



**Centre for
Social Protection**

Promoting Social and Economic Justice

Session 1.2: What is social protection and what can it do?

Social protection policy and programmes:
a review of experiences, lessons and best practices
18-20 November 2013, FAO, Rome



**Centre for
Social Protection**



Definitions and approaches

Conceptual approaches:

- Social protection as a response to vulnerabilities throughout the life-cycle.
- Social protection as a tool for reaching different objectives in relation to poverty.

Operational approach:

- Social protection as a set of policies and instruments.

Rights-based approach:

- Social protection as a basic human right.

Life-cycle approach: a vulnerability-led definition

“Social protection is a set of transfers and services that help individuals and households confront risk and adversity (including emergencies) and ensure a minimum standard of dignity and well-being throughout the life-cycle.”

Life-cycle approach

infants

free primary
health care

**school-age
children**

free
school feeding

adolescents

scholarships
and skills training

elderly

old age
pension

working-age adults

unemployment benefits
input subsidies

**pregnant and
lactating women**

free MCH services

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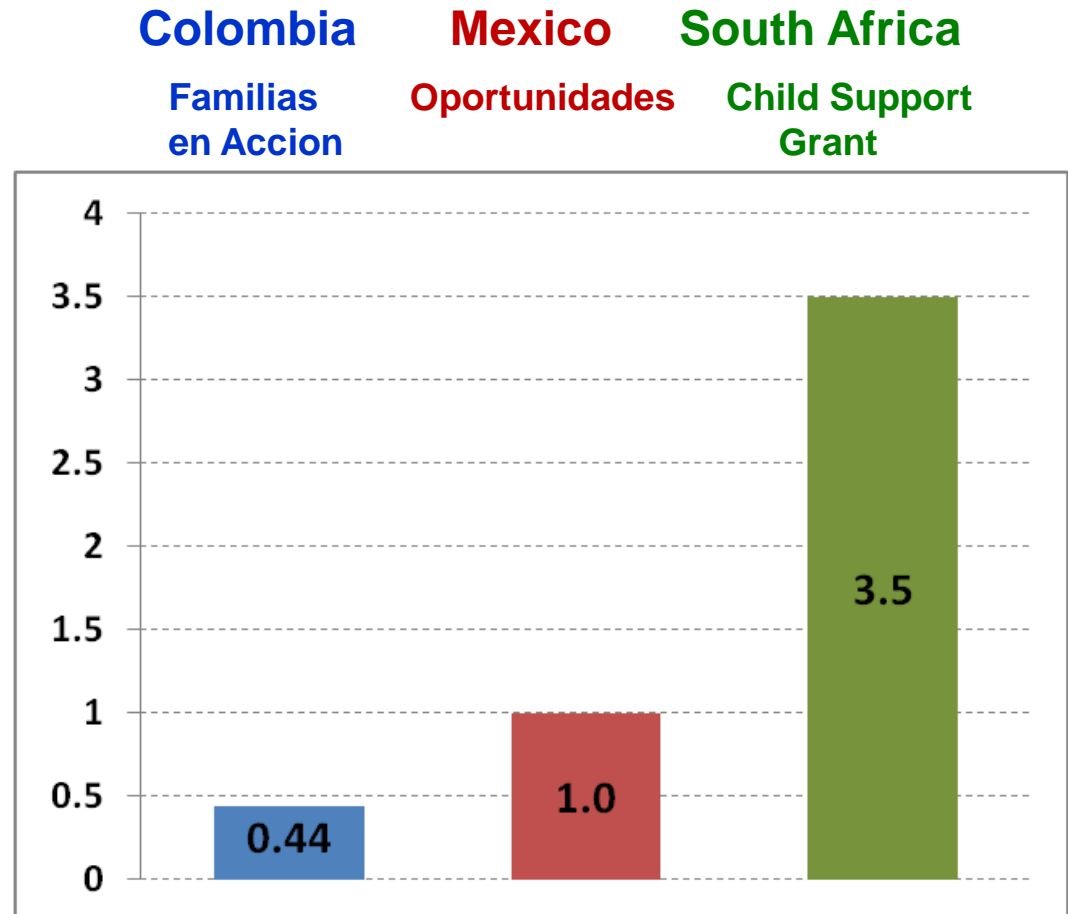
Evidence

Positive anthropometric impacts from quantitative evaluations.

Colombia: 12-month-old boys on CCT grew 0.44cm more.

Mexico: children gained 1cm in height-for-age after 2 years.

South Africa: Boys receiving Child Support Grant will be 3.5cm taller as adults.



Objectives-led approach: a functional definition

“Social protection describes all initiatives that:

1. provide cash or food transfers to the poor;
2. protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks; and
3. enhance the social status and rights of the excluded and marginalised.”

Objectives-led approach

Transformative social protection

Promotion

Livelihood promotion: Linkages to graduate the poor out of poverty (e.g. credit schemes, public works).

Prevention

Social insurance: Security against life-cycle events and livelihood risks or shocks (e.g. unemployment insurance)

Protection

Social assistance: Income transfers (cash) or consumption transfers (food or vouchers or subsidies) to the poor

Transformation

Social justice: Address structural drivers of poverty and vulnerability with policies of social inclusion

Promotion

Livelihood promotion: Linkages to graduate the poor out of poverty (e.g. school feeding, public works).

Prevention

Social insurance: Security against economic vulnerability (e.g. life-cycle events and livelihood risks or shocks)

Protection

Social assistance: Income transfers (cash) or consumption transfers (food or vouchers or subsidies) to the poor

Evidence

Table 5.1—Summary of impacts of unconditional cash transfers on poverty

Country, program	Headcount poverty	Poverty gap	Poverty severity
South Africa, all grants	-7.2 percent	-22 percent	-75 percent (HIV-affected households)
South Africa, OAP	-5 percentage points	-81 percent (-20 percent indigence poverty gap)	
	-2.8 percentage points (-2.3 percentage points indigence headcount)	61 percent (HIV-affected households)	
	-48 percent (HIV-affected households)		
South Africa, CSG	-8 percent (HIV-affected households)	-15 percent (HIV-affected households)	-20 percent (HIV-affected households)
South Africa, FCG	-6 percent (HIV-affected households)	-20 percent (HIV-affected households)	-33 percent (HIV-affected households)
Mozambique, GAPVU	-6 percentage points	-27 percent	-44 percent
Uganda (projected)	No impact	-15 percent	

Sources: Datt et al. (1997); Case and Deaton (1998); Barrientos (2003); Booysen (2004b); Samson et al. (2004).

Notes: CSG = Child Support Grant; FCG = Foster Care Grant; GAPVU = Gabinete de Apoio à População Vulnerável; OAP = Old Age Pension. Blank cells indicate that results were not evaluated.

Operational approach: an instruments-led definition

“The proposed definition of social protection contains [...]: (i) Labor market policies and programs designed to facilitate employment and promote the efficient operation of labor markets; (ii) Social insurance programs to cushion the risks associated unemployment, health, disability, work injury, and old age; (iii) Social assistance and welfare service programs to provide subsistence to the most vulnerable groups with no other means of adequate support.”

Operational approach: an instruments-led definition

1) Social assistance for the poor:

Alleviating chronic poverty with social grants (cash/food transfers; child grants etc.)

2) Social insurance for the vulnerable

“Insuring the uninsured” against:

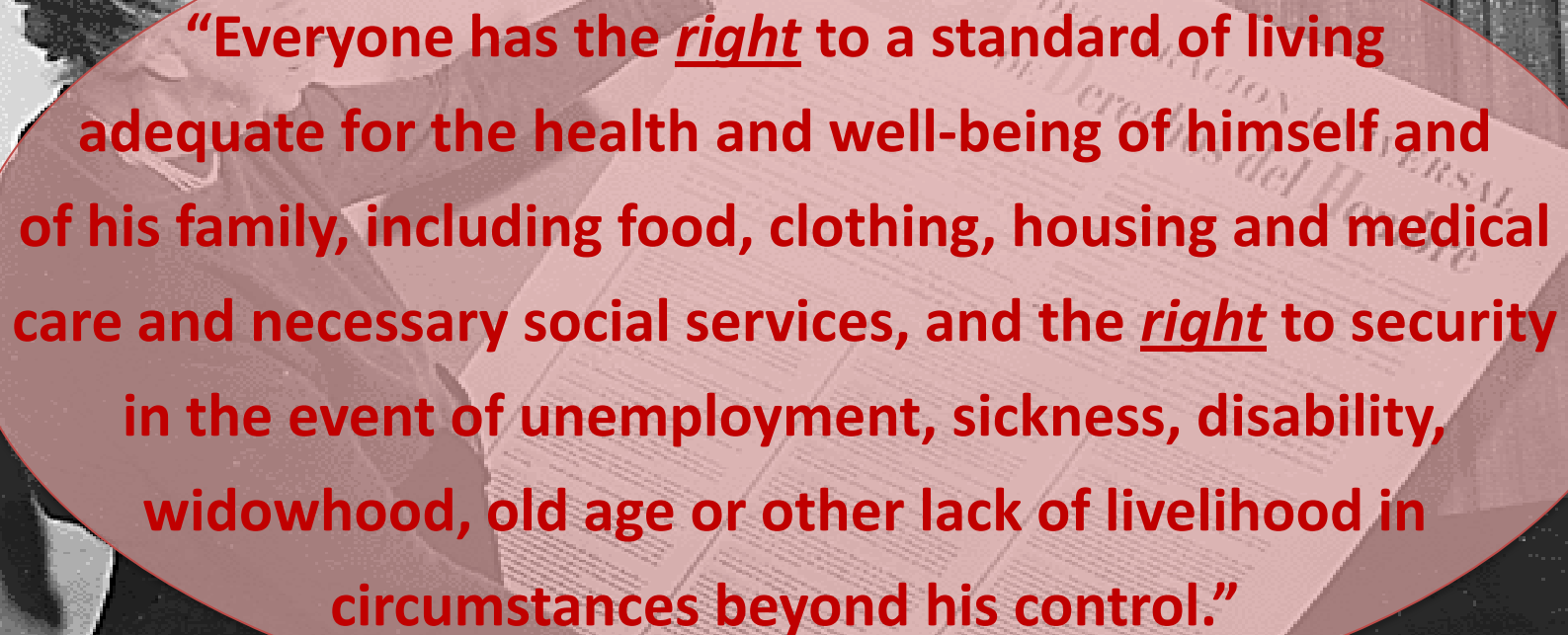
- (1) adverse personal circumstances (e.g. health insurance, income protection);
- (2) life-cycle hazards (e.g. old age pensions);
- (3) livelihood risks (e.g. crop insurance)

3) Labour market policies

Facilitate employment and promote livelihoods (public works, credit schemes)

Ensuring basic standards at work and extends rights (maternity rights, minimum wage legislation)

Rights-based approach: a rights-led definition



“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

Rights-based approach: a rights-led definition

Social Protection Floor

Four “essential guarantees” through the life-cycle:

- 1. All residents have access to essential health care services.**
- 2. All children have income security, through transfers in cash or kind, to access nutrition, education and care.**
- 3. All those in active age groups who cannot earn sufficient income on the labour markets should enjoy minimum income security through social assistance transfers.**
- 4. All residents in old age and with disabilities have income security through pensions or transfers in kind.**

Rights-based approach: a rights-led definition

Social protection floor



Lessons learned

“There is convincing evidence from a number of countries that cash transfers can reduce inequality and the depth or severity of poverty.”

“There is robust evidence from numerous countries that cash transfers have leveraged sizeable gains in access to health and education services.”

DFID (2012)

“All the evidence is that spend grant money wisely and that grants do not encourage people to be lazy or work-shy.”

Hanlon, Barrientos and Hulme (2010)