

AT A GLANCE

PUBLICATIONS

BLOGS

OTHER NEWS

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE EADI SOCIAL PROTECTION
WORKING GROUP,

This is the **25th edition** of our Social Protection Brief. On the left-hand side you can find a short list of the sections included.

*Best Regards,
Callistus Agbaam*

PUBLICATIONS

[Pathways to stronger futures? The role of social protection in reducing psychological risk factors for child development in Haiti](#) by Keetie Roelen and Amrita Saha. in: World Development, Vol. 142 (2021).

It is widely recognised that poverty undermines early childhood development (ECD). In turn, poor childhood development reinforces the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Social protection could break this negative cycle by reducing poverty and addressing biological and psychosocial risk factors. In this study, we examine the effects of a relatively new wave of social protection and anti-poverty interventions – so-called ‘graduation programmes’ – on psychosocial risk factors in a context of widespread poverty and poor outcomes for children in rural Haiti. Using a mixed-methods approach, we find positive effects on maternal mental health and on children’s exposure to harsh corporal punishment. We find no discernible impact on exposure to violence inside and outside of the home, attitudes to child disciplining practices or child stimulation practices. Greater ability to meet children’s basic needs and positive support from programme staff contribute to positive effects. The ubiquity of violence, notions of play being replaced with a focus on discipline as babies turn toddlers and women struggling to combine

* The content of this Brief lies within the responsibility of the working group members.

child care with paid work and domestic chores serve as explanations for lack of impact. Findings point to the potential and limitations of social protection and anti-poverty interventions to address pernicious issues such as poor ECD outcomes and highlight the importance of a multi-sectoral approach.

[Policy Pollination: A Brief History of Social Protection's Brief History in Africa](#) by Stephen Devereux. IDS Working Paper 543 (2020).

The relatively recent emergence and sustained rise of social protection as a policy agenda in Africa can be understood as either a nationally owned or 'donor-driven' process. While elements of both can be seen in different countries at different times, this paper focuses on the pivotal role of transnational actors, specifically international development agencies, as 'policy pollinators' for social protection. These agencies deployed a range of tactics to induce African governments to implement cash transfer programmes and establish social protection systems, including: (1) building the empirical evidence base that cash transfers have positive impacts, for advocacy purposes; (2) financing social protection programmes until governments take over this responsibility; (3) strengthening state capacity to deliver social protection, through technical assistance and training workshops; (4) commissioning and co-authoring national social protection policies; (5) encouraging the domestication of international social protection law into national legislation. Despite these pressures and inducements, some governments have resisted or implemented social protection only partially and reluctantly, either because they are not convinced or because their political interests are not best served by allocating scarce resources to cash transfer programmes. This raises questions about the extent to which the agendas of development agencies are aligned or in conflict with national priorities, and whether social protection programmes and systems would flourish or wither if international support was withdrawn.

[Subsidy reforms in the Middle East and North Africa: Strategic options and their consequences for the social contract](#) by Georgeta Vidican Auktor and Markus Loewe. DIE Discussion Paper 12/2021

After independence, energy and food subsidies became a cornerstone of the social contracts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries. Governments spent heavily to reduce poverty and strengthen their own legitimacy. However, as government rents faded, subsidy spending became financially unsustainable and foreign donors pressed for reforms. In their latest discussion paper, Vidican Auktor and Loewe argue that subsidy reform is challenging because it affects the nature of social contracts profoundly and distinctly and bears the risk of government delegitimisation. The paper assesses how Morocco, Egypt and Iran have dealt with the challenge in reforms implemented between 2010 and 2017. The governments of the three countries applied quite distinct strategies to prevent major social unrest – with the effect that the social

contracts of the three countries changed in quite different ways. Morocco's government engaged in dialogue with society, implemented compensatory measures for the poor and thereby succeeded in preserving some features of its original social contract. Egypt's government dismantled subsidy schemes quite radically without systematic consultation campaigns or meaningful compensatory measures. Here, the provision of social benefits is longer the key pillar of the social contract. Instead, the government relies more and more on repression and a narrative of collective security. Iran's government, finally, replaced subsidies with a generous quasi-universal cash transfer scheme, which was more cost-efficient and egalitarian. Thereby, it paved the way to a more inclusive social contract, at least for a couple of years until inflation and external shocks eroded the real value of the new direct cash transfers.

[Do social transfers benefit local economic development? The case of cash-for-work programmes in Jordan](#) by Loewe Markus and Tina Zintul. Economic Research Forum (ERF) Discussion Papers 1467 (2021).

The discussion paper investigates what effects cash-for-work (CfW) can have on local economic development (LED). It is based on the hypothesis that CfW, which is targeted provision of jobs to vulnerable households, affects LED directly (through employment and income for workers and the creation of public goods) but also indirectly (through multiplier and investment effects as well as better social cohesion). The article builds on quantitative and qualitative research conducted in Jordan in 2019, Jordan being a particularly interesting case for the topic: Here, different foreign donors have set up a whole bunch of different CfW programmes after 2016 to support Syrian refugees along with vulnerable Jordanians. The results confirm that CfW has an indirect impact on LED through multiplier effects since CfW participants spend most of their income locally. In addition, CfW programmes in Jordan improve the skills and employability of their participants. This upgrading does not transform into higher employment rates, however, because the Jordanian labour market is extremely tight. Finally, the programmes empower women; they open new doors to the labour market and contribute to a – however not irrevocable – change of traditional gender roles. Our suggestion is thus that other refugee host countries set up CfW programmes as well, covering both refugees and low-income nationals.

[The Politics of Domestic Resource Mobilization for Social Development](#) by Katja Hujo. UNRISD Research and Policy Brief 34, (2021).

At a time when the development community is grappling with the challenge of raising the required investment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to address the socio-economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, countries' mobilization of their own domestic resources for social development is more important than ever. This Brief summarizes UNRISD research showing that while increased international solidarity is indispensable to help shoulder the financial burden of crisis response and of investment in the socio-ecological

transformation required to truly meet the SDGs, expanding fiscal space and capacity in the global South will be key for building a new social contract that is inclusive and sustainable.

[Responding to Protracted Displacement Using the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Approach: UNDP and UNHCR Theory of Change](#) by Katja Hujo. UNRISD Research and Policy Brief 33, (2020).

Forced displacement is now affecting more than 80 million people in the world and many are in protracted situations. This long-lasting displacement blurs the lines between humanitarian crisis and longer-term development, and creates additional challenges for conflict resolution or prevention. In response we need stronger collaboration between the many actors involved based on an approach which has come to be known as the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus, or triple nexus. In line with the holistic vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), such an integrated approach aims to lead to a better understanding of, and more effective responses to, the complexity of protracted displacement, while fostering coherent and complementary collaborations between different partners. The final objective is to create a safe and secure environment for both the forcibly displaced and host populations, where everyone can realize their rights and access services, while contributing to and benefitting from society and the economy in ways that promote resilience and longer-term solutions.

[The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: Towards Differentiated Configurations](#) by Sebastian Benedikt Weishaupt. UNRISD Working Paper 08/2020.

This paper examines and problematizes recent conceptualizations of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus, which has been proposed as a comprehensive response to protracted crises and, in particular, protracted displacement. It is based on a literature review and primarily addresses those organizations currently experimenting with the idea of nexus programming. The paper aims to encourage a more differentiated debate about the HDP nexus. For that purpose, four aspects that deserve further inquiry are fleshed out and tentatively sketched as determinants for a variety of potential nexus configurations. First, the common conceptualization of humanitarian aid, development and peace as sectoral *silos* is problematized as it emphasizes separations and disregards overlaps. Attention is drawn to ideological differences within each of the three sectors, as they illustrate that differences between and overlaps of humanitarian, development and peace objectives, activities and outcomes are organization specific. Second, inter- and intra-organizational perspectives on the HDP nexus are distinguished, as they provide starting points for *bridging* and/or *breaking* the silos. Third, the disregard of contextual particularities in conceptualizing the nexus is problematized, calling for further exploration regarding the conditions that enable or prevent a nexus approach in a specific context. Fourth, and related to the former, it is argued that the substance of nexus configurations

needs to become a more prominent element in the debate. Answers need to be found not only for how the HDP nexus can be pursued, facilitated and institutionalized but with which activities and outcomes it can be substantiated. In conclusion, the paper acknowledges the potential of the HDP nexus to encourage thinking beyond distinct spheres of competence and intervention but warns against the conceptualization and proliferation of a nexus-blueprint.

[A global fund for social protection could help to establish safety nets in low-income countries](#) by Markus Kaltenborn and Laura Kreft. Development and Cooperation 4/2021.

For years, social experts have proposed the establishment of a Global Fund for Social Protection – an international institution to help low-income countries develop the capacity to finance a minimum level of social protection for their population. The debate is now gaining momentum. This article therefore explores issues pertaining to present support, mandate and organizational structures as well as a call for new global initiatives to address issues of social protection financing in developing countries.

[Social Protection](#) by Markus Kaltenborn. Encyclopedia of Law and Development (edited by Koen DeFeyter, Gamze Erdem Türkelli and Stéphanie de Moerloose) Edward Elgar Publishing 2021.

The encyclopedia entry provides a brief overview of the legal framework of social protection, the rights-based approach and the extraterritorial obligations arising from the right to social security.

BLOGS

Social protection during conflict: reflections on Tigray by Rachel Sabates-Wheeler and Jeremy Lind <https://www.ids.ac.uk/opinions/social-protection-during-conflict-reflections-on-tigray/>

Poverty has a language by Keetie Roelen <https://poverty-unpacked.org/2021/03/28/poverty-has-a-language/>

OTHER NEWS

The IDS announces the extension of its free Online course on Social Protection until 28 February 2022. To enroll, please click the link: <https://www.ids.ac.uk/professional-development-courses/social-protection-a-primer/>

The Community of Practice on Social protection in Crisis Contexts announces the launching of a dedicated Discussion group (Dgroup): <https://dgroups.org/groups/social-protection-crisis-contexts/>. Anyone interested in the topic is of course invited to also become a member of the community on: <https://socialprotection.org/connect/communities/social-protection-crisis-contexts/join-our-discussion-group-dgroup>

Lutz Leisering (Bielefeld University, Germany) has been participating in the UN's Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG-A), which works for a UN human rights Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, since 2019, providing expertise on global social security and representing HelpAge Germany as a board member of HelpAge Germany. The 11th Session of the OEWG-A took place 29 March - 1 April 2021 in New York, though largely online. On 30 March Lutz Leisering gave an oral statement on the normative content of the human right to social security.

*****The End*****