities of transfers, however they fail to point out the political aspects of such programmes, which is what this paper attempts to address.

Dodlova and Lay used theory and empirical tests with a unique quantitative dataset on social transfer programmes to explain how different political regimes choose different types of transfer programmes. Higher inequality within a country increases the probability of having a social assistance programme overall. Their key findings show that democracies have more cash transfer programmes with conditions. Non-democracies, on the other hand, choose more selective targeted transfers without conditions, yet with the motive to buy-off opposition and prevent social unrest.

The discussant Katrin Weible from Bielefeld University pointed out the relevance of this paper, as it is one of the first studies to analyze all social transfer programmes quantitatively. She welcomed the author's contribution to finding out to what extent country characteristics influence the adoption of any social transfer programme. Weible, however, questioned the contributions of the second part of the paper, where the authors try to find out to what extent country characteristics, including the regime type, have any influence on whether the transfers are conditional or unconditional. According to her, the distinction between conditional and unconditional programmes is not clear, since it is based on a classification of programmes which is blurred and incomplete.

Weible suggested a revision of the classification of programmes: either the classification should strictly focus on the aspect of conditionality only, or it should consistently focus on policy models of social transfer programmes which include not only conditionality, but also particular target groups. As a response, Dodlova said that the information on the types of conditions is available and the database is constructed in the way that it is possible to reclassify the programs if needed. All elements of the design are encoded as binary variables. At this stage, no distinction between conditionality was made, as the condition itself presents a compliance to a certain behavior, including public works programmes. Further, the study can be enriched by focusing on the types of conditions. Regarding the policy implications, Dodlova suggested that autocracies could be given more incentives to adopt transfer programmes with conditions as the latter imply investments in human capital development in these countries.

For more information, please refer to **Dodlova's and Lay's paper**.

Paper 5:

Leave nobody behind. Designing systemic poverty/hunger reduction programmes for Least Developed Countries

Bernd Schubert, Team Consult

In this paper Schubert explores how to design systematic social protection programmes that leave no one behind in a very poor country, taking Malawi as an example.

Schubert explained that when choosing between options for providing effective social protection systems under conditions of severe financial and administrative constraints, LDC governments should opt for a systemic approach that is designed to achieve the following results/benefits:

1. Include all ultra poor households – leave nobody behind. Being excluded from poverty/hunger reduction programmes can mean the difference between life and death for members of ultra poor households (food poor households)
2. Restrict social assistance to households that are ultra poor and consist exclusively or mainly of vulnerable persons (OVC, elderly, disabled, chronically sick, single mothers with many children)
3. Ensure that ultra poor households with labour capacity are not provided with long-term social assistance but with access to labour-based programs. This reduces dependency syndrome fears.

Based on these principles the Government of Malawi analysed eight different options for achieving the results listed above. The analysis arrived at the conclusion that categorical programs like social pensions or child grants are not the best choice for effective systems of poverty/hunger reduction under the constraints of a poor country like Malawi. Categorical programs tend to exclude large groups of ultra needy people and/or exceed the financial and administrative capacities of LDCs. Schubert concluded that LDC governments can best achieve the above social protection results by implementing inclusive programs that provide social assistance to all ultra poor labour-constrained households and access to labour-based activities to all ultra poor labour-endowed households (public works, livelihood programmes) combined with access to basic social services.

The discussant Brian Mathebula highlighted the missing rights-based approach which should provide the basis for designing systematic social protection programmes in Schubert's paper. This approach helps to dismantle the fallacy of the stigmatization of the "undeserving poor" and assist our understanding to move towards a model in which people are understood as individuals with inherent dignity and entitlements to social protection. Targeting further enforces such stigmatization, Mathebula said. Furthermore, Mathebula criticized the notion of a dependency syndrome, as this also relates to thinking of the poor as weak and lazy, yet little evidence on this actually exists. Innovative financing measures are needed to steer government priorities into the right direction. More consensus on the notion of global solidarity needs to be achieved in order to prepare for future challenges on how resources are to be distributed if not through the private market.

Additional questions raised included what the reason for a fear of dependency was, how a distinction between a labour-constrained and labour-used household is made and how households are dealt with that are unable to work.

For more information, please refer to **Schubert's presentation**.

Paper 6:

Social Protection Systems in Latin America's Southern Cone: Impacts on Social Cohesion

Gala Diaz Langou (CIPPEC)

Diaz Langou researched on the impacts of conditional cash transfers on social cohesion in Argentina, Chile and Brazil.

Dependent on the meaning of social protection in each country social cohesion is addressed and affected differently. Within the same systems social risk management, the role of labour markets and social democratic experience each are dealt with differently in the respective countries.

The social protection system in Argentina with a strong corporatist tradition demonstrates strong links to the labour market, whereas Brazil refers to social protection more prominently within a rights-based rhetoric. In Chile, social protection is closer to the liberal ideal type and includes behavioural components into its programmes, through psychological support for example.

Diaz Langou discussed the broad definitions of social cohesion and pointed out it's both material and symbolic resource characteristics which classifies the levels of cohesion within the respective countries. The design and implementation of the three conditional cash transfer programmes contribute to social cohesion differently dependent on their target population, exit strategy, targeting mechanism, compliance and sanctions and their classification in material and symbolic resources used. As a results it is Argentina's Universal Family allowance which is considered to contribute most to notions of social cohesion.

Fabio Veras commented on Diaz Langou's treatment of the three conditional cash transfers as a similar unit, acknowledging their diversity in conditions as advantageous to the research. What Veras would have liked to see however, was how the ideal types of conditional transfers are viewed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) as a reference point. Furthermore, Veras addressed the overconceptualization of the framework of social cohesion and social protection, as too elaborate for research question tackled. He also points out the country-specific context of Argentina which has a different political background than Chile and Brazil.

For further information, please refer to **Diaz Langou's paper**.

Paper Session 2: System Creation - Effective Linkages between SP Interventions

Session 2A

Paper 7:

Putting Agriculture into Social Protection Systems: Strengthening Coherence between Agriculture and Social Protection

Marco Knowles (FAO)

Marco Knowles presented a report on linkages between agricultural policies and social protection interventions.

He began his presentation by explaining why agricultural interventions and social protection need to be combined. In developing countries, he said, agriculture was characterised by few animals, basic technologies, limited land and modern inputs as well as a focus on staple crops. In order to increase production, agricultural interventions are necessary, but not sufficient. The reason, according to Knowles: farmers face trade-offs between consumption, investment, and health and education. Cash transfers can be a way to reduce liquidity constraints, thus increasing labour productivity and investments and allowing farmers to manage and take risks. Cash transfers have been found to influence labour choice, but not work effort, thus not providing evidence for the concern of dependency. Social protection can also have an impact at the community and local level, providing infrastructure through public works programmes, renewing the participation in local networks and stimulating the local economy, Knowles said.

In the second part of his presentation, Knowles talked about how to bring together agriculture and social protection. Among the challenges: The ministries of agriculture on one hand and of social welfare on the other have different objectives and approaches. While ministries of agriculture often understand themselves as economic ministries and target commercial farmer, ministries of social welfare see themselves as social institutions and rather target the poor and vulnerable. Often there is a limited understanding of the theory of change behind the graduation of people out of poverty, limited understandings of the productive potential of the poor and little coordination between the branches of government, according to Knowles.

As a solution, Knowles pointed to the need of creating evidence on the synergies between the different policies, as well as institutional coordination and financing arrangements. As an example of policy coordination, he named home-grown school feeding programmes. Messaging, information systems for M&E and other design options could further help bringing the two sectors together, he said.

Subsequent to the presentation, the audience asked questions about the methodology used, classification of programmes, limitations of the interventions as well as about land reform. For more information, please refer to **Knowles' paper**.

Paper 8:

Social Grants, Remittances, and Food Security: Does the Source of Income Matter?

Jennifer Waidler (UNUMerit MGSOG), Stephen Devereux (IDS)

Jennifer Waidler and Stephen Devereux investigated the effect of different types of transfers on food and nutrition security.

Previously, the literature has mostly looked at formal transfers but informal transfers, such as remittances had to be taken into account, they said. A literature review revealed that while increases in income increase expenditure on food, the empirical impact on nutritional outcomes is limited.

Using the South African National Income Dynamics Survey 2008/2010, Waidler and Devereux estimated the effect of transfers on anthropometric and other kinds of indicators on food outcomes with a fixed-effects regression. Using the dietary diversity index (DDI) as a dependent variable, they found that the South African Old Persons Grant and remittances had significant positive effects. The Child Support Grant didn't, which might be explained by the fact that it provides lower transfers (roughly one third of the Old Persons Grant), but also by the fact that older people pool household income. With the Body Mass Index (BMI) and anthropometric measures, no transfer had a significant effect.

In conclusion, the authors stated that while increases in income generate food security, the pathways towards good nutritional outcomes are more complex. They recommended combining cash with other interventions such as behaviour change communication.

Among the comments from discussant Thomas Otter, was that the results might be different when using household DDIs rather than individual ones. He also said that the results might be driven by the circumstances of 2008/2010 and suggested including measures of school feeding as explanatory variables. In general, he said, there should be more discussion on the conversion factors from food security to nutritional outcomes. Food security was further discussed from a cultural perspective. It was brought up that while in some cases, social grants have not reduced stunting, in some, they have. This might also have to do with an offer of maternal education.

Paper 9:

Linking Social Protection Programmes in Ghana; the Case of the LEAP Cash Transfer Programme

William Niyuni (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ghana)

In this presentation, Ghana's flagship social protection programme, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme, was introduced, and its impact was assessed.

LEAP's deputy director William Niyuni started off with a short background on the programme. It has started in 2008 and has expanded from less than 2000 households to 150,000 households. LEAP had a number of positive impacts, according to Niyuni: There was an increase in school enrolment, attendance and retention, gender relations improved, consumption and productive activities increased, health care became more accessible, and households were happier and better integrated in social networks. The local economy also experienced an upturn.

For Niyuni, political commitment, strategic partnerships with development partners as well as with key sectors and sustainable financing are key factors for the success of the LEAP programme.

On the other hand, challenges are being encountered with regards to linking cash transfer programmes with other social protection programmes. Niyuni listed the lack of services, the differing eligibility criteria for various programmes, appropriate data management, costs and lack of funding, administrative overruns, logistical issues, limited ownership and commitment as well as difficulties with monitoring, impact assessments, controlling and accountability as challenges.

Discussant Markus Loewe shared a number of remarks: He observed that some questions were left unanswered. He pointed out that both the hypothesis that no single programme can combat poverty without it being linked to others and the hypothesis that the cash transfer was just too low were plausible. He suggested modifying the interviews conducted to assess the results of the programme to dig deeper and ask what the positive impacts are due to. Loewe also said that harmonization and coherent eligibility criteria were important, but that was also such a thing as too much harmonisation, especially in case of bad targeting. In that case the poor might be more satisfied with differing eligibility criteria, Loewe said.

Several questions were also raised by audience concern the conditionalities, the modalities of health insurance provision and other topics.

For further information, please refer to **Niyuni's paper**.

Session 2B

Paper 10:

A New Social Protection Model in the CIS Countries: From Social Assistance to Labour Activation

Esuna Dugarova (UNRISD)

This paper outlined the development of social protection in Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, countries that are often neglected in policy debate.

The main research questions are: What policy innovations have occurred in social protection in these countries and what were their drivers of change, how has social protection been implemented and what explains the diversity in measures undertaken by the respective governments.

In recent years a slowdown in poverty reduction has been observed in these countries, which can be mainly attributed to economic downturn. Simultaneously, a shift in the role of the state in providing social guarantees occurred: The state is no longer considered the sole actor responsible for providing support to the society as it had been in the Soviet times. The Soviet universalist principle has now largely been replaced by means-tested assistance to vulnerable groups and economic independence of families. State programmes have had little impact on poverty levels, which, as Dugarova argued, has been due to the low government spending on social policies, the low monetary value of benefits and insufficient effectiveness of the programmes.

To tackle growing poverty and improve the population's living standards, the countries under examination undertook a new approach towards social protection by transitioning from social assistance to active labour market policies, emphasizing the citizen's productive potential. These active labour market policies are aimed at creating jobs and providing self-employment and training opportunities. Herein, Dugarova discovered several problems. The jobs created are poorly paid, of low quality and productivity, and take on a rather conservative and narrow approach towards women's employment. Dugarova provided a wide variety of policy suggestions that could contribute to combatting poverty and boost economic growth.

For more information information, please refer to **Dugarova's paper**.

The discussant Franziska Gassmann admired the work of Dugarova, calling it a good "bird's-eye view" of what happened since the independence of these countries. She pointed out that the research also needed to take the level of social protection and coverage of the poor into account, including also the attitudes of the poor in the respective countries. In addition, she suggested adding a political economy perspective into the research. Gassmann also pointed out the role of energy subsidies in these countries which significantly contribute to a household's welfare situation. Finally, she questioned the feasibility of the policy recommendations listed by Dugarova. Certain recommendations needed to be refined and made more realistically, she said.

The specific role of women as workers in these countries interested the audience, raising the question of what gender dimensions the active labour market policies had. The question of political will in these countries was posed.

Dugarova explained that there is a paradox between the public and private domain in terms of the role of women. The private domain is still loaded with conservative power relations with a restrictive view on women's employment. In contrast the public sector underlines women's role

in the labour market. With regards to political will, Dugarova stated that while it does exist in these mainly authoritarian contexts, it is driven primarily by the need to keep society in piece.

Paper 11:

Can Social Protection Policy Right Past Wrongs? Lessons from Citizenship Driven Social Protection in Pakistan

Ayesha Siddiqi (Royal Holloway University of London)

Ayesha Siddiqi sought to find out how the role of the state was perceived by its citizens in southern Pakistan.

In 2010 and 2011, southern Pakistan was severely affected by a large-scale flooding disaster. A disaster relief programme known as the Citizens' Disaster Compensation Programme was established by the state. It distributed cash transfers to all households domiciled in the flood affected region and was delivered through digital identity cards. It was a universal cash transfer that reached out to all disaster affected regions and no targeting method was applied. This social protection intervention was "transformative" in linking citizenship numbers to disaster relief, making some basic disaster relief a defacto or informal right of citizenship.

Siddiqi's paper explores what was happening in the political environment after the floods took place. She conducted ethnographic research in three disaster-affected districts for seven months. While interviewing affected households in the area, Siddiqi discovered that the most common response to the question on what the state did in the aftermath of the disaster was "nothing at all". Most people in disaster-affected regions of southern Pakistan were unable to see the state. Even though, to the researcher the state was clearly visible in terms of messages on billboards, abandoned relief sites and most importantly the post disaster cash transfers.

The interviewees however were unable to connect the disaster relief cash transfer back to the state. The paper posits that geography of marginality and a history of exclusion of this region make it difficult for people to be able to "see" the state. What people in southern Pakistan see most frequently are development programmes that benefit other parts of the country at their expense, so the narrative that no one cares about them has now been internalised.

In using identity cards and citizenship numbers to provide universal disaster relief, the state was able to push along a progressive and rights based element of citizenship. Yet despite the potential that social protection has to transform the state citizen contract, it was unable to right past wrongs or be truly 'revolutionary' in impact.

For further information, please refer to **Siddiqi's paper**.

The discussant Christoph Strupart commented on how a general theoretical framework needs to be included into the research paper. He also advised Siddiqi to consider looking at how social protection instruments could potentially improve the state-citizen relationship and to include

future policy advice. Furthermore, he criticized the lack of a methodological framework including Siddiqi's personal role in the research.

What does it take for the government to be seen and perceived and what are the underlying notions in this regards towards social protection? - a question posed in the discussion.

Siddiqi suggested Pakistan to adopt innovative measures to reach out to its citizens, which are potentially demand driven, thus occurring from both sides of the equation. She further recognizes that there is no simple answer to what it takes to be seen. Cultural factors may need to be taken into account, especially in the context of South Asia. A publicity might also need to occur along with the cash transfer.

Paper 12:

Social Protection System in Bangladesh and the Scope of Social Work: Learning from Lessons on the Ground

Mohammad Monirul Hasan (Bonn University), Trisa Khan (Peace Followers Lab)

The objective of this paper was to provide an overview of the social protection system in Bangladesh from the point of view of the demand side and to identify the role of social work in order to better manage delivery systems of social protection.

By pointing out strengths and weaknesses of the Social Safety Nets Programme in Bangladesh, Monirul and Khan's goal was to determine the key elements under what conditions rural households participate in social protection programmes. This programme is of particular importance as the country lacks active labour market policies, social insurance and other complementary social welfare services. Though over 80 different social protection programmes exist in Bangladesh's Social Safety Net Program, only half of the programs were found in the survey data.

Using Bangladesh's Integrated Household Survey from 2011-12, the researchers used an econometric analysis to assess the progressiveness of the programmes in place and to what extent vulnerable and poor households are reached. Monirul and Khan found that the existing systems were progressive in nature, but failed to achieve their main objective of serving vulnerable and poor groups and improving their standard of living. As a reason they pointed out the aggregated amount of support as being insufficient to meet the needs and large exclusion errors in the distribution.

Instead of relying on such a non-contributory system as the social safety net, Monirul and Khan argue for placing more emphasis on the active population and their potential to participate and enrich the employment generation, as well as to recognize their significance in terms of human capital development for sustainable development of the poor. Furthermore, they find that delivery systems are neither efficient nor effective nor sustainable. The key message hence focuses on employing social work graduates in the implementation process. Based upon their

principles of social work a better delivery of social protection systems may improve programmes' effectiveness and sustainability.

Keetie Roelen appreciated the insight and overview of Bangladesh's current implementation efforts. She pointed out the different levels of coverage in both the sample and in the different social safety net programmes themselves and asked Monirul and Khan how they had accounted for this. Additionally, she suggested splitting the analysis into four different types of programmes using probit regression models. Furthermore, Roelen saw the need for the research to share a more nuanced role and discussion on the role of social protection and social workers.

For more information, please refer to **Monirul's and Khan's paper**.

Paper Session 3: System Analysis - Analysis of Social Protection Systems

Paper Session 3A

Paper 13:

Effective Linkages between Social Protection Interventions Piloting the ISPA CODI tool in Belize 2016

Thomas Otter (ECI)

Thomas Otter presented the results of a pilot of the ISPA Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) tool in Belize in 2016.

First, Otter briefly explained the importance of the ISPA tools: While the World Bank's ASPIRE database on social protection gives information on the state of social protection systems, the tools help move towards more harmonized systems, rather than implement a series of fragmented and ad-hoc policies, programmes and administrative arrangements. ISPA tools are a range of assessment tools designed to improve policy and programme options for clients based on key system metrics and outcomes. Specifically, the Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) seeks to provide a broad, overall assessment of the policies, programmes and administrative arrangements of the social protection system based on 10 criteria. Otter demonstrated the assessment level definitions at the example of inclusiveness criteria, before presenting results tables from the assessment.

The application of the CODI tool in Belize revealed some striking results, as Otter reported. The country's social protection system benefits from an extremely high level of domestic financing and a modern structure for expenditure budget classification. However, it also faces limitations: In general, there is weak information sharing between programmes and across sectors, and cross-sectoral stakeholder involvement is limited. The transfer schemes show low coverage rates and don't have redistributive effects. Their legal bases are not consolidated, and the staff lacks resources for adequate implementation as well as preparedness for shock situations.

Otter suggested that the expenditure composition could be better fitted to population needs, and that it was necessary to update the country's statistics for evidence-based policy making.

In Belize, Otter concluded, there was virtually no support income security, and while the life cycle approach is respected, the level of coverage, benefits and services were insufficient. However, capacities (in education and health) are improving. Specifically with regards to a minimum social protection floor, Otter added the possibility of creating a fiscal pact or protected minimum budget guarantees for social protection. He also recommended considering social protection planning not only with targets but also with required minimum achievements.

Questions on whether ISPA is really coordinating donors, how the indicators are measured, and how synergies are detected stood in the focus of discussant Stephen Devereux' comments on the presentation.

For further information, please refer to **Otter's presentation**.

Paper 14:

Assessing the Capacity of Local Administration and Community Structures to Deliver Social Protection Programmes

Andrew Kardan (OPM), Andrew Wyatt (OPM), Paul Quarle Van Ufford (UNICEF), Ramlatu Attah (OPM)

This paper focuses on the performance of local and community based structures in delivering the social protection systems they are tasked to support.

Presenter Andrew Kardan began by trying to find a definition of capacity. In his research, he recognised the complexity of this concept, but then pinned it down to denote "institutional, organisational and individual attributes that converge to in such a way as to enable tasks to be performed and objectives to be attained". Therefore, capacities only exist in relation to performance and activities.

The research group had used a multi-dimensional approach to capacity assessment, looking at capacity across institutional, organisational and individual dimensions by reviewing documents and literature, key informant interviews and a questionnaire survey with government staff at the national and sub-national level. Capacity was assessed in two countries: Kenya and Zambia. Kardan presented a number of findings: Skills and qualifications are revealed to be lower at the sub-national level, as trainings are more often offered at the national level. Local administrations are strained by the additional task of implementing a social protection system and thus face shortages in material resources as well as human resources. The researchers also identified legislative gaps: In Kenya, for example, the intentions of the policymakers weren't met by legislation.

In the concluding discussion of the results, Kardan emphasized that local capacity building goes beyond trainings, that ways to divide between statutory and non-statutory functions need to be

found, and that administrative resources have to match the tasks of the local staff. He said that it was necessary to consider institutional and organisational requirements before expanding programmes. Furthermore, local voluntary structures needed to be linked with formal structures and cannot be sustained without the necessary financial and material support, Kardan said. Programmes should also be coordinated and consolidated as well as embedded in a legislative framework and policy. Standardized training packages could help increase human capital in the local structures.

Discussant February Curry and members from the audience raised questions about the sequence of expansion and capacity building after the presentation. It was also asked what kinds of skills local staff need to acquire.

For further information, please refer to **Kardan, Wyatt, van Ufford and Attah's paper**.

Paper 15:

Money or the message? Evaluating the 'X-factor' in graduation programmes

Keetie Roelen (IDS), Stephen Devereux (IDS)

In their research, Keetie Roelen and Stephen Devereux tried to find out about the role of coaching and support in the success of graduation programmes.

According to them, cash transfers had recently been en vogue, but had turned out to be insufficient to combat food and nutrition insecurity. Hence, cash transfers started being linked to other interventions. For example in Ethiopia, cash transfers were linked to savings services, asset transfers, livelihood training and behaviour change communication (BCC). In Bangladesh, the Transfer Modality Research Initiative (TMRI) had shown that neither cash nor food assistance by themselves have had an impact on nutrition. The combination of food assistance and BCC also did not cause a significant difference. Cash combined with BCC had large and significant positive results.

Roelen and Devereux assessed the Concern Worldwide 'Terintambwe' graduation programme in Burundi. In the two-year programme, participants received monthly cash transfers for one year and a lump sum transfer according to a business plan that they set up. They were also given trainings and were visited by case managers - this constitutes the BCC element of the programme. They compared two groups - one that received three visits per month and another that received one visit per month. Visits aimed to reinforce trainings that were held at the community level, to discuss the business plan and activities and to provide additional coaching on issues such as sanitation. The difference between the two groups was too small to lead to significantly different impacts. Qualitative research indicates that there was a spill-over effect whereby treated households informed others.

Discussant Krzysztof Hagemeyer voiced a number of concerns - rather than distinguishing between money and the message, as the title suggested, he said that it seemed both – income

support and services providing guidance, training and other support in finding employment and solving other problems - were important and both should be part of any social protection scheme, a remark to which Devereux agreed. He also questioned the findings' relevance for system building since they investigated a single programme. Furthermore, he asked whether the coaching is not belonging to normal scope of professional social work which should always accompany well designed social assistance programmes, in particular targeted ones. The major question however is whether such coaching and other forms of professional social work are affordable in low income countries if one goes beyond pilots into country wide implementation and domestic financing. Roelen conceded that a wide range of services had to be made available, and that different development workers should be involved in the implementation.

Paper Session 3B:

Paper 16:

Understanding the Impact of Cash Transfers: The Evidence

Francesca Bastagli, Jessica Hagen-Zanker, Luke Harman (ODI)

This extensive literature review assessed the results of over 165 studies in 30 countries on the impacts of 56 cash transfer programmes.

Rebecca Holmes presented the paper on behalf of Bastagli, Hagen-Zanker and Harman. The study distinguishes itself from other reviews in terms of the methods used, the breadth of the evidence collected and the focus on design and implementation features. Over half of the programmes are conditional programmes in Latin America. The review looked at six different outcome areas and considered evidence of the links in programme design, looking also at the issues around conditionality payment and grievance mechanisms. The goal of the comprehensive literature review was to find out what evidence existed on the impacts of cash transfer on individual and household level outcomes.

The paper reflected upon a range of key findings, for example: In the field of education, an increase in school attendance, was observed for both girls and boys, though there is less evidence that cash transfers lead to better long-term learning outcomes. In the field of health and nutrition, an increase in the use of services and dietary diversity was found. In terms of savings investment and production, robust evidence was found that cash transfers increased beneficiaries' savings, economic autonomy and impacts were particularly strong for female-headed households.

With regards to the role of design and implementation, the authors found how important the size of the transfer and the duration of its receipt is. No statistical difference was found in terms of the transfer received by a man or a woman in 3/4 studies. Including an element of conditionality can but does not necessarily lead to greater impacts in these areas; clear communication about the importance of using these services is an element of conditionality clearly associated with

greater service uptake. The effect of cash transfers can be further strengthened by complementing the transfer with other interventions, such as trainings, grants or other products. Holmes ended her presentation by pointing out significant research gaps. So far strong evidence stems from observed short-term impacts of transfers, but one still knows far too little about the long-term effects of cash transfer programmes, which is why research on them needs to be extended.

Ellen Ehmke showed great respect and admiration for the extensive research conducted. In terms of design of the research she asked Holmes why employment guarantee schemes and child grants were excluded from the research, since enterprise grants were included. Ehmke also inquired what design features may explain why certain studies showed no effect of the transfer and whether the data provided an insight to which design features enable, facilitate or impede what kind of effect. In addition, Ehmke also asked if a distinction might need to be made between donor-financed and tax-financed schemes, which can potentially produce a different effect in terms of the duration of a transfer. Finally, she suggested further implications needed to be made on how to bridge the gap between policymaking and how to achieve reliable payments on the ground.

Holmes thanked Ehmke for the extended feedback and shared that most of the research focused on the selected schemes mainly due to the feasibility of the research workload. The remaining comments and questions, Holmes would take back to the authors. Her concluding remark highlighted the necessity to link cash transfers to other services. Even though cash transfers are achieving their intended goals, they still need to be linked and embedded into other programmes.

For further information please refer to **Bastagli, Hagen-Zanker and Harman's paper**.

Paper 17:

Non-Contributory Social Transfer Programmes in Developing Countries: A New Data Set and Research Agenda

Anna Giolbas (GIGA Hamburg), Marina Dodlova (University of Passau)

This paper takes on a global perspective on social transfer programmes in the developing world, introducing a data set that provides a comprehensive overview of social transfer programmes in developing countries, extending the work of Barrientos, Niño-Zarazúa and Maitrot (2010).

Giolbas and Dodlova highlighted that prior social protection data focused mainly on a specific region or a specific type of programme. The new data set contains panel data up to 2015 on 186 non-contributory programmes from 101 countries. Another advantage of the data set is its extensive information on programme design, cost and coverage in a coded format enabling

quantitative and qualitative cross country comparisons, since all details and characteristics are encoded.

The strength of the research lays in the choice of the dataset, named Non-Contributory Social Transfer Programmes in Developing countries (NSTP), Giolbas pointed out. The data set is intended to be used as an innovative tool to study trends in social assistance, performance evaluation and effectiveness and efficiency of programmes. The paper describes how the data set can be used to explore open questions. It also presents an exemplary research question to show the data's possible usages. The research question is: To what extent is the expansion of social transfer programmes in the developing world driven by factors that are not related to pro-poor motives? A political analysis of social transfer programmes is done by using proxies for regime types.

The findings revealed that democracies on average adopt more social transfer programmes, especially conditional cash transfers. More unconditional family support programmes in contrast are found in non-democratic regimes, where public works programmes also appear to be more common. Furthermore, systematic differences between the numbers and types of programmes, as well as the targeting methods, reveal proneness to abuse in specific contexts. Aside from the exemplary research findings the paper indicates possible directions for further research.

For further information please refer to **Giolbas' and Dodlova's paper**.

Axel Weber provided feedback in terms of the distinction between democracies and non-democracies, which may create resistance depending on the audience addressed. Weber further included technical considerations in terms of weighting and how categories developed into codes. He questioned in which category public works is placed and why.

Additional questions raised included: What was the intention in classifying programmes by type? Why was a cluster-analysis not considered? Why did the dataset focus on developing countries and where did the data exactly come from, posing questions towards its adequacy and reliability?

Giolbas shared that the data used was retrieved from evaluation reports of the World Bank. She also justified the distinction between a democracies and non-democracies as an established approach in research.

Paper 18:

From "Social Protection" to "Poverty Management": The Case of Turkey under JDP (2003-2013)

Yavuz Yasar (University of Denver), Gamze Cavdar (Colorado State University)

This paper provides a critical perspective on how social protection and its redistributive functions can be exploited to create a new society under an increasingly authoritarian regime.

Yasar's research was motivated by popular perceptions and characterizations of the Justice and Development Party (JDP). In the past years Turkey had undergone a process of institutionalization of neoliberalism. This enabled reforms in public administration which allowed further decentralization and privatization, in pension and in the health care system, as well as a reorganisation and expansion of comprehensive social protection measures implemented by faith-based institutions. A notion of social solidarity developed from which mutual assistance foundations evolved.

Qualitative and quantitative data was collected in 2013 until the data collection process was interrupted by social unrest. The Household Budget Survey Micro Dataset by the Turkish Statistical Institute was used, the same panel data which the government itself used. The panel data analysis focused on the role of transfers in the fight against poverty at an individual level and was further classified by transfer type. Yasar found that individuals were becoming increasingly dependent on social transfers and employment income over time. Women were found to be much more dependent on these transfers than men. Matching this observation, Yasar found that more and more social expenditure was distributed by the state, also through in-kind transfers and services, such as in Health. From the data Yasar found a divide of the population into two social classes, those working and those not working, whereas a large share of women were out of the workforce and receiving a transfer. Additionally, the retired population appeared to become increasingly dependent on welfare transfers.

From these findings, Yasar drew the conclusion that Turkey was actually reproducing poverty through its economic and social policies, rather than reducing it. Dependency was increasing also for the working poor and retired. Simultaneously, he observed an increase in the establishment and involvement in faith-based organisations which are close to JDP. This will lead to major equity problems in terms of accountability, transparency and discretionary distribution, Yasar said. The gender gap was increasing, along with lacking actor transparency, pointing out the ambiguous directions social protection could take. With this work Yasar provided a new perspective into the social protection debate.

Wolfgang Scholz congratulated Yasar for his paper. In essence, according to Scholz, Yasar's paper describes Turkey's recent years' social policy as pursuing and supporting other, overarching, policies and policy goals. To this end, Turkish social policy is not different from social policies, over extended periods, in other countries. Among these are Germany, whose Bismarck, in introducing social insurance in the 1880, aimed primarily at fighting the social democrats, and at circumventing the tax-stipulations of the German Constitution of the time. A more recent example is Thailand's Thaksin who, in his 2001 campaign, used the promise (and later implementation) of "universal health coverage" for all Thai citizens to win the elections. Other examples can be found in history where social policy was instrumentalized for gaining or strengthening political power.

Scholz suggested to support and deepen the paper's results, which, thus far, are mainly data-based, by adding a detailed narrative of significant political, legal, administrative and/or other relevant "events". This could not only foster the paper's underlying hypothesis but also further

the understanding of Turkey's contemporary social policies, of its governance system and its policy dynamics at large. Once the archives of the Turkish Republic will be accessible in 50+ years (or so) historians might be in a position to add more substance to today's findings, which, by their very nature, can only be preliminary.

Closing Session

As "Don't leave the poor behind" was one of the sentences repeated most throughout the Symposium, Franziska Gassmann made a plea to not lose the poor out of sight, which is a notion inspired first by Martin Ravallion.

According to her, it seems that the debate on poverty reduction has had a success story, especially since the establishment of the MDGs, in which poverty was no longer seen only in monetary terms but in many other fields, using also a variety of different indicators. Gassmann noted that if one does not look at the aggregate numbers, one can see great disparity between the countries in terms of poverty reduction, as especially in Sub-Saharan Africa the absolute numbers have hardly changed. Even though we may have reduced poverty and average consumption has increased, the average consumption of the poor has actually stayed the same, being equally poor as 20 years ago, experiencing no change in living conditions and continuing intergenerational inequality, Gassmann made clear.

Yet Gassmann observed a change in focus, moving more towards the Rawlsian principle of social justice and notions of equality of opportunity by Amartya Sen. Whatever notion used, equality as such had very long-term implications, Gassmann stated. What indicators do we need to use to measure progress more adequately? Is the poverty gap not more telling than simply looking at poverty aggregates and what policies will help to reduce the poverty gap?

Gassmann stressed that a lot of work needs to be done, since coverage remains limited, particularly in regions that need it the most. What lessons were learnt from the past, and why were some countries emerging while others were left out, Gassmann asked. The implications for social protection, according to her, are to continue working on how to extend coverage, increase the level of support and to ensure access to education, health and infrastructure in order to also strengthen future generations.

Gassmann placed a strong emphasis on the increasing costs of social protection, underlining that one needs to find a way how to go about it. She suggested a variety of potential solutions: Increasing financial allocations to social protection, creating political will by additionally taking people's preferences into account and mobilizing donors, implying a redefinition of their roles in the expansion of social protection. Furthermore, she questioned whether one can trust on economic growth to increase benefits for social protection.

The role of the international community was about leadership, specifically about trust relationships developed over many years which can be used to build the capacity to push for an extension of social protection, Gassmann said. Good quality institutions and functioning governments as well as educated civil servants were related to social protection system development, she highlighted. She emphasized the necessity to reflect on the meaning of capacity building and particularly whom it should be designed for.

Gassmann's presentation concluded by predicting a long and winding road ahead for social protection.

Krzysztof Hagemeyer agreed with Gassmann on the achievements reached so far, but also acknowledged the challenges which still need to be faced in the future. Essentially he pointed out four additional aspects.

The first aspect addressed the progress which had been made so far. Hagemeyer named the number of nationally agreed documents as a good indicator for future outlooks. He referred to the 202 National Floor on Social Protection, as well as the set of principles and recommendations.

Second, Hagemeyer deemed evaluation tools to be essential for future social protection systems. Ideally, each country should have their own monitoring system, developed not only by government but also by other organisations representing society. Hagemeyer however observed a lack of ownership of monitoring systems in many countries. He further acknowledged the steps of the ISPA and CODI tools as taking the right direction.

Financing presented the third aspect that Hagemeyer mentioned. Stable and sustainable financing methods are needed, especially for non-contributory schemes. Hagemeyer identified the need for further research in innovative financing tools and methods that are more resistant to political change.

Finally, Hagemeyer stressed the importance of international financing and finding out to what extent a global system of redistributive transfers can be managed and implemented in an effective way.

With only little left to add Axel Weber admired and encouraged the expansion of professionals working in the field of social protection over the last 40 years. Social protection in the future should consider the current challenges of a growing population. Weber states: The increase in poverty, migration induced by climate change for example, technological changes and evolution will affect labour markets and the way people communicate. Finally, the growing global trade and competition will change the agenda and prioritization of social protection.

Weber appealed to the new needs of social protection, highlighting great future potentials and great future threats. New areas of social protection should address a reprioritisation of benefits in general, redesigning schemes to address the range of problems associated with them. The

notion of financial redistribution systems needs to be reevaluated between people, regions and countries, Weber says.

In addition, political work and research is needed to show the link between competing social protection schemes in a country as well as to convince government and people of the short- and long term investments in social protection and how to refine analytical tools of assessment. It should not only be a cost factor for governments, Weber underlined, but also allows government to strengthen and move towards a country's development.

Finally, Weber spoke out on the recurring topic of financing which was in constant need of refinement and the notion of "lending" which should not be overseen as a possibility of implanting external budget into a government's national budget, leading to shifting budget priorities.

Weber ended his speech with encouraging words for social protection scholars and passionate practitioners to continue researching and working on setting the agenda for social protection.

Conclusion

This symposium was a great success in providing a platform for academics, practitioners and decision-makers from 58 different countries to exchange ideas and discuss advances and challenges in social protection system building.

On the first day of the event, panel discussions identified challenges for social protection system building. The first panel identified the need to define specifically how systems are built and how they can be strengthened. Several challenges to the expansion of social protection and the ultimate goal of universal coverage were identified: 1) the inherent multi-sectoral nature of social protection and the difficulty of building dynamic, interoperable systems; 2) the lack of political will to work towards Universal Social Protection; 3) the issue of sustainably financing social protection; and a number of others. In addition, it was pointed out that social protection efforts need to be linked to other fields of work, such as agriculture. The panelists found a consensus in saying that social protection systems are often fragmented, and that there is insufficient coordination between governments, ministries, and the international community.

Profound practical insights were gained in the second panel, where country experiences in system building from Brazil, Iran, Kenya and Germany were shared. The careful consideration of country contexts stood at the centre of the panellists' presentations, and several recounted failed attempts to copy other countries' social protection systems or programmes. Fragmentation, lack of funding, administrative capacity, coordination and information sharing between programmes were concerns that were raised by the speakers.

The third panel discussed tools for social protection system assessments. Most prominently, the ISPA tools were presented. In addition, two speakers commented on the tools from a user country's perspective, pointing to a need to tailor the tools to country contexts and design them in a way that makes them user-friendly and accessible for administrators. Further concerns raised were the lack of monitoring of the usage of the tools.

The fourth and last panel discussed various issues related to the creation of linkages between different social policy interventions. It broadened the scope of the event to include issues pertaining to decent work and gender inequality. The panelists discussed ways of designing social protection interventions taking these issues into account. Furthermore, the graduation approach was presented as a way of sustainably reducing poverty.

The second day was devoted to the presentation of research papers, with contributors presenting empirical evidence on various topics and country contexts.

This symposium shed a light on how we think about a system's approach to social protection. What implications does all this have for the future? Several recommendations emerged from the debates:

1. As the evidence base on system strengthening is only slowly growing, there is need for more research on system differences, effective linkages and appropriate assessment methodologies, including tools. However, it has to be made sure that the design of the tools corresponds to the respective country's needs and technical capacities.
2. Social protection system-building requires investments into capacity of all people involved as well as the provision of a solid knowledge base for future academics and practitioners.
3. System strengthening remains a focal area for stakeholders in social protection, and there is a need to develop further ties between practitioners and researchers, between the national and the international levels as well as between the global South and the North. It would hence be desirable to establish a regular exchange platform such as a biannual conference on social protection systems.
4. On an administrative level, it is still important to break down what system strengthening entails. Best practices in terms of targeting beneficiaries across coordination delivery mechanisms and managing information systems need to be developed.
5. Further evidence on the possibility of linkages between different social policy interventions needs to be collected. In particular the relevance of graduation approaches and their adaptation to different country contexts need to be evaluated.
6. A renewed commitment to reaching the poorest and the most vulnerable of society needs to be made. This also entails the necessity of looking for innovative ways of targeting the most vulnerable and leaving no one behind.

The Symposium was a forum in which different disciplines were able to connect and exchange ideas. We'd like to thank all those who contributed, who participated and of course all those who helped making this event possible!

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