

**PROMOTING
SOCIAL TRANSFERS:
DFID AND
THE POLITICS OF
INFLUENCING**

*Sam Hickey
and Rachel Sabates-Wheeler,
Bruce Guenther & Ian Macauslan*

DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BDF	Bangladesh Development Forum
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CAP	Country Assistance Plan
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi (ruling party in Tanzania)
CFPR	Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction (Bangladesh)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPRC	Chronic Poverty Research Centre
CSP	Child Support Programme (Pakistan)
DAC	Development Co-operation Directorate
DACPovnet	DAC Network on Poverty Reduction
DFID	Department for International Development
DFID-K	Department for International Development Kenya
DFID-N	Department for International Development Nepal
DFID-P	Department for International Development Pakistan
DFID-T	Department for International Development Tanzania
DoC	Drivers of Change
DRT	Development Research and Training
DWG	Donor Working Group (Ethiopia)
FNDP	Fifth National Development Plan (Zambia)
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GoK	Government of Kenya
GoM	Government of Malawi
GoN	Government of Nepal

Abbreviations

GoP	Government of Pakistan
GoU	Government of Uganda
GTZ	Gesellschaft Technische Zusammenarbeit
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IDRC	International Development Resource Centre (Canada)
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JASZ	Joint Assistance Strategy Zambia
JCC	Joint Coordinating Committee (Ethiopia)
JCTR	Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (Zambia)
LGC	Local Consultative Groups (donor group in Bangladesh)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCDSS	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (Zambia)
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (Malawi)
MFPEd	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Uganda)
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development (Uganda)
MFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning (Zambia)
MP	Member of Parliament
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MVAC	Malawi National Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy

PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Uganda)
PPA	Programme Partnership Agreement
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSNP	Productive Safety Nets Programme (Ethiopia)
PWAS	Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (Zambia)
PVA	Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation (think-tank in Tanzania)
SP	Social Protection
SP-SAG	Social Protection Sector Advisory Group (Zambia)
SPTF	Social Protection Task Force (Uganda)
SRM	Social Risk Management
ST	Social Transfers
SCT	Social Cash Transfers
TWG	Technical Working Group (Zambia)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

Preface

The authors would like to express their gratitude to all of the key informants who participated in the research that this report draws on, particularly those involved in the four key case-studies. Their time, efforts and insights are much appreciated. This report draws from the other components of the Preparatory Phase work, written by Armando Barrientos, Mark Davies, Stephen Devereux and Sarah Coll-Black. We acknowledge with gratitude the comments and suggestions on previous drafts from the above mentioned, and also from Julia Compton, Jo Bosworth, Rick Davies, Tim Robertson, and Howard White. Each of the main case-studies has been checked for accuracy by the relevant DFID advisors in each country, and their timely and insightful responses have been much appreciated. However, full responsibility for the text of this report rests with the authors. In common with all evaluation reports commissioned by DFID's Evaluation Department, the views contained in this report do not necessarily represent those of DFID or of the people consulted.

Executive Summary

In brief

S1 The increased efforts by donors such as DFID to promote social transfers and social protection in low and middle-income countries over the past five or so years have yet to achieve significant outcomes in terms of actually reducing vulnerability and poverty. However, a number of more intermediate outputs and outcomes have been achieved, including the development of national strategies and policies on social protection, some budgetary commitments, a growing awareness amongst key policy actors of the potential of social transfers and social protection to reduce vulnerability and poverty, the piloting of social transfer schemes that could potentially be scaled-up to national level, and growing levels of donor harmonisation in this area. This has been achieved from a very low baseline of policy activity in this area, and within often highly constraining political environments. In most cases social protection remains seen as a donor-driven agenda, and has not commanded high levels of government commitment or significantly increased budgetary support. As such, it is possible that many of these gains could be rolled back in the short-medium term.

S2 Along with other actors, DFID has been strongly involved in this process and can now be considered alongside the World Bank as the most significant player in this field. DFID country offices and their advisors, with the support of other donors and DFID headquarters, have directly help achieve some of the outcomes listed above, most notably through strategically positioning itself as a lead donor in this field, helping to establish new policy spaces through which social transfers and social protection could be discussed and promoted, providing high-quality evidence and technical assistance on critical issues relating to social transfers and social protection in a timely and responsive manner, and through its persistence with this focus as a priority area for several years. High-calibre DFID advisors in country offices have been critical to this process. Nonetheless, DFID could arguably have achieved a greater level of influence had it developed stronger relationships with more powerful policy actors, made better use of influential actors within its own hierarchy, and attuned its efforts even more closely to the particular political contexts within which it operates.

S3 Efforts to subject DFID's policy influencing activities in this and other fields to higher and more regular levels of monitoring and evaluation face significant challenges, specifically in terms of developing meaningful indicators, avoiding onerous reporting systems that could stifle the creative process of policy influencing on the ground, antagonising its partners and in determining attribution. However, some promising ways forward here can be identified.

Background and context

S4 Social protection (SP) can be defined as “public actions taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risk, and deprivation, which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society” (Conway, de Haan et al. 2000). Social transfers (ST) are one type of SP intervention and are defined by DFID (2006a: 1) as “non-contributory, regular, and predictable grants to households or individuals, in cash or in kind.”

S5 DFID's key objectives with regards policy influencing on ST/SP are to:

- Influence international partners to gain greater commitment to the use of ST in the poorest countries including the re-focusing of SP;
- Influence national governments and other donors to support ST and the development of national strategic frameworks for SP.

S6 Since 2002, DFID has made increasing efforts to influence many of the governments who receive UK aid to adopt and implement social protection programmes, policies and strategies as a means of reducing vulnerability and poverty. From around 2004, this approach has come to focus on the specific promotion of social transfers, both as an end in itself and as a means towards establishing broader social protection policies and strategies.

S7 This study investigates DFID's efforts in Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia, with a subsidiary focus on five other countries. Notwithstanding the extent to which any evaluation of DFID's efforts to influence policy on SP at this point in time is inevitably limited and contingent, it is possible to draw some conclusions and make some recommendations regarding DFID's strategic approach to policy influence on SP in aid-receiving countries.

Contextual issues: the politics of social protection in Africa

S8 The contexts within which DFID has sought to promote ST/SP vary greatly, as does DFID's own status, approach and policy focus therein. Both need to be considered carefully when seeking to evaluate the impact that DFID has had in promoting ST/SP to date.

S9 It is increasingly recognized by donor agencies that whether or not governments commit themselves to ST/SP interventions it is an intrinsically political decision, shaped by political factors that are both enabling and constraining. Enabling factors identified here include the existence of a programmatic political agenda, whereby an ideological basis for political debate and policy-making exists, and the presence of increasingly well-institutionalised policy processes. High levels of indebtedness and aid dependence might be associated with enabling donors to have higher degrees of policy influence, but generally not with high-levels of governmental ownership of pro-poor policy agendas.

S10 The constraining factors in our case studies are perhaps more apparent, particularly in terms of:

- A prevailing political discourse that frames the problem of poverty in terms of a lack of effort by individuals and dismisses what might be seen as 'handouts' to those who are not perceived to be 'economically active';
- A tendency towards personalised and patronage-based forms of decision-making and resource allocation;
- A (related) re-balancing of the development agenda away from a concern with poverty towards wealth-creation and prosperity;

- The highly uneven balance of power between different policy actors or tendencies, particularly in terms of the low levels of capacity and political voice associated with the social welfare ministries who have the clearest mandate to promote and implement SP-type policies;
- The lowly status of debates and strategies around ST/SP in most countries prior to external efforts to promote them, and/or the particular history of state-donor responses to vulnerability, particularly in terms of emergency assistance;
- The high level of staff turnover and regrettably high-mortality rate amongst key government officials has sometimes been a significant constraint to progress;
- Unfavourable underlying social conditions, whereby the uptake of national SP schemes in Africa has historically been associated with high levels of inequality and urbanisation, neither of which is generally present in the cases examined here.

DFID's policy influencing strategies and activities

S11 It is difficult to quantify in precise terms the resources that DFID has expended in pursuit of policy influence on ST/SP. DFID's financial commitment to projects varies between £93m over 4 years in Ethiopia to £10m over the same length of time in Zambia. Other activities (e.g. commissioning studies, facilitating study tours) have amounted to between £100-150,000 in each of Zambia and Uganda in the past 2-3 years. The human resource input is harder to quantify. The process has taken up about 15-20% of one Adviser's time in Uganda since 2006, while in Zambia, the attendance of external meetings alone is estimated to have involved one advisor for one day of every week over nearly a three-year period. The advisor in Ethiopia initially devoted about 90% of his time to the process of influencing and supporting the PSNP, with this declining to about 60% over a three-year timeframe.

S12 DFID has tended to adopt a 'project-based' approach to its policy influencing work on ST/SP, whereby ST schemes are established and/or supported as the basis for scaled-up ST programmes and promoting broader SP policies and strategies.

Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts

S13 DFID's policy influencing activities around ST/SP can be thought of in terms of the following types of outputs, outcomes and impacts, and it is possible to link DFID's policy influencing activities to the (full or partial) achievement of some of these in each of the countries:

Outputs

- The establishment, facilitation and functioning of new policy spaces dedicated to promoting ST/SP ideas and activities across government, and also amongst donors, politicians and civil society;
- Increased awareness of and commitment to ST/SP amongst key policy actors, including civil society;

- An improved informational basis for making and evaluating ST/SP policies and programmes;
- Increased levels of donor harmonisation around the need for improved ST/SP policies and instruments.

Outcomes

- A commitment to ST/SP within national policy documents;
- The establishment of new dedicated budget lines on SP;
- Increased budgetary commitments to ST/SP policies and programmes;
- The proposal and implementation of SP programmes, particularly pilot ST schemes;
- The increased capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors to deliver SP, including ST;
- Improved quality of evidence-based policy debates and processes on ST/SP;
- A degree of commitment to SP amongst key policy actors.

Impacts

- Reduced vulnerability levels for households and individuals;
- Poverty reduction.

S14 The achievement of these outputs and outcomes has varied between countries and there is very little evidence of wider impacts at all, although recent evaluations in several countries may alter this picture shortly. Key stakeholders at country level frequently cite DFID as being one if not the most influential force behind the outputs and outcomes listed above. However, no DFID country offices could (or would) claim to have been more than moderately successful at this stage of the process. In most cases ST/SP remains seen as a donor-driven agenda, and has not commanded high levels of government commitment or significantly increased budgetary support. As such, it is possible that many of these gains could be rolled back in the short-medium term.

A Comparative Analysis of DFID's Influence

S15 The fact that DFID has worked closely with and through other actors makes it difficult to attribute either success or failure directly to the specific activities and strategies that it has employed in its efforts to influence policy on ST/SP.

S16 Despite often formidable political constraints, DFID has played a lead role in helping to establish a relatively new and complex policy agenda in a range of countries, albeit to differing extents.

Successful activities and approaches

S17 On the basis of the evidence collected in this study, DFID's most effective means of influencing government and donor approaches to ST/SP is its ability to facilitate the access of policy actors to the growing evidence base in this field. This has

been achieved through the provision of expert technical assistance, the studies that it commissions, the study tours to that it facilitates and also through the knowledge that its advisors possess of ST/SP. This capacity has allowed DFID to directly influence debates over ST/SP in ways that has increased the number of beneficiaries who benefit from ST/SP schemes (e.g. Ethiopia) and persuaded government officials to adopt social transfer pilot projects (e.g. Zambia). Where DFID has failed to produce and disseminate high-quality information and knowledge in sequence with its facilitating and advocacy strategies within national policy processes (e.g. the early stage of the process in Uganda), it has been less influential.

S18 In particular, the framing of ST/SP as ‘an African success story’, particularly via study tours, has been an important factor in persuading some government officials to increasingly adopt what has clearly (and accurately) been seen as a donor-driven agenda.

S19 DFID’s desire and capacity to take a lead role within the dedicated policy spaces that it has helped to established to formulate and promote SP has enabled it to directly influence and shape debates over ST/SP.

S20 The evidence suggests that policy influencing activities need to be routed through the full range of policy channels in order to be effective, from formal through semi-formal to more informal channels. In most countries, DFID has proved more capable of generating influence through formal and (in particular) semi-formal channels of influence, but has achieved fewer gains through more informal channels. However, it not clear that donors should be re-enforcing this essentially discretionary form of decision-making process, which could potentially re-enforce personalised and even patronage-based forms of decision-making and resource allocation as opposed to strengthening more transparent processes.

S21 DFID’s efforts to promote SP within poverty reduction strategy processes (PRSPs) have tended to achieve somewhat better results in terms of policy and budgetary commitments when SP has been framed as a stand-alone sector in its own right (e.g. Zambia), than when it has been promoted as a cross-cutting policy issue (e.g. Uganda).

Donor harmonisation vs. government ownership?

S22 DFID has generally been successful in persuading governments to establish new policy spaces dedicated to the discussion and promotion of ST/SP, and in using its leadership position within these newly established policy spaces to work towards high levels of donor harmonisation in this field. This has helped policy debates with government officials to move faster than they might otherwise have done and presented a common front that seems to have helped DFID and its partners to gain greater influence over the government.

S23 However, there are at least two potential problems here. First, donor ‘harmonisation’ around ST/SP may reflect a declining level of engagement from actors who could be playing a stronger role. More importantly, donor harmonization may close down the space for government officials and others to discuss alternative approaches to ST/SP.

Building influential relationships

S24 The ability of DFID advisors to cultivate relationships of trust with key government officials in social welfare ministries has helped to secure higher levels of commitment from such actors and to ensure that ST/SP debates and policy processes have moved forward faster than they might otherwise have done. However, such ministries have evidently low levels of funding, capacity and political voice, and have therefore been largely unable to take a strong lead on SP, thus seriously impeding DFID's efforts to influence national policy, particularly in terms of national-level interventions beyond the ST pilot phase.

S25 DFID has been less successful in building productive relationships with more powerful political and policy actors, including parliamentarians, high-level political leaders, and those within the more powerful ministries of finance and planning. It is this latter group, which can be thought of as part of a broader 'Finance Ministry tendency' (Kanbur 2001, see Annex 3) that currently constitutes the primary source of resistance to DFID's efforts in this field.

From inputs and strategies to outcomes?

S26 There does not appear to be a clear linkage between the levels of financial or human resources expended by DFID in trying to exert an influence over ST/SP and the outcomes achieved. For example, high levels of financial expenditure (as in Ethiopia) have not necessarily gained DFID greater influence than where far less has been spent (e.g. Zambia). However, this is understandable in terms of the differing levels of governmental commitment to ST/SP in different contexts and the amount of money already being expended on ST/SP.

S27 In three of the countries examined here, DFID directly funds and promote ST both as an end in its own right and as a means of moving governments towards establishing broader SP strategies. In Malawi, it has rejected the notion of piloting ST in favour of establishing the broader SP strategy and institutional framework first.

S28 DFID's project-based approach has had mixed success to date. On the plus-side, this has led to the implementation of such projects and (sometimes) an improved capacity of government institutions to implement such programmes. Projects have given DFID and other proponents something tangible around which to base their broader strategies of promoting social protection and of proving their commitment via their expenditure. Where no such projects exist (e.g. Malawi, Uganda), DFID has struggled to build its influence.

S29 On the downside, where projects are implemented by NGOs (e.g. Zambia), this does little to improve government capacity in this field or increase governmental ownership of a SP agenda. Where ST projects have so far failed to gain official approval (e.g. Uganda) or have come to be seen as providing an inadequate basis for a national-level policy (e.g. Zambia), then DFID's policy influencing strategies have faltered with little to fall back on. There is some evidence that the increasingly exclusive focus on ST might have increased resistance to DFID's wider SP agenda, particularly where this clashes with the types of prevailing political discourses and institutional resistance identified above.

The DFID factor

S30 DFID's Advisors emerge from this study as the key resource upon which its influencing strategies rest. Key stakeholders have attested to the high-levels of personal commitment and professional competence shown by DFID's advisors in their promotion of the ST/SP agenda, and link this to the outputs and outcomes achieved. It is difficult to envisage how DFID could carry out policy influencing work without specialist advisors who have the strong grasp of contextual and sectoral detail required to mediate between broad agendas and local (especially political) realities.

S31 Financial management systems that are flexible, generous and responsive have been critical in enabling DFID to develop a degree of comparative advantage in this field. Advisors have been able to respond to needs and requests as they arise which has been very important for building trust and credibility in the countries studied here.

S32 Similarly, DFID Advisors have greatly appreciated the high-levels of competence and support that DFID HQ has made available to them. The emphasis on ST/SP from London has given DFID offices further credibility and helped ensure a higher degree of continuity within their activities on the ground than has been the case with many other donor agencies.

S33 Although it is difficult to evaluate in precise terms, the views of our key informants suggest that DFID's influence on ST/SP is shaped by its: status as a leading bilateral donor, willingness to disburse funds through direct budgetary support in support of its favoured policy agendas, and relatively long history of engagement within each country.

Implications and Recommendations I: Policy Influencing Strategies and Activities on Social Protection

S34 Although constrained in many ways by problems of attribution and the limited country sample, the above analysis could be used to suggest that DFID should consider continuing and perhaps further extending certain elements of its policy influencing activities and approaches on ST/SP to date, whereas others should be reviewed and/or subject to revision.

S35 **Acting as a knowledge interface:** DFID has achieved its most significant levels of influence through acting as an interface between key stakeholders and the wider evidence base on ST/SP, some of which it has been actively involved in producing. The activities, capacities, deployments of resources and institutional practices associated with this role should therefore receive further support and development. This includes: developing the professional competence of advisors in this area; nurturing close links with researchers with expertise in ST/SP; responding swiftly to fill evidence-gaps; and facilitating the access of key political and policy actors to the evidence.

S36 **Adopt a leadership role:** DFID's willingness to take a lead role in policy spaces dedicated to SP/ST has been effective in securing higher levels of influence. The emerging opportunity to share this role in certain contexts (e.g. with UNICEF in Zambia) offers similar benefits alongside a potential reduction in human resource outlay.

S37 **Strong support from the hierarchy to advisors:** DFID Advisors have been powerfully enabled by the level of importance that DFID HQ and DFID country offices have placed on the ST/SP agenda, and the scope that they have given to its advisors to allocate financial and human resources to these activities on a flexible and responsive basis. Such practices must be supported and further embedded and extended.

S38 **Sequence activities carefully:** In general, DFID has proved adept at sequencing its activities in a productive manner, in terms of the links between facilitation, advocacy, generating information and knowledge and building relationships. However, this has not always been the case and a more proactive effort to ensure that (for instance) the evidence-base is in place prior to advocating for specific approaches, or that advocacy efforts are well-timed vis-à-vis national policy processes, is important to effective policy influence.

S39 **DFID could usefully re-examine its project-based approach,** with a particular focus on the following questions and issues:

- Broad strategies to influence SP policies within countries should not rest entirely on the promotion of pilot cash transfer projects – at the very least, a Plan B is required;
- DFID could usefully expend more energy exploring alternatives to ST, including efforts to mainstream SP interventions within higher-capacity sectors such as health and education;
- If ST are to remain a key focus, then the following points could usefully be addressed:
- Such schemes require high-quality M&E systems so that evaluative data is rigorous enough to provide a basis for future advocacy and potential scaling-up;
- Targeting issues need to be considered in advance of piloting, to ensure that the different models that might be required are subject to adequate testing;
- The implementation of pilot ST schemes be undertaken through government departments rather than NGOs, as part of wider capacity-building efforts;
- Key actors from ministries of finance need to be involved in the design process of any such pilots from the outset.

S40 **Ownership or influence?:** More broadly, DFID should reconsider the contradictions between two of its primary objectives – namely its efforts to promote its own vision of ST/SP on the one hand, and its efforts to secure government ownership of ST/SP policies and strategies on the other. Each objective may well be different and have possible contradictory approaches; for example, increased donor harmony may be good for donor influence but can also limit government ownership.

S41 **Employ the hierarchy:** Where appropriate, and if done sensitively, Heads of Office, ambassadors and visiting members of the UK hierarchy could be invited to make the case for SP and ST to their counterparts, as a means of communicating DFID's high-level of commitment to this agenda.

Changes required

S42 **More capacity-building for social sector ministries:** The most significant reform to DFID's strategy is required in the area of relationship-building. To the extent that social welfare-type ministries are important partners in establishing national level strategies and programmes on ST/SP, then DFID (and others) should make far greater efforts to help develop their institutional capacity to perform this and other roles that such ministries deem important.

S43 **Build stronger relations with more powerful policy actors:** Greater efforts are required in developing close working relations with policy actors operating within the Finance Ministry tendency on ST/SP issues. DFID's argument that SP can be a critical part of a productive growth-based agenda is likely to flounder unless stronger relationships are built in advance with finance ministry actors. Bridging the gap between different policy actors and sectors should also be considered in terms of where ST/SP programmes are institutionalised and delivered from. It might be possible to locate programme delivery units within ministries of finance (e.g. see the pension scheme in Lesotho) and to run programmes within broader systems of social service delivery that have greater political support and institutional capacity, particularly health and education.

S44 **Develop a broader national constituency:** DFID's incipient efforts to persuade civil society organisations and parliamentarians in partner countries to play a stronger role as advocates for ST/SP could be usefully pushed further, although perhaps indirectly via other agencies.

S45 **Focus on the external causes behind poverty:** It is imperative that donors efforts to improve the informational basis for making policy on ST/SP (e.g. support for vulnerability assessments) is extended to producing and disseminating compelling accounts of the external constraints that poor people face. This is required to persuade political elites that public action is required to overcome them.

S46 **Institutionalise political analysis:** Some of the most serious problems with DFID's strategic approach reflect a failure to engage productively and sensitively with established political discourses on poverty, with policy processes, and with policy actors capable of securing the success or failure of the ST/SP agenda. It is possible that a prior and in-depth effort to analyse the politics of ST/SP might have helped here. DFID is well-positioned to adopt such perspectives, having trailed useful approaches such as Drivers of Change studies.

Implications and Recommendations II: Measuring, Monitoring and Evaluating DFID's Policy Influencing Strategies and Activities

S47 **Adopt a light-touch to evaluating policy influence:** There is a clear willingness amongst advisors working on ST/SP to be held to account for their policy influencing work in this area and to learn from evaluations of their (and their colleagues') work. However, there is equally a concern that any mechanisms used for this purpose should be devised and applied via a 'light-touch' approach. Few feel that a more 'projectised' approach to policy influencing activities would have yielded significant dividends, as opposed to imposing extra burdens on their efforts. Stringent

systems may prevent staff from taking risks or from positioning themselves as part of a wider venture that (as with most advocacy work) inevitably required partnerships with other actors.

S48 **Improve the incentives:** Another important issue here is to increase the incentives for strong performance in this area. This could include specific training and a stronger emphasis on the element of DFID's Annual Review process for Advisors that looks at performance under the heading of 'working with people and influencing'.

S49 **Adopt a holistic perspective to evaluations:** DFID's success in achieving policy influence involves a joined-up effort within the organization, both within and beyond the country office and, as such, needs to be evaluated along with the Office's overall programme of work. It is also clear that the success of DFID's policy influencing activities and strategies is contingent on a much wider range of factors than can be fully controlled by DFID, including the capacity of partner organisations and the political context. Whether such factors enable or constrain, they must be taken into account within any balanced system of evaluating progress.

S50 **Consider adopting the Outcome Mapping approach:** The future M&E of DFID's policy influencing work could usefully draw on the increasingly popular Outcome Mapping approach (OM), as promoted by Canada's IDRC. The OM approach focuses on changes in behaviours and relationships (defined as outcomes) which will then lead to changes in actions. Monitoring is attached to outcomes rather than inputs, to reflect the fact that the same objective might be reached via different means in different times and places.

S51 **Maintain a partnership-based approach:** The problem of attribution raises a tension that has been apparent even in this more limited effort to assess the effectiveness of DFID's policy influencing activities to date. The tension here is between the need to involve DFID's partners in any evaluation of outcomes and the insistence that such evaluations focus as explicitly as possible on DFID's specific impact. While partners might feel reluctant to criticise an important partner such as DFID, they might also feel that their role is being overlooked. Such tensions once again highlight the need for probing analysis on a case-by-case basis alongside any application of more generalised frameworks of analysis.

S52 **Keep the (political) context firmly in view:** It is possible to devise a list of indicators (some of them quantifiable) that offer insights into whether or not DFID's influencing activities are achieving the desired outcomes, and to map these against the activities and also strategies that DFID advisors adopt to try and attain their ends (see Table 2). However, it should be recognised that the success of policy influencing will often take fairly intangible forms (e.g. an improved quality of debate surrounding policy ideas and options on ST/SP), which are difficult to quantify. There is a danger that if more quantifiable indicators were developed for the purposes of accountability, policy influencing activities would become skewed towards the achievement of these rather than potentially more important but less tangible outcomes. It is proposed here that any broader effort to quantify and measure DFID's policy influencing activities should be accompanied by case-study analyses that locate such efforts firmly in particular contexts.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report aims to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of DFID's approaches to influencing policy change on ST, and will ultimately contribute to providing a benchmark and set of indicators to measure (in 2010) whether policy influencing has or has not been successful. It responds to Objective (5.2) from the Terms of Reference for the broader programme of work, which asks: 'What have we learned about approaches to influencing policy change and to implementation, in different environments?' In addressing this broad question, the report will:
- Characterize the type and range of policy influencing strategies employed by DFID in promoting ST;
 - Evaluate their effectiveness and impact;
 - Explore the extent to which these strategies were attuned to the politics of ST/SP in given contexts;
 - Offer recommendations regarding future strategic directions for DFID's approach to influencing policy on ST;
 - Offer recommendations regarding the future evaluation of DFID's policy influencing activities more generally.
- 1.2 This study has involved case-study investigations of DFID's policy influencing efforts in four countries (Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia), with more limited explorations of five other countries (Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan and Tanzania).
- 1.3 The report is structured as follows. The first section includes the main body of the report. Chapter Two briefly reviews DFID's approach to policy influencing in relation to ST/SP. Chapter Three sets out the conceptual framework for analysing and evaluating the outcomes of policy influencing that is employed here. Chapter Four summarises the results of the application of this framework to four country studies before Chapter Five offers a comparative analysis and discusses lessons of influencing and proposes some benchmarks and indicators for measuring policy influence. The second section, Chapters Six to Ten, includes the four full country case studies, plus a briefer review of DFID's efforts in five other countries.

Definitions

- 1.4 DFID's approach to ST is set out in a practice paper, 'ST and chronic poverty: emerging evidence and the challenge ahead', (DFID 2005), complemented by a briefing note, 'Using ST to Improve Human Development', (DFID 2006a). DFID (2006a: 1) defines ST as "non-contributory, regular, and predictable grants to households or individuals, in cash or in kind." ST are 'public' actions (carried out by the state or privately) that are often – but not always – targeted at vulnerable or long-term poor households or individuals (DFID 2005: 6, Box 1). ST provide direct, regular, and predictable assistance in cash or kind to poor individuals or households, with the aim of reducing deficits in consumption and, in some cases, strengthening their productive capacity. ST include conditional and unconditional transfers targeted on poor individuals and households, as well as categorical transfers that focus on population groups with high incidence of

poverty. Indirect transfers, such as subsidies or fee waivers; irregular transfers, such as emergency or humanitarian assistance; and community transfers, such as social funds, are not normally included as ST.

- 1.5 ST are an important component of social protection, defined as “public actions taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risk, and deprivation, which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society” (Conway, de Haan et al. 2000). Social protection includes social assistance, social insurance, and labour market regulation. Social assistance is non-contributory, normally tax-financed, and focuses on poverty reduction, and ST fall into this category of SP.
- 1.6 Although this overall project is focused on ST rather than SP as a whole, a clear separation is impossible. ST is an instrument of SP and DFID (2006) explicitly states that its influencing objectives on ST are part of a wider strategy to influence SP. This has been the case in practice, and as such the abbreviation ST/SP is often used in this report to reflect this linkage.

Methodology

- 1.7 This study uses a range of methodologies to evaluate DFID’s approach to policy influence. Three particular analytical frameworks are employed; the first is designed to elucidate the *political context* within which DFID’s influencing activities were undertaken; the second to consider the particular *activities* that DFID employed to influence policy, while the third looks at the particular *channels* through which DFID deployed these activities (see section three for further details).
- 1.8 Four country studies were conducted of Malawi, Ethiopia, Uganda and Zambia. A questionnaire was emailed to a further 10 country offices, sometimes followed up by telephone interviews. Details on five of these are included here (Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan and Tanzania). This comparative case-study approach is a staple within policy research, offering as it does the possibility of generating general policy messages while being firmly grounded in particular contexts (Bulmer 1986).
- 1.9 The research methods included a desk-based review of the relevant literature and key informant interviews. The literature reviewed (see bibliography) included existing studies of policy influencing with respect to ST; research on the politics of social protection; DFID policy documents regarding policy influencing in general as well as a review of formal commitments to ST; country specific literature, including relevant Government commitments to ST (as expressed in National frameworks, documents, TORs for steering committees), and relevant DFID studies and documents promoting ST.
- 1.10 The primary research consisted of semi-structured interviews conducted with between 7-12 key informants for each of the main country studies. The key informants were chosen as representatives of the main stakeholders in these processes, including DFID advisors, government officials, staff from other donor agencies and civil society representatives. Further interviews were carried out with one or more DFID representatives from Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan and Tanzania. DFID advisors in each of the main countries studied here

were given the opportunity to read through and comment on the relevant case-studies in advance of their inclusion here. This helped clarify several empirical details and also fulfilled one of the ethical requirements of research concerning the sharing of research findings with participants. The confidentiality of respondents vis-à-vis particular findings has been maintained.

- 1.11 The research for this report is thus limited in certain respects, including its methodological scope (e.g. range of countries) and timing (e.g. DFID's efforts are ongoing and incomplete). Some key interviews were carried out over the telephone rather than in person. Above all is the critical problem of attribution, which makes it very difficult to isolate direct causal linkages between DFID's activities (especially as many were carried out in partnership) and a set of outcomes (that were also subject to a range of other influences). These limitations should be borne in mind when considering the reports analysis and recommendations.

2. DFID's Strategy on Influencing Social Transfer Outcomes

- 2.1 The 2006 DFID White Paper, 'Eliminating World Poverty: Making Governance Work for the Poor' outlines three primary objectives for support to social protection:
- Significantly increase spending on social protection in at least ten countries in Africa and Asia by 2009, supporting national programmes and working with the UN and NGOs in fragile states;
 - Working with European partners and national governments in Africa, double to 16 million the number of people moved from emergency relief to long term social protection programmes by 2009;
 - Support partnerships between developing countries to share experience of expanding social protection.
- 2.2 More specifically, DFID's key strategies for influencing on ST have been defined as being to (DFID 2006):
- Influence international partners to gain greater commitment to the use of ST in the poorest countries including the re-focusing of social protection;
 - Influence national governments and other donors to support ST and the development of national strategic frameworks for social protection.
- 2.3 In terms of the first objective, DFID is concerned to re-focus the ST/SP work of other key international partners, particularly the World Bank's social risk management approach, which it feels needs to be expanded to tackle chronic as well as transitory forms of poverty. DFID is also keen to encourage the ILO to extend its focus on social security beyond the formal sector to the informal.
- 2.4 The Implementation Plan (DFID 2006: 6-7) begins to suggest ways in which these objectives may be attained. First, DFID should "encourage policy coherence and programme complementarity." This includes facilitating the coordination of sector ministries with social welfare ministries, explaining the linkage between ST and health and education outcomes, and discussing combining ST with other policy options, such as the removal of user fees. The document recommends using the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process as a platform for coordination and an entry point for dialogue, and notes that the critical determinants of the ST/SP agenda will often be political, not technical. Second, DFID should "support pilots and scaling up of promising initiatives to build up the evidence base." DFID should collaborate with other agencies in undertaking rigorous evaluations of social transfer projects, disseminating the findings, and monitoring the scaling up process.
- 2.5 DFID has become increasingly concerned to identify whether or not its policy influencing activities are being effective, and to work out how best to measure, monitor and evaluate them. This task is complicated by the fact that DFID's approach to promoting ST/SP is rarely stated in explicit terms, and also because the objectives of individuals in country offices need not in practice mirror those

in official DFID policy statements. This reflects a wider issue, as identified by a DFID Evaluation Department Review which noted that: “A substantial amount of DFID resources are invested in influencing activities, though the nature of these tends to be implicit, without clearly identified objectives.” (Asquith 2002: 10). Spicer (2004) also notes that overall impact assessment on policy influencing “is constrained by the implicit nature of many of DFID’s influencing objectives and resulting lack of strategy documentation”. While at the same time, “any overall corporate definition of influencing would inevitably be too limited to capture the range of approaches and strategies DFID employs,” (Spicer, 2004: 5).

- 2.6 The next section proposes a series of conceptual frameworks designed to understand and evaluate DFID’s efforts to influence international partners and (in particular) national governments towards a stronger policy focus on SP and ST in particular.

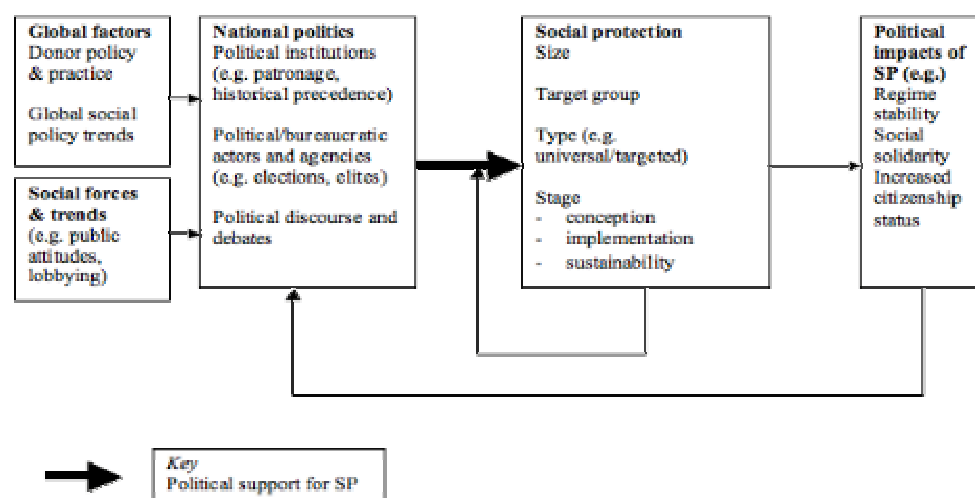
3. Frameworks for Evaluating Influencing on ST

- 3.1 Relatively little is known about which activities and strategies are the most effective for influencing policy, and still less about the approaches that can evaluate these. It is a field of study fraught with difficulties, particularly concerning the problem of attribution. Trying to attribute specific causes to processes of change or actual outcomes – which may each derive from any number of different influences, not all of them necessarily observable – is a well documented dilemma. To try and narrow down the focus to one particular influence is further complicated here because of the extent to which the promotion of ST/SP is pursued by a multiplicity of actors often acting in collaboration with each other.
- 3.2 This study can therefore only seek to establish a degree of plausible association. Following White (1999) the approach is one that weighs up the balance of the evidence – drawn from a representative group of the key participants and observers within the process – and to try and identify and make an informed judgment concerning the extent to which DFID, or DFID in combination with partners has had an influence on the ST agenda within any specific country.
- 3.3 Three analytical approaches are employed here in order to give a framework to the evaluation. The first is designed to elucidate the *political context* within which DFID's influencing activities were undertaken; the second to consider the particular *activities* that DFID employed to influence policy, while the third looks at the particular *channels* through which DFID deployed these activities.

The politics of social protection

- 3.4 Whether or not governments commit themselves to ST/SP interventions is an intrinsically political decision, shaped by a wide range of political concerns. Critical issues here may include the type of regime in place (in terms of ideology and legitimacy), the way in which poverty and the poor are framed within political discourse, and the balance of power between key policy actors, including international donor agencies. It is therefore important to have a clear understanding of how donor activities and strategies for influencing policies relate to the particular politics of ST/SP in given contexts. This allows an evaluation of the extent to which DFID's approach was 'politically-attuned' to the specific conditions in each case, and if/how this shaped the success of these policy influencing initiatives around ST.
- 3.5 Recent research, including work commissioned by bilateral aid agencies such as DFID, has begun to identify the relationships between politics and SP, in ways that may assist such agencies to identify entry points when seeking to promote ST/SP. This work has been influenced by the broad 'Drivers of Change' approach championed by DFID (DFID 2004), but is closely informed by the more specific historical experiences of ST/SP interventions in Africa in particular. The basic framework to be employed here to understand the politics of social protection in Africa can be depicted as follows:

Figure 1. Conceptualising the Politics of Social Protection in Africa



(Source: Hickey 2008).

- 3.6 In the broadest terms, historical analysis suggests that the uptake of social protection policies in Africa is associated with more programmatic regimes who feel secure in power and whose political sociology links them to social groups who tend to suffer from poverty and vulnerability (Hickey 2008). Patronage-based systems of decision-making and resource allocation tend not to favour the poor as they do not generally allocate resources according to need and undermine norms of public service. However, populist-style and patronage-based gestures have often included elements of SP transfers.
- 3.7 In many countries it is possible to identify a prevailing political discourse that frames the problem of poverty in terms of a lack of effort by individuals, and its solution in terms of providing incentives for them to become economically active and productive citizens.
- 3.8 The poverty agenda that ST/SP derives from has been increasingly established in poor countries over the past decade, and pro-poor policy processes (e.g. PRSPs) have arguably become more institutionalised. Although this should offer a valuable entry point for efforts to promote ST/SP, the recent wave of PRSPs have tended to shift away from a focus on poverty to a clearer focus on productivity and prosperity. This is driven by a number of factors, including a desire to sustain the relatively high rates of economic growth that many countries have experienced in recent years; the increased availability of aid and investment from sources such as China who support this shift of emphasis; disappointments in the achievements of the aid-led agenda over the past decade; and a level of national pride amongst political elites that eschews the constant portrayal of their country in such as negative term as poverty.

- 3.9 The nature of aid relationships is important in the types of highly-indebted countries discussed here, with donors often acting as part of the policy-making process. Their policy agendas, levels of expenditure and credibility can all be influential, although often not as influential as the policy direction undertaken by other governments in regional counterparts.
- 3.10 The implementation of national systems of social protection in Africa has tended to be associated with high levels of inequality and urbanisation. Although the evidence is inconclusive here, it appears that high levels of inequality may help to: create a stronger impulse for social protection amongst elites; make targeting easier; and create a tax base that allows for redistributive measures. Meanwhile urban citizens have generally been better able to pressurise regimes to respond to their needs/secure their rights compared to their rural counterparts.
- 3.11 Comparative research of social protection approaches in 6 other countries suggests that existing policy channels can enable the relatively swift passage of 'new' policy agendas, such as the extension of existing pension schemes in Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho and India (Hickey et al 2007). However, it is also possible that the problems experienced with longer-standing SP may constrain rather than enable new initiatives in this field to emerge.

Investigating DFID's approach to policy-influencing: activities and channels

- 3.12 Policies are an outcome of policy making processes that sit within this broader political context, nested within historical trajectories and institutions. For some, "the policy making process can be understood as a succession of bargains among political actors, interacting in formal and informal ways.' (IADB 2006: 11). Influencing policy making requires influencing the policy making process.
- 3.13 An increasing amount of research has focused on trying to understand the ways in which policy processes work and are subject to influence.¹ This report draws on Ros Eyben's work (Eyben et al 2003; Eyben 2006a, 2006b), which suggests that there are four major types of activity that can be undertaken to influence policy, namely:
- Facilitation: providing space and informed support for policy actors, helping them debate, negotiate and exchange ideas and experience. Space can be thought of as particular levels of the state, and activities linked to government such as formal policy consultations, or they may be civil society forums and processes outside of government.;
 - Advocacy: supporting advocates for change regarding ST, through moral support, bringing their views to the attention of policy-makers, and, when appropriate, providing funds and/or technical assistance;

¹ For example, see Brock, McGee and Gaventa (2004), Grindle (2002), Keeley (2001), Keeley and Scoones (1999, 2003).

- Information and knowledge: supporting the development of evidence-based policy, and helping policy-makers secure access to the information and knowledge they want; it also means constantly analysing the policy environment, learning from others, and using this learning for our facilitation and advocacy work;
- Investing in relationships: identifying allies who may share a common policy objective and building non-instrumental relations of trust and friendship. What types of relationships/alliances have been built to influence policy change?.

3.14 This project will evaluate the extent to which each of the above activities was employed in each case, and with what results. This will include a focus on the (estimated) amount of resources expended by DFID staff and offices in relation to each activity, although this will be difficult to account for in a precise manner. This focus will enable recommendations to be made regarding the future deployment of resources in pursuit of policy influencing objectives.

3.15 The above activities can be strategically undertaken in a direct or indirect manner, and through channels that are more or less formal, as indicated in the table below.

Table 1. Channels for policy influence

	Formal channels	Semi-formal channels	Informal channels
Direct on government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid negotiations • Policy oriented studies • Conditionality • Briefing sessions called by head of state / minister 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communications of states / people / DFID staff with ministers / civil servants etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendships with government officials • Margins of meetings
Indirect through other donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor groups meetings • Joint programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communication of DFID staff with other donor staff • Policy oriented studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendships with donor staff • Margins of meetings • Leadership by example
Indirect through domestic stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint programmes • Conditional funding • Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct communications with staff • Policy oriented studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendships • Margins of meetings

Adapted from White (1999: 37)

3.16 This study will examine the extent to which DFID's use of different forms of channel in particular was more or less effective in influencing policies on ST/SP.

3.17 These three frameworks are interrelated and can be conceptualised in terms of the objectives that DFID has set itself for policy influence on ST/SP and the outputs, outcomes, impacts and overall goals that it wants to achieve (see Figure 2).

Indicators

- 3.18 Successful monitoring and evaluation requires that outputs and outcomes are identified through indicators that can, directly or indirectly be attributed to the activities and inputs undertaken. These indicators should be consistent with the final objectives. Here we distinguish between two sets of indicators, namely process indicators (outputs) and outcome indicators, and schematically link them to DFID's overarching objectives and the activities and inputs that they undertake in *Figure One*. In the realm of evaluating policy influence it is important to make this distinction as process indicators allow a stock-take of initiatives and activities underway in pursuit of more final outcomes and impacts that may not yet have materialised (as is the case here).
- 3.19 Examples of process indicators could include the existence of ST/SP working groups while outcome indicators refer to changes in behaviour of the actors DFID seeks to influence. Outcome indicators reflect longer-term commitments to change and are thus indicative of changes to systems and institutions. Examples include the number and type of ST/SP programmes adopted, or the presence of SP and/or ST commitments in national budgets.
- 3.20 It is envisaged that the broader outcomes concerning the increased number of people receiving ST/SP and impacts on reduced vulnerability and poverty flow from the types of outputs and outcomes identified here (*Figure Two*), and will increasingly emerge as more ST/SP interventions are rolled out.

Figure 2. A conceptual framework: The influencing channels between policy objectives and ST

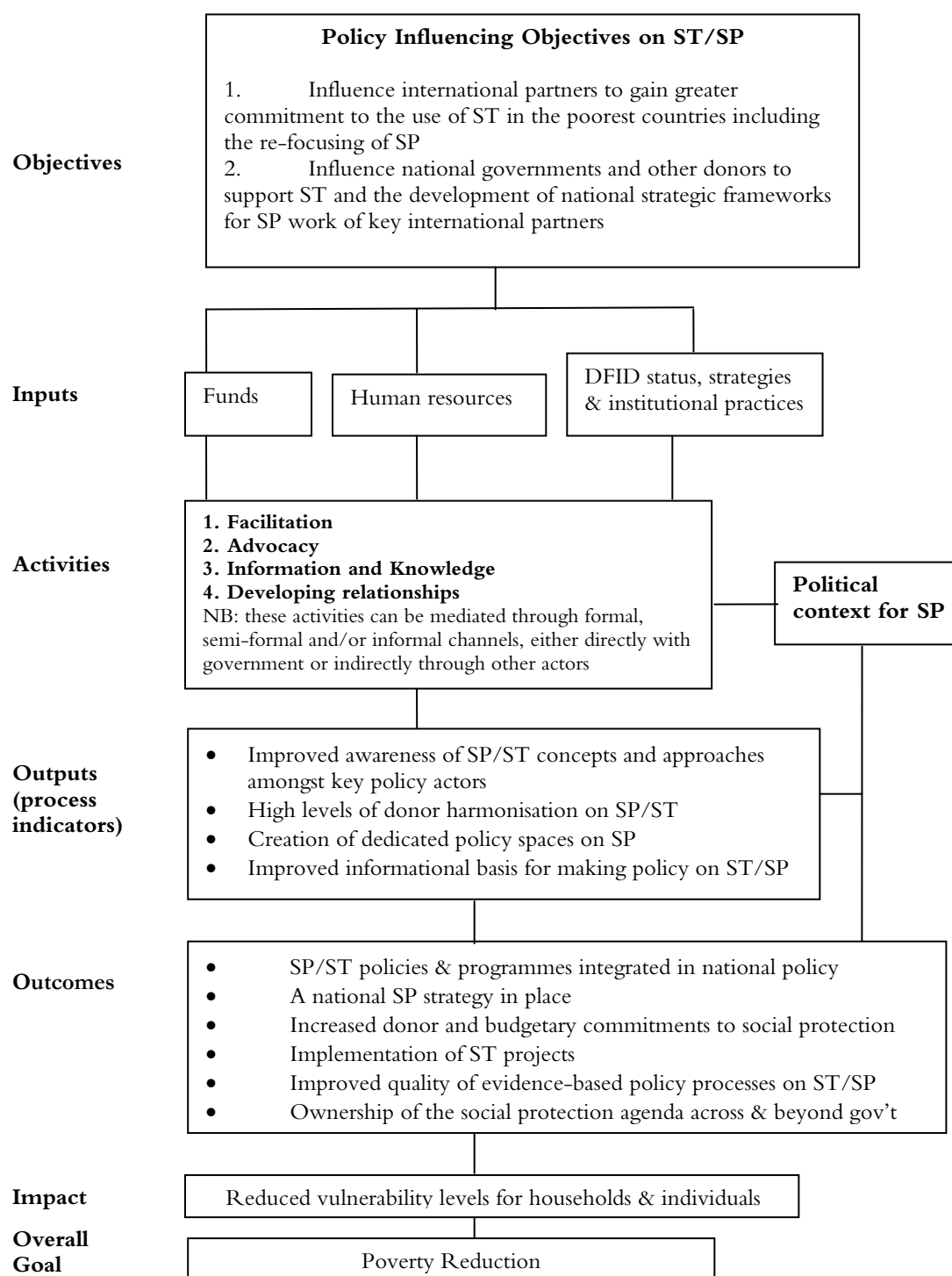


Table 2. Examples of Output, Outcome and Impact Indicators for Evaluating Policy Influence

Objectives	Possible activities	Outputs (process indicators)	Outcomes (with suggested indicators)	Impacts
<p>Influence international partners to gain greater commitment to the use of ST in the poorest countries including the re-focusing of SP work of key international partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate/fund donor working groups and activities related to ST/SP - Build good relationships with relevant donor agencies - Advocate buy-in within heads of development agency fora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a donor working group on ST/SP - Establishment of basket funding mechanism on ST/SP - Heads of development agencies agree to support a strategic focus on ST/SP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donor (s) commits more funding to ST. These are outputs in our normal terminology, not outcomes - Donor(s) agree to finance social transfer programmes over the medium to long term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced levels of vulnerability and poverty amongst poor households
<p>Influence governments and other donors to support the development of national strategic frameworks for SP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate/fund working groups on ST/SP - Adopt a leadership role within such groups - Build good relationships with relevant policy actors - Study tours - Commission SP studies - Advocacy - Support the establishment of pilot ST schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Functioning of specialist working groups on SP within government policy processes - Existence of a draft national strategy for ST/SP - Improved informational basis for making policy on ST/SP - Improved awareness of ST/SP concepts and approaches amongst key policy actors (e.g. no of officials and MPs trained in SP approaches) - Design of ST pilots in place, including M&E systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ST/SP policies & programmes integrated into national policy documents - Increased budgetary commitments to ST/SP as a proportion of government expenditure - Implementation of ST projects underway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased ownership of the 'SP agenda across & local government - Increased capacity of government institutions to implement and evaluate ST/SP policies - Improved quality of evidence-based policy debates and processes on ST/SP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced levels of vulnerability and poverty amongst poor households

4. DFID's Efforts to Promote Social Protection and ST: Case Study Summaries of Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia

- 4.1 This chapter provides executive summaries of each of the four main case-studies investigated for this research. The full reports can be found in Chapters 6-10, and a comparative analysis with recommendations follows in Chapter 5.

Ethiopia: Executive Summary

- 4.2 DFID's efforts to promote social transfers in Ethiopia have centred on the Government of Ethiopia's (GoE) Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP), which was established in 2005 for a five-year period. Although DFID has not devised an explicit strategy regarding its policy influencing work on the PSNP, its activities are informed by the fact that the country office's three main instruments of support in Ethiopia include social safety nets alongside basic services and capacity-building. The main purpose of its engagement around the PSNP has been to ensure the successful implementation of the project, followed by more recent efforts to ensure that (a) the programme is extended and (b) that the GoE moves towards a broader policy focus on social protection.
- 4.3 DFID has invested heavily in this influencing process. Between 2005-2008, DFID spent £93 million directly on the PSNP and around £1m in technical services. In terms of human resources, one member of staff initially devoted about 90% of their time to the process of influencing and supporting the PSNP, declining to about 60% over this three-year timeframe.
- 4.4 The PSNP is generally perceived to have been a fairly successful programme to date. It is well-funded and reaches over seven million people across all food-insecure regions of the country. Although there is little evaluation data as yet, early results include some evidence that levels of food insecurity amongst recipients is declining; that a majority of recipients were able to avoid selling of assets; that around a quarter were able to use funds to gain new assets and skills respectively (Devereux et al 2006); and also that PSNP cash is enabling households to invest in education and health (Devereux et al 2006, RHVP 2007). Its extension for at least one further five-year period seems to be ensured, and there is currently a debate around the issue of if and how 'graduation' will occur and for who, which in turn informs debates about what other SP measures might be required. However, there remain significant obstacles to the future extension of ST and SP more broadly in Ethiopia, in both political and financial terms.
- 4.5 Other SP instruments exist in Ethiopia, including formal sector pensions and regional social transfer programmes, but the PSNP is the largest policy vehicle for the social protection debate and tends to obscure other existing and potential social protection mechanisms that could be explored.
- 4.6 The political context for extending ST/SP in Ethiopia is promising in some ways and constraining in others. Four main issues stand out: concerns over dependency; the character of the regime; elections and the funding system for the PSNP:

- GoE's high-level of commitment to the PSNP flows in part from a concern that people were becoming dependent on emergency handouts. However, while this helped persuade the GoE to move towards a more coordinated approach to social transfers, concerns over creating dependency have in turn shaped programme design, with the PSNP placing a heavy emphasis on conditional rather than unconditional grants and the GoE's reluctance to extend the programme beyond a relatively brief timeframe;
 - Similarly, although the regime has programmatic character and the GoE is willing to listen to and take decisions according to the available evidence, there remain other political norms and imperatives that could adversely affect the pro-poor character of the programme;
 - Elections have so far proved to be a positive factor in terms of increasing the size and coverage of the programme and GoE seems particularly keen to ensure that the programme runs successfully in election years (including 2008), although the risk of politicisation remains;
 - Finally, the PSNP does not fall within the normal framework for financial management (e.g. for basic services) but operates through a unique grant guideline process, known as a Federal Specific Grant. This means that rather than each region gaining its allocation in accordance with universal principles, regions instead nominate the number of beneficiaries for the PSNP on an annual basis and then negotiate with the federal government for this. This discretionary process retains the potential for patronage politics to come into play, prevents the programme from becoming based in an entitlement approach, and allows for accusations of regional bias.
- 4.7 DFID has not carried out a Drivers of Change type study in Ethiopia but seems aware of the need to be attuned to the character of politics, and has carried out a governance assessment. In terms of the PSNP, the social safety net technical working group meets with the Deputy Prime Minister twice a year, thus offering some clear insights into government thinking on ST issues.
- 4.8 There is a high level of political commitment within GoE to the PSNP, including at the top levels of political leadership, where there is a belief that this programme can help stimulate rural growth. Ethiopia's second PRSP outlines a continuing commitment to the PSNP. The PSNP has its own budget line, although this remains a time-limited programme. The GoE was the key instigator of the programme, albeit with the strong involvement of the World Bank, and saw it as marking an important transition away from the 'merry-go-round' of annual appeals around food security issues. However, GoE also sees this as a temporary measure that will become obsolete once growth becomes more productive and pro-poor.
- 4.9 This level of governmental commitment, and a corresponding lack of coordination amongst donors in the early stages of programme design and implementation, gave GoE the upper hand over key decisions (e.g. the scale of the roll-out). In this context, DFID has sought to both further deepen GoE ownership over PSNP and a wider SP agenda while also promoting its own vision of cash-based ST and an entitlements-based approach to ST/SP.

- 4.10 Overall, DFID can be credited with helping to ensure that: the quality of the debate around the PSNP has been high; programme funding (e.g. of the minimum wage) has been maintained at a reasonable rate, disbursed in a timely fashion and according to good standards of transparency and accountability; donors are relatively well-coordinated on PSNP issues; and that the poorest have been maintained as a focus. It has had a degree of success in shifting the terms of debate around ST away from a productivist and towards a more entitlements-based approach.
- 4.11 This type and level of influence has been achieved through commissioning studies and provide technical assistance in a responsive manner; taking a lead role within the donor and GoE-donor working groups; and building good relations with key government officials. The fact that DFID has committed a high-level of funding creates an incentive within the country office to devote a lot of time, energy and resources to its advocacy efforts in order to protect its vested interest. DFID's effectiveness could be enhanced through wider engagement with other ministries as well as deeper engagement with levels of government who are implementing the programme (i.e. the regional and woreda (district) levels).

Malawi: Executive Summary

- 4.12 The Government of Malawi (GoM) has committed itself to implementing a broad social protection strategy, most notably within its Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), where social protection (SP) constitutes one of five key themes. A National SP Framework has been adopted by a national steering committee on SP and the guiding principles have been incorporated into a draft national SP policy. As of March 2008 this policy, which includes but is not limited to social transfers, was in fourth draft stage and due to be presented to cabinet imminently. The programme design process will start in June 2008. However, there is currently no national-level SP intervention and no direct funding from the national budget. There is currently a cash transfer pilot project in operation, championed by UNICEF and funded by National Aids Commission.
- 4.13 Importantly, institutional responsibility for SP shifted in August 2007 from the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OPC) to the Department for Poverty Reduction and Social Protection within the more powerful Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD). However, this department has yet to become well-institutionalised and has struggled to play a leading role to date. As such, SP in Malawi is currently top-heavy in terms of institutional structures and policy frameworks with very little actual activity on the ground.
- 4.14 The drought of 2004 was the key driver that persuaded GoM and donors to adopt a more coordinated, national level approach to SP. The piecemeal but costly safety net projects were failing to make a significant impact on malnutrition and poverty.
- 4.15 DFID and other donors have helped facilitate this shift through a mixture of evidence-based lobbying, technical assistance, support of policy champions and through facilitating debates on SP amongst government officials, and also more broadly amongst parliamentarians and civil society actors. DFID's strategy has been to support a transition from safety nets to social protection, and to try and

ensure that the GoM has a coherent and comprehensive approach to SP. It does not have its own vision of SP that it is trying to promote but sees its role in terms of supporting GoM to achieve such a perspective for itself. Since 2006 to date DFID has spent an estimated £117,845 on various policy dialogue activities. Funding to the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) for three years from October 2007 will total £770,000.

- 4.16 It is difficult to accurately evaluate DFID's influence on progress to date, partly because of the usual problems of attribution and partly because its 'policy influencing' goals have been both long-term and fairly intangible in character. DFID has also clearly been learning as it goes along, responding to changing circumstances and reshaping its approach accordingly. The outcomes that have been secured – e.g. the national level SP policy rather than a proliferation of new SP instruments – are certainly in line with DFID's stated strategy, and there is little doubt that DFID is an influential development partner in Malawi as a result of its long history of engagement and large level of financial support. It seems apparent that DFID's efforts – particularly around providing an evidence base, facilitating awareness of SP amongst key GoM officials and persuading MEPD to play a growing leadership role – have been fairly influential regarding the character and extent of the current ST/SP agenda in Malawi. GoM explicitly recognises DFID as its key partner in this field alongside the World Bank.
- 4.17 Problems have included the somewhat belated realisation of the need to work with more influential elements of GoM on this agenda. A question mark remains over the wisdom of promoting a wider strategy and institutional structure in isolation from more tangible and specific interventions. However, this approach is clearly understandable within the specific context of Malawi's policy history in this area. Any more final evaluation must await the anticipated onset of basket funding and rolling out of SP programmes later this year.
- 4.18 Although most international partners seem to be relatively well-harmonised around the development of Malawi's SP strategy, one agency has tended to work apart from the others and promote a project-based approach to social transfers. This has frustrated DFID and highlights the difficulties of donors seeking to promote change at the level of broad-based policy strategies without (a) concrete interventions and (b) securing influential partners within government who are able to promote both a new policy agenda and a new way of 'doing' development, i.e. from projects to policy. However, this experience also derives directly from the particular nature of politics in Malawi, including aid relationships.
- 4.19 The politics of development in Malawi are broadly unfavourable to the promotion of a coherent national level response to vulnerability, and have proved to be an obstacle to institutionalising a policy focus on SP. The sense that the personalised and patronage-based character of politics in Malawi makes it difficult for either the GoM or donors to act coherently in the public interest in Malawi (Booth et al 2006) has been reflected in the resistance shown to moving away from a project-based approach to tackling vulnerability to a broader, institutionalised focus on national policy processes. Although DFID is well-informed about the politics of development in Malawi, and makes direct use of a Drivers of Change Study on Malawi, it could be suggested that DFID have

perhaps been somewhat over-ambitious in going for a 'technically optimal' solution, where a more 'politically optimal' approach (that perhaps included some kind of policy experimentation) may have reaped greater dividends.

- 4.20 The turnover of key ministerial staff has meant that the momentum behind specific initiatives has been lost at different points along the way. As a result, the visions held and nurtured by particular champions for change both in Government and by donors have at various times been overlooked or discarded.

Uganda: Executive Summary

- 4.21 DFID's efforts to promote social protection policies within Uganda can be divided into two main stages. The first stage ran from 2002-5 and focused on establishing SP as a policy agenda. This involved promoting ownership of SP within the Government of Uganda (GoU) through a Social Protection Task Force (SPTF) that was located within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). The SPTF is designed to act as the champion of SP within GoU, initially by securing a policy focus on SP within the third Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP, 2005-8). The second stage, running from 2006-date, has involved attempts to establish a pilot cash transfer programme as the basis for a national-level ST programme and establishing a broader SP strategy.

- 4.22 The political context for promoting social protection in Uganda is relatively favourable in some respects, but several important constraints are apparent:

- GoU has a proven track-record in poverty reduction, in part because of the programmatic character of the regime in power, and there are well-institutionalised and pro-poor policy and budgetary processes in place;
- However, GoU is increasingly moving towards a stronger focus on wealth-creation and prosperity rather than poverty reduction, a move both shaped and re-enforced by a political discourse that tends to favour the 'economically active' over less capacitated households;
- The power relations at the centre of official policy processes are heavily skewed in favour of the powerful Ministry of Finance, whereas the social welfare ministry with responsibility for addressing vulnerability is relatively marginal and lacks significant administrative capacity;
- Uganda has yet to experience the levels of urbanisation or income inequality that have historically been associated with the instigation of national SP policies in Africa, although inequality levels have been rising over the past few years. Only a few SP-type instruments existed in Uganda, and the problems experienced with these schemes (e.g. pension arrears) tends to hinder proposals for new interventions in this area.

- 4.23 The DFID Social Development (SD) Advisor estimates that, since 2006, DFID has spent around £110,000 so far on the design of the pilot ST project, workshops and study tours, while £4m of (unspent) funding has been committed to the ST pilot project for a 3-year period. The human resource commitment is estimated to have involved about 15-20% of one Adviser's time over an 18-month period to date. Of this time, only 5% was spent on what

could be characterised as “influencing”, while the rest was spent managing the process of designing the cash transfer, including the inputs required to set it up and working towards establishing a memorandum of understanding with GoU.

- 4.24 Efforts to encourage the GoU to adopt SP policies are ongoing and are at a very sensitive moment at the time of writing. As such, it is impossible to draw hard and fast judgements regarding the success of otherwise of DFID efforts to this end. As things currently stand, however, there has only been a limited achievement of the outcomes that DFID set itself regarding this process.
- 4.25 On the upside, SP is now recognised as a policy agenda and was mentioned in the third PEAP. The informational basis for making and evaluating SP policies in Uganda has been improved, largely through the efforts of the World Bank although with some support from DFID-Uganda. The MGLSD does now seem to be promoting ST/SP somewhat independently of donors, and the Ministries of Health and Education are now either implementing or considering the implementation of SP instruments within their work.
- 4.26 However, little budgetary support has been forthcoming for actual SP programmes and commitment within GoU is very uneven. Proponents of SP have yet to agree on and circulate a coherent national level SP strategy (the first draft of a concept note on such a strategy was circulated within SPTF by the World Bank in late March 2008).
- 4.27 Most importantly, the powerful Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) remains largely resistant to both the agenda and the specific attempt to pilot the DFID-funded cash transfer scheme. In August 2007 MFPED declined the opportunity to accept DFID funding for the scheme and requested a Cabinet level decision.
- 4.28 DFID has helped to achieve a harmonised approach amongst the key donors with an interest in the sector, and has also played a role in promoting a small but growing constituency for SP within civil society. A closely associated outcome of this has been an acceptance within the SPTF to focus on a cash transfer pilot scheme that targets the poorest 10% of the population as the key element of working towards a wider SP policy agenda. However, one international non-governmental organisation and its local partner have sought to promote an alternative approach to ST in the form of a non-contributory pension. This has further slowed the process down and sown a degree of confusion within MGLSD concerning the way forward.
- 4.29 Overall, the current position of the SP agenda within Uganda reflects well on DFID's ability to generate interest in this new policy agenda as set against a number of often formidable constraints. It has performed particularly well when promoting or carrying out activities associated with facilitation (see Table 2), and when working through semi-formal channels (e.g. study tours). In other respects it is possible to identify problems with DFID's strategic approach that could (with hindsight) have been identified and avoided, particularly when working through formal policy channels (e.g. influencing the PEAP, adopting a project-based approach). These relative strengths and weaknesses must be seen alongside

those of other actors with whom DFID has undertaken these activities, and must also be understood in terms of the (increasingly unfavourable) political context for SP throughout this period.

Zambia: Executive Summary

4.30 The political context for promoting ST/SP in Zambia has been broadly unfavourable:

- The current regime cannot be described as particularly pro-poor and the current Minister of Finance has repeatedly stated that poverty does not exist, that 'poor people' are simply lazy, and that policy should focus on wealth creation than poverty reduction. This fits the prevailing political discourse that tends to favour the 'productive' segment of the population;
- However, the 2006 elections saw a shift in the regime's basis of political support towards a reliance on voters in rural areas, where the majority of Zambia's poor reside, and also extended and consolidated the power of the regime, which may now possess the legitimacy and capacity to push forward with relatively ambitious policy agendas;
- The PRSP-experiment is in its second-generation, and presents donors with a pro-poor and increasingly institutionalised policy process to engage with. Nonetheless, politics is personalised rather than programmatic, with decision-making, appointments and resource allocation shaped more clearly by patrimonial politics rather than by meritocratic or needs-based criteria;
- Concerns over 'vulnerability' have gained increasing currency in political and policy circles since the food crisis of 2002. However, the political economy of food aid in Zambia initially created difficulties for those seeking to promote ST as an alternative to the direct distribution of food;
- In the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme, there is a ready-cut policy channel through which to promote the ST approach. However, the ministries with responsibility for this and other areas of SP are among the weakest in terms of power at the centre and capacity to deliver on the ground.

4.31 In this context, DFID's efforts to promote social protection policies in Zambia can be divided into three main stages. The first stage ran from 2004-5 and focused on establishing SP as a policy agenda within the Fifth National Development Plan. This involved helping to form and operationalise the Social Protection Sector Advisory Group, as located within the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS). The second stage ran from 2006-7 and involved DFID funding CARE-International to operationalise five pilot cash transfer schemes, as a basis for a national-level scale-up. The third stage, from 2007-date, has seen DFID withdraw its strong support for scaling-up ST in favour of securing deeper levels of ownership of SP across government and within MCDSS in particular. There are also efforts to develop a broader SP strategy.

- 4.32 In terms of resource expenditure, DFID Advisors in Zambia estimate that it has spent around £100,000 on studies in Zambia since 2005; the value of the overall Programme Partnership Agreement (PPA) with CARE, which includes delivery of the pilot projects, is £10m over 4.5 years (although it is expected that only £7m will actually be spent). DFID's funding of ST pilots directly from DFID to MCDSS is £2m over 2.5 years. The human resource commitment in terms of attending external meetings is estimated to have involved one advisor for one day of every week since 2005, and this is in addition to the Social Development Advisor's inputs over 2004. Other funding has gone towards training and field visits, often channelled through other agencies (e.g. CARE PPA, RHVP, ILO etc.).
- 4.33 To date, there has been a reasonable level of achievement in terms of the outcomes that DFID set itself regarding this process. Stage One built on the ongoing efforts of the World Bank to mainstream a social risk management approach and GTZ's initial efforts with the Kalomo Cash Transfer Scheme and broader support to the MCDSS on establishing a SP policy agenda. It was effective to the extent that a chapter on SP was included in the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP, 2006-9). Although funding levels for the associated programmes remain low, it is notable that there is now an official budget line for SP. Stage Two has seen DFID roll-out ST pilot projects with CARE and MCDSS in three districts, and take on funding responsibilities for GTZ-established schemes in two others. There is no strategy for implementing a national SP policy at present.
- 4.34 In terms of the Government of Zambia's (GRZ) ownership of a ST and the SP agenda more broadly, a degree of cumulative success has become apparent in Stage Three, especially within MCDSS. ST have received favourable mentions in Presidential speeches and proponents suggest that the only obstacle to scaling-up the ST pilots is now financial. However, ownership within MCDSS is patchy and the Ministry lacks the capacity and political clout to make serious headway with this agenda. Importantly, advocates of ST/SP (including DFID) have not been able to convince key decision-makers in MFNP of the viability and desirability of increased SP, despite some efforts in this direction. Although, as the largest bilateral donor of direct budgetary support, DFID does have strong relationships with MFNP, there is little evidence that the Minister of Finance and others in powerful positions have overcome their strong ideological opposition to the idea of ST/SP.
- 4.35 As co-lead agency on SP in Zambia (first with GTZ and now with UNICEF), DFID has helped to ensure a high degree of donor harmonisation around SP. Combined efforts have helped generate growing levels of buy-in from elements of political and civil society.
- 4.36 Since the publication of the social protection chapter in the FNDP, budgetary allocations to SP have risen from 0.4% in 2006, 3.8% in 2007 to 4.2% in 2008 (JCTR 2008). According to GRZ's five-year forecast (2006-2010), the budget for SP will increase by 22% over a five year period, from K61.7 billion in 2006 to K74.7 billion. If inflation remains high, the SP budget may then decrease annually in real terms, and remain less than 1% of total government expenditure in each year (JCTR 2007).

- 4.37 The 2008 budget suggests that GRZ is not currently pushing funds towards DFID's favoured elements of the FNDP's SP agenda. There were significantly increased funds for programmes targeted at street children (from ZMK 6bn last year to ZMK 10bn this year.) and to help clear the pension arrears (ZMK 436bn). Both programmes have political momentum behind them, either in terms of a public desire to reduce the numbers of children on the streets or the unionised pressure for pension scheme obligations to be met, that is not apparent around efforts to extent social assistance to the poorest groups.
- 4.38 The scheme that relates most closely to the ST approach, the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS), had its funding levels reduced from ZMK9.3bn in 2007 to ZMK 4.3bn in 2008. If pensions are removed from the equation, then SP only accounts for around 0.7% of government expenditure under the current MTEF (JCTR email response). MCDSS may seek to divert some of the Street Kids Project funds to the PWAS, but seems unlikely to actively lobby MFNP for more funds at present.
- 4.39 The informational basis for making and evaluating SP policies in Zambia has been improved, particularly via the World Bank's Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment (co-funded by DFID) and also a range of studies into different aspects of ST that DFID has funded. However, the pilot ST programmes seem unlikely to significantly improve this information base, given the absence of high-quality baseline data and the initial absence of a well-designed monitoring and evaluation processes. Some of these informational issues have been addressed, and the evaluation results at the end of April 2008 may provide a stronger basis for moving debates forward.
- 4.40 Activities: DFID has employed a full range of activities in pursuit of its objectives, and has achieved a degree of success with each of them. DFID's facilitation of the Social Protection Sector Advisory Group (SP-SAG) and its wider generation of information and knowledge have both been influential. The building of good relationships within the donor community has helped secure a usefully harmonised approach therein. However, there are serious concerns as to whether the project-based approach to advocacy will prove to be an effective one. Moreover, DFID's decision to build its most significant relationship with a relatively weak and marginal Ministry has been a problematic factor, as has the (related) failure to build strong relationships with key officials within MFNP. There has been some efforts to directly engage MNFP officials on SP (including a specific advocacy event in February 2006, and invitations to study tours, field visits and trainings) although many of these attempts have been rejected. The Minister of Finance appears to harbour a generalised aversion to increased spending by social sector ministries, including the relatively strong ministries of Education and Health.
- 4.41 Overall, the current position of the SP agenda within Zambia reflects well on DFID's ability to generate interest in this new policy agenda in a political context that is broadly unfavourable to the uptake of a national SP strategy. Its policy-influencing activities have played a major role in securing the outcomes identified above. It has high-calibre professional staff with a now long-standing

awareness of the context within which they operate. One advisor was (in part) appointed to specifically take this agenda forward, revealing a willingness within DFID to invest strongly in this agenda.

- 4.42 DFID HQ and DFID Zambia have proved to be largely enabling influences here, in terms of keeping SP high on the policy agenda, offering a responsive approach to resourcing and technical assistance and a lot of room for manoeuvre in terms of individual workloads. At times, elements within the hierarchy have been somewhat inflexible in pushing for particular ST approaches but these pressures have now been relaxed in favour of a more contextualised approach.

5. Summary, Comparative Analysis and Recommendations

Introduction

- 5.1 This section brings together the main findings of the report, including a comparative analysis of the case-studies, and closes with some tentative recommendations regarding (a) DFID's approach to policy influencing around SP and ST and (b) its approach to monitoring and evaluating this.

Contextual issues: the politics of social protection in Africa

- 5.2 The political contexts within which DFID has sought to promote social protection vary greatly, and closely shape the possibility of countries moving towards increased and institutionalised levels of social protection. Critical issues here may include the type of regime in place (in terms of ideology and legitimacy), the way in which poverty and the poor are framed within political discourse, and the balance of power between key policy actors, including international donor agencies.
- 5.3 However, and at the risk of further generalisation, a number of broad tendencies are evident in each case, particularly in terms of the prevailing political discourse, the status of the poverty agenda, the balance of power between different policy actors or tendencies, the prior existence of debates and strategies around social protection, and the underlying social conditions.
- 5.4 In the countries examined here, the prevailing political discourse has frequently meant that DFID's approach to promoting ST/SP has been depicted as a welfarist, hand-out approach that is an expensive and also unproductive use of funds that is likely to deepen problems of 'dependency' and 'laziness' amongst the poor. This factor has been particularly evident in the degree of resistance that several ministries of finance in the cases studied here have exhibited towards the promotion of ST/SP. Donor efforts to persuade governments that ST do not create dependency are improving in some respects but remain largely unconvincing.
- 5.5 The existence of the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) experiment in many aid-receiving countries has offered a formal channel through which the efforts of DFID and others to promote social protection have been directed. However, and although the poverty agenda has taken hold to some extent in many aid-receiving countries over the past decade, often in relation to the PRSP experiment, there is now a growing tendency for the governments studied here and more broadly in Africa to emphasise issues of wealth-creation and prosperity rather than poverty.
- 5.6 The official mandate for social protection policies in many countries is often most clearly held by social welfare-type ministries, and it is with such institutions that DFID has often sought to forge close partnerships in promoting social protection. These are often the most poorly funded and under-capacitated ministries within governments, and tend to have a weak voice within national policy and budgetary decision-making processes. The donor-led capacity-

building initiatives that have been associated with financial management, SWAps and PRSP processes in recent years have generally tended to increase the already higher levels of capability and power of mainstream ministries such as health, education and, in particular, finance and planning, while largely by-passing the social welfare ministries. Although the relative weakness of these policy actors has enabled donors such as DFID to influence *them* to adopt a stronger focus on ST/SP, this has not easily translated into broader policy influence vis-à-vis more powerful policy actors in the same contexts.

- 5.7 It must be recognised that social protection was not an issue of any significance on the policy agenda of the countries where DFID has sought to promote from 2002 onwards. As such, progress must be measured against a very low baseline. Policy actors often associate it with older, welfarist approaches, and/or with more recent responses to food insecurity, and/or with the more recent poverty agenda. The existence of other social protection schemes can be considered a benefit, as in Zambia where the long-standing Public Welfare Assistance Scheme provided an institutionalised mechanism through which donors could trial the new cash transfer approach or in southern African countries where existing pension schemes have been scaled-up and rolled out to larger sections of the population (Pelham 2007). However, where existing programmes are considered controversial – as with many formal sector pension schemes in sub-Saharan Africa that are in considerable arrears – they may also foreclose the possibility of new SP schemes.
- 5.8 In some contexts, the key challenge here is to move beyond emergency assistance and towards longer-term forms of social protection. This entails a significant shift in state-donor relations and in institutional practice on both sides, including a shift from project-based work to more strategic and national-level policy processes, and has proved a significant challenge.
- 5.9 Over the time period that DFID has been seeking to promote social protection the evidence base on this policy approach has grown rapidly. Where as in 2002 there was relatively little good news to report, there is now a wider-range of apparent ‘success’ stories which DFID and others have been able to use to advocate for social protection, from one-off pilot projects through larger programmes and onto national systems.
- 5.10 Although it is not strictly a political factor, the high level of staff turnover and regrettably high-mortality rate amongst key government officials has sometimes been a significant constraint to progress in several of the cases studied here (Ethiopia, Malawi, and Uganda).
- 5.11 Although levels of both inequality and urbanisation are generally increasing within the countries studied here (with the exception of de-urbanisation processes in Zambia), both remain at lower levels than have been associated with the uptake of national SP systems in Africa in the past.
- 5.12 So, although the political context for social protection must be analysed and considered on a case-by-case basis, and cannot be portrayed as entirely negative in the cases examined here, there are a fairly clear and common set of constraints against which the character and success of policy influencing efforts by DFID and others must be judged.

DFID's policy influencing strategies and activities

- 5.13 DFID has increasingly adopted a 'project-based' approach to its policy influencing work on SP and ST, whereby either pilot ST schemes are established or existing schemes are supported in ways that should theoretically enable DFID to build a stronger advocacy case amongst key policy actors for a broader, national-level policy or programme of social protection activities.
- 5.14 It is difficult to quantify in precise terms the resources that DFID has expended in pursuit of policy influence on ST/SP. DFID's financial commitment to projects varies between £93m over 4 years in Ethiopia to £10m over the same length of time in Zambia. Other activities (e.g. commissioning studies, facilitating study tours, holding workshops etc.) have amounted to between £100-150,000 in each of Zambia and Uganda in the past 2-3 years. The human resource input is harder to quantify. In Zambia, the attendance of external meetings alone is estimated to have involved one advisor for one day of every week over nearly a three-year period, while the process has taken up about 15-20% of one Adviser's time in Uganda for 18 months. The advisor in Ethiopia initially devoted about 90% of their time to the process of influencing and supporting the PSNP, with this declining to about 60% over a three-year timeframe.

Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts to date

- 5.15 Notwithstanding the problem of attribution, DFID's policy influencing activities around social protection can be thought of in terms of the following types of outputs, outcomes and impacts:

Outputs

- The establishment, facilitation and functioning of new policy spaces dedicated to promoting ST/SP ideas and activities across government, and also amongst donors, politicians and civil society;
- Increased awareness of and commitment to ST/SP amongst key policy actors, including civil society;
- An improved informational basis for making and evaluating ST/SP policies and programmes;
- Increased levels of donor harmonisation around the need for improved ST/SP policies and instruments.

Outcomes

- A commitment to ST/SP within national policy documents;
- The establishment of new dedicated budget lines on SP;
- Increased budgetary commitments to ST/SP policies and programmes;
- The proposal and implementation of SP programmes, particularly pilot ST schemes;

- The increased capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors to deliver SP, including ST;
- Improved quality of evidence-based policy debates and processes on ST/SP;
- A degree of commitment to SP amongst key policy actors.

Impacts

- Reduced vulnerability levels for households and individuals;
- Poverty reduction.

5.16 It is worth re-emphasising here that policy influence is a different type of activity to programme-based work, especially in terms of being more processes based, less tangible and arguably longer-term. This means that some things that might normally be seen as outputs are now framed as outcomes, while things generally considered as outputs (e.g. improved services, number of people reached with services) might only be seen as outputs in the future, once the policy-influencing strategy involves more direct support for actual ST interventions. This helps explain the large gap between the outcomes of policy influencing activities and impacts in the above listings. More work is required in this area, both in terms of developing clear indicators for policy influencing work, and managing the interface between evaluating policy influence and evaluating more programmatic inputs.

5.17 However, many of these outputs and outcomes have only been achieved to varying degrees in the countries studied here, and there is very little evidence of actual impact to date. Some country offices have had more success than others although none could (or would) claim to have been more than moderately successful at this stage of the process. In most cases social protection remains seen as a donor-driven agenda, and has not commanded high levels of government commitment in terms of policies or finance. As such, it is possible that many of these gains could be rolled back in the short-medium term.

A Comparative Analysis

5.18 It is very difficult to attribute the above outcomes to the specific activities and strategies that DFID has employed in its efforts to influence policy on social protection. This section works towards this through triangulating the various perspectives of different stakeholders involved in the process.

5.19 Despite often formidable political constraints, DFID has played a lead role in helping to establish a relatively new and complex policy agenda in a range of countries, albeit to differing extents. Key stakeholders at country level frequently cite DFID as being one of and frequently the most influential force behind the outputs and outcomes listed above.

5.20 DFID's most effective means of promoting ST/SP has been through its ability to facilitate the access of policy actors to the growing evidence-base on these approaches, and to fill specific evidence gaps where they are identified. It has achieved this through providing expert technical assistance and commissioning

studies and also through the knowledge that its advisors possess of social protection. Importantly, these have generally been deployed in a responsive, timely and well-financed manner. DFID is thus credited with ensuring that debates over social protection are of a high quality and are generally seen by key stakeholders as persuasive advocates. For example, DFID-commissioned studies in Ethiopia directly helped persuade the government that the graduation of programme beneficiaries would not occur within the programme's five-year lifetime, and helped secure their commitment to funding a further phase. The study tours which took key government ministers and officials to the Livingstone conference and also Lesotho and South Africa are credited by participants from social welfare ministries in Uganda and Zambia as securing their commitment to the cash transfer approach. On the other hand, where the timely production and dissemination of high-quality information and knowledge has fallen out of sequence with its facilitating and advocacy strategies (e.g. as happened during the early period in Uganda during the PRSP revision process), DFID's influencing activities have been less influential.

- 5.21 In particular, the framing of social protection as 'an African success story' (via study tours to pilot projects and national schemes), has been an important factor in persuading government officials to increasingly adopt what has clearly (and accurately) been seen as a donor-driven agenda. The African Union's endorsement of social protection at the Livingstone Conference is also cited by government officials as a positive influence.
- 5.22 DFID's desire and capacity to take a lead role within the policy spaces that it has helped establish to formulate and promote social protection policies has enabled it to directly influence and shape debates over social protection. In Zambia, its role as lead donor of the social protection sector under the donor harmonisation strategy helped to ensure that it was able to put the cash transfer approach centre-stage in social protection policy debates (despite the fact that it was only one element of a six-pronged agenda identified in the SP chapter in the FNDP). In Ethiopia, DFID's chairing of the Donor Working Group has similarly enabled them to gain a more influential position vis-à-vis the World Bank, and in one case this has enabled DFID to advocate successfully for an alternative approach that should have a direct and positive impact on poverty reduction in the ground (e.g. wages set at higher levels).
- 5.23 In general, DFID has been successful in using its leadership position within these newly established policy spaces to work towards high levels of donor harmonisation around the social protection agenda. This has helped policy debates with government officials to move faster, as donors have already thrashed out their conceptual and ideological differences in advance. The presentation of a common front by donors seems to have been important in gaining greater influence over the government.
- 5.24 However, there are at least two problems here. First, donor 'harmonisation' around social protection perhaps reflects an absence of engagement in some respects, as suggested by the recent tendency for the World Bank to become what one government official described as "a silent partner" in debates over social protection in some countries (e.g. Uganda and Zambia). This reduces the tensions that are often apparent between DFID's more holistic and even rights-

based approach to social protection versus the World Bank's narrower, more productivist focus (e.g. Ethiopia). However, this has also deprived the social protection agenda in some countries of a powerful and well-resourced partner that may be critical to the financing, formulation and scaling-up of national social protection strategies and policies.

- 5.25 More importantly, efforts to establish a consensus amongst donors on social protection concepts and strategies tends to close down potential policy options and risks presenting so strong a position that government officials feel bound to pursue the path that donors set out for them. To an extent, this contravenes the wider objective of securing government ownership of the social protection agenda (a stated DFID objective). So, although donor harmonisation is an important element of an effective strategy for donor led policy influencing, it risks the possibility that donors will implant a social protection agenda while denying it the chance to take deeper root.
- 5.26 In terms of which channels have been the most productive ones through which to steer policy-influencing activities (formal, semi-formal or informal), the evidence clearly suggests that a mixture of all three is required. Each is required to win specific struggles at particular moments in the process, and sometimes efforts via a combination of channels have been required to reach certain outcomes (e.g. the signing of the MoU for pilot cash transfers in Zambia). DFID has generally proved more capable of generating influence through formal and (in particular) semi-formal channels of influence, but has achieved fewer gains through more informal channels. However, it not clear that donors should be re-enforcing this essentially discretionary form of decision-making process.
- 5.27 DFID's efforts to build relationships that can help support its influencing strategy on social protection have been effective in some ways, but deficient in several other respects. Some advisors have made dedicated efforts to cultivate relationships of trust with key government officials, particularly those in social welfare ministries where the new social protection policy spaces are often located. This has helped to secure higher levels of commitment from such individuals and associated institutions and to ensure that policy processes on social protection have moved faster than they might otherwise have done. More recently, DFID has also built good relations with civil society organisations who can help either in terms of designing cash transfer pilots (e.g. Uganda) and/or advocating for social protection (e.g. Zambia, Uganda), thus extending the constituency of support for the social protection agenda and building capacity towards its implementation.
- 5.28 However, DFID's approach to relationship-building has been failing in three important respects. First, it has only recently started to engage with parliamentarians (e.g. by inviting them to workshops, or funding their participation on study tours), despite the influence that such actors can have within parliamentary policy processes and more generally as public advocates for social protection (e.g. see a recent press release by a Zambian MP on the lack of support for social protection in the 2008 budget). Second, DFID has only sporadically sought to develop informal relationships with decision-makers at high levels of government. This reflects a number of constraints, particularly regarding the status of the key actors involved here, namely DFID's advisors. As

non-nationals, they tend to lack be poorly integrated into national social networks, while their status in the hierarchy of the DFID office and beyond in policy circles means that they also lack access to the kind of high-level spaces where powerful actors can be approached informally. Advisors occasionally overcome this barrier by soliciting the intercession of Heads of Office and visiting members of the DFID hierarchy.

- 5.29 This relates to the third and most serious of DFID's problems/failings in terms of developing relationships in support of its policy influencing strategy on social protection. DFID's primary effort at relationship-building in many countries (including Uganda, Zambia and, until recently, Malawi) has been with social welfare ministries who it has correctly identified as having the clearest mandate amongst government ministries to protect people from vulnerability. This has helped develop a degree of ownership of the social agenda within one branch of government. However, such ministries have evidently low levels of funding, capacity and political voice, and have therefore been largely unable to take a strong lead on social protection, either in terms of advocacy within central government policy and budgetary processes, or in terms of delivering social protection projects on the ground. This has seriously impeded efforts to promote SP and ST agendas, particularly in terms of national-level interventions beyond the pilot phase.
- 5.30 At the same time, DFID has seriously underestimated the importance of developing good relationships with policy actors in the more powerful ministries, particularly those of finance and planning. According to one Ministry of Finance source, policy processes have run aground because of DFID's failure to speak to influential people within the Ministry early in the process. The lack of engagement has made it easier for leaders and officials within finance ministries to dismiss the social protection agenda on either ideological or financial grounds, and constitutes the biggest single obstacle to DFID's policy-influencing agenda. DFID's close association in this field with what Ravi Kanbur (2001) calls the 'Civil Society tendency' as opposed to the 'Finance Ministry' tendency enables opponents to cast DFID's approach as 'welfarist' and handout-based, thus making it difficult for DFID to frame it as part of a productivist, growth-based agenda (see Annex 2). One damaging result of DFID's strategy has been to thrust its social welfare partners into direct conflict and/or strained relationships with their more powerful counterparts in government, leaving them cast as donor-driven lobbyists against mainstream government positions. Persuading – and in some instances dominating – relatively weak policy actors to take up the social protection agenda thus appears as a somewhat Pyrrhic victory in the wider scheme of things.²
- 5.31 When DFID has promoted the social protection agenda within PRSP processes as a stand-alone sector in its own right (e.g. Zambia), this has tended to achieve somewhat better results than when it has been promoted as a cross-cutting policy issue (e.g. Uganda). For example, the Zambian PRSP included a dedicated

² Ironically, the bid by donors to mainstream the poverty agenda over the past decade, particularly as promoted through the PRSP experiment, has tended to focus on persuading and empowering the powerful ministries of finance and planning to adopt and push forward the agenda. This has tended to further re-enforce the inequality between certain types of policy actors and further marginalise the social welfare ministries who had been the focus of earlier efforts to promote the poverty agenda.

chapter on social protection plus a dedicated budget line, whereas social protection receives more sporadic treatment in Ugandan's latest PRSP document. This may be because a dedicated policy space allows a new sector to display technical competence and make a reasonable budgetary case. One downside of the sectoral approach is that it holds few strong incentives to reach out to other sectors (such as health and education). On a related issue, efforts to promote stand-alone social protection interventions in Uganda have faltered in part because they run counter to the Finance Ministry's stated preference for the provision of broad-based social services with, where necessary, targeted interventions within these (e.g. the school feeding programme, or the abolishment of user fees in health).

- 5.32 It has not been possible to establish a clear linkage between the levels of financial or human resources expended by DFID in trying to exert an influence over social protection policies and the outcomes that have been achieved. This is not surprising given the extent to which outcomes are mediated by a wide range of factors, some highly very contextual. For example, the highest levels of expenditure (Ethiopia) have not necessarily gained DFID greater influence over social protection than it exerts in a country where it has spent far less (e.g. Zambia). However, this is understandable in terms of the differing levels of governmental commitment to social protection in different contexts and the amount of money already being expended on social protection. Contextual differences also mediate the proportion of time that any advisor spends on this is a very blunt tool for trying to evaluate progress (e.g. a high degree donor harmonization has reduced to a quarter the amount of time that the DFID advisor in Zambia needs to spend in meetings, while a degree of disharmony between DFID and an external actor in Uganda has taken up a considerable amount of DFID's time and energy).
- 5.33 DFID country offices have tended not to document a formal strategy of policy influence around social protection that has then been subject to evaluation. This makes such strategies difficult to define and evaluate post-hoc. An exception is Zambia, which initially built this strategy into its wider country programme strategy (2004-7), although even here activities are not systematically linked to specific intended outcomes, making it less useful as an approach for monitoring and measuring vis-à-vis a wider strategy.
- 5.34 The most distinctive element of DFID's strategic approach – the project-based approach which has been implemented in Zambia and Ethiopia and is currently being attempted in Uganda – has had mixed success to date. On the plus-side, the implementation of such projects is an outcome in itself, in line with DFID's strategic objectives in this field. Projects have also sometimes helped to improve governmental capacity to implement social protection programmes (e.g. Ethiopia), another important outcome. Projects have given DFID and other proponents something tangible to point to as an example of social protection and a way of proving their commitment via their expenditure. This in turn should improve their capacity to influence the broader social protection agenda. Where no such attributable project exists, as in Malawi, DFID has struggled to build its influence.

- 5.35 On the downside, where projects are implemented by NGOs (e.g. Zambia), this does little to improve government capacity in this field or increase governmental ownership of the social protection agenda. Where projects have failed (as yet) to gain official approval (e.g. Uganda) or have come to be seen as providing an inadequate basis for a national-level policy (e.g. Zambia), then DFID's policy influencing strategies have faltered with little to fall back on. The difficulty of shifting from pilots to national programmes has arguably been underestimated. Recent studies in Zambia suggest that a significant re-design of the existing targeting mechanisms will be required to adapt a cash transfer instrument to different regions of the country.
- 5.36 A tendency to rush projects through the design process in pursuit of 'quick wins' may mean that monitoring and evaluation systems will not yield the quality of information required to make a more persuasive case for scaling-up. The project-based approach required excellent baseline and M&E data that governments take seriously. However, M&E systems have not always been designed in ways that will yield the quality of information required to make a more persuasive case for scaling-up.
- 5.37 DFID's willingness to fund pilot cash transfer has done little to persuade the more powerful actors within ministries of finance who remain concerned with the affordability and sustainability of scaled-up interventions. There is some evidence that the increasingly exclusive focus on ST over the past few years might have increased resistance to DFID's wider SP agenda, particularly where this clashes with the types of prevailing political discourses and institutional resistance identified above.
- 5.38 However, there is some evidence to suggest that it is DFID's particular *approach* to the project-based strategy that is the problem, rather than the *strategy per se*. For example, the World Bank-influenced PSNP in Ethiopia has provided a useful point of reference for DFID's broader strategic work. It could be speculated that if the World Bank had been more engaged in promoting ST/SP in Uganda and Zambia, particularly in terms of bringing its considerable experience and reputation in project-design to bear, then DFID's project-based approach to influencing policy on ST/SP might have yielded stronger outcomes.

The DFID factor

- 5.39 The final set of points relate to the specifics of how DFID operates as an aid agency, and suggests that its not so much what an agency does to influence policy on social protection that matters, but the way that it does it that counts.

DFID Advisors: competence, commitment...and contextual awareness?

- 5.40 DFID's advisors emerge from this study as the key resource upon which its influencing strategies rest. Key stakeholders have attested to being both impressed and persuaded by the high-levels of personal commitment and professional competence shown by DFID's advisors in their promotion of the social protection agenda. The capacity to render a general strategy legible within a specific context is a critical skill, and one observer of DFID-Zambia's efforts has identified the in-country expertise of DFID's advisors prior to appointment as linked to their successes there to date.

5.41 Given the general failure to date to secure support from within finance ministries, it is surprising that DFID Offices have not incorporated their Economics Advisors into this effort. As noted above, Heads of Office and still more senior figures could have employed more regularly in terms of relationship-building with high-level government actors.

DFID methods: HQ and in-country

5.42 Financial management systems that are flexible, generous and responsive have been critical in enabling DFID to develop a degree of comparative advantage in this field. Indeed, one World Bank social protection specialist bemoaned his own organisation's incapacity to respond as flexibly as DFID had done. DFID's advisors have been able to respond to needs and requests as they arise, enabling them to build trust and credibility in the countries studied here, and to help keep policy processes moving forward. There are numerous examples of this across each of our four cases, including where DFID's responsive approach has helped ensure that: technical assistance is available to help government ministries move policy development forward; policy debates are evidence-based (e.g. commissioning studies) and resistance to SP is reduced, particularly from actors within the Finance Ministry tendency (e.g. carrying out fiduciary risk assessments).

5.43 Advisors stress the importance of being given enough scope by their Heads of Office to devote time and resources to pursuing their policy-influencing strategies as and when required. Similarly, DFID Advisors have greatly appreciated and employed the high-levels of competence and support than DFID HQ has made available to them – through a dedicated Policy Division Team on Social Protection but also after its disbandment – and which they have employed throughout these processes. The fact that social protection is perceived both by advisors and local stakeholders to be high-upon London's overall agenda has given DFID further credibility and ensured a continuity of activity on the ground that has been notably missing from other donor agencies.

5.44 However, at certain times (e.g. during the preparation of DFID's most recent White Paper) DFID Advisors have also felt under pressure to push hard for certain objectives (e.g. the implementation of cash transfer projects) whether or not this was deemed the wisest move in particular contexts. Career-wise, it might still be considered important for DFID staff to show their capacity to manage and disburse large amounts of money. The pressure to spend could easily lead to an inflexible focus on a particular project or policy proposal that may be inimical to the wider goals of gaining political support for the initiative.

DFID's status as a donor

5.45 Although it is difficult to pinpoint in precise terms, it does seem from the views given by our non-DFID key informants that DFID's status as a leading bilateral donor, its willingness to disburse funds through direct budgetary support in support of its favoured policy agendas, and its relatively long history of engagement within each country have all enabled it to have relatively more influence than might otherwise have been the case.

Implications and Recommendations I: Policy Influencing Strategies and Activities on Social Protection

- 5.46 The nature and limitations of this particular project; the incomplete and ongoing character of DFID's activities in this area; and the different types of context within such efforts are either enabled or constrained all prevent the formulation of hard and fast recommendations regarding ways forward from here. However, the above analysis could be used to suggest that DFID should consider continuing and perhaps further extending certain elements of its policy influencing activities and approaches on social protection to date, whereas others should be reviewed and/or subject to revision.
- 5.47 DFID has achieved its most significant levels of influence on the social protection policies of national governments through acting as an interface between key stakeholders and the wider evidence base on social protection.³ The activities, capacities, deployments of resources and institutional practices associated with this role should therefore receive further support and development. This includes: developing the professional competence of advisors in this area; nurturing close links with research actors with expertise in social protection; and the identification of social protection success stories and exposure of key government officials to them. More broadly, this role has been enabled by the level of importance that DFID-HQ and DFID country offices have placed on the social protection agenda, and the scope given to advisors at country level to allocate financial and human resources to these activities on a flexible and responsive basis. Such practices must be supported and further embedded and extended.
- 5.48 DFID's willingness to take a lead role in policy spaces dedicated to social protection should also be persisted with, although where opportunities arise to share this role (e.g. with UNICEF in Zambia) this may offer similar returns alongside a potentially reduced human resource outlay.
- 5.49 In general, DFID has proved adept at sequencing its activities in a productive manner, in terms of the links between facilitation, advocacy, generating information and knowledge and building relationships. However, this has not always been the case and a more proactive effort to ensure that (for instance) the evidence-base is in place prior to advocating for specific approaches, or that advocacy efforts are well-timed vis-à-vis national policy processes, is important.
- 5.50 Greater efforts are required to ensure that an extensive and high-quality informational basis on issues of vulnerability is available in support of efforts to promote and implement ST/SP policies and programmes. Moreover, given the extent to which the prevailing political discourses in many African countries tend to blame the poor for their predicament, it is important to produce and disseminate compelling accounts of the constraints that poor people face.

³ This fits with one of the key models that development agencies might pursue over the medium-long (Maxwell 2007) and broadly follows the 'knowledge Bank' model. This finding is further supported by Britto's (2008) analysis of the role that donors have played in supporting social protection policies in Latin America.

- 5.51 The constraints imposed on policy influencing activities by the high turnover of staff, and regrettably high-mortality rate amongst key government officials in poor countries, cannot be entirely overcome. However, given the extent to which this has sometimes proved to be a significant constraint to progress, DFID could consider identifying and building relationships with a wider cohort of policy champions, and further emphasise its aim of institutionalising a commitment to ST/SP within departments and ministries rather than just individuals.
- 5.52 DFID could usefully re-examine its project-based approach, with a particular focus on the following questions and issues:
- Broad strategies to influence social protection policies within countries should not rest entirely on the promotion of pilot cash transfer projects – at the very least, a Plan B is required;
 - Such alternatives could include efforts to mainstream social protection interventions within higher-capacity sectors such as health and education that command greater governmental commitment;
 - All such schemes require high-quality M&E systems so that evaluative data is seen to be rigorous enough to provide a basis for future advocacy and potential scaling-up;
 - If targeting issues arise, these need to be considered in advance of piloting, to ensure that the different models that might be required are subject to adequate testing;
 - The implementation of ST schemes should be undertaken through government departments rather than NGOs, and be part of a much wider capacity-building process;
 - Key actors from ministries of finance need to be involved in the design process of any such pilots from the outset;
 - DFID could perhaps reconsider whether it should take a lead role in project design and implementation vis-à-vis other actors with perhaps greater expertise and influence in this area.
- 5.53 More broadly, DFID should reconsider and attempt to resolve the contradictions between two of its primary objectives, namely its efforts to promote its own vision of ST/SP on the one hand, and its efforts to secure government ownership of ST/SP policies and strategies on the other. There is a clear tension between trying to promote a particular policy agenda and some of DFID's wider goals, particularly concerning the securing of governmental ownership of the broader poverty agenda within which social protection sits. For example, government ownership of the social protection agenda might be quite high (Ethiopia) and this might mean that DFID's scope to influence is correspondingly reduced. The opposite scenario appears to prevail in Zambia. Attaining high levels of donor harmonisation around ST/SP may increase levels of donor influence but at the cost of government ownership of the agenda. This risks the possibility that donors may implant a social protection agenda while denying it the chance to take deeper root.

- 5.54 DFID's use of 'informal' channels to promote social protection policies needs to be carefully thought through in relation to the adverse impact that it might have on the increasingly formal and well-institutionalised policy processes that exist in aid-receiving countries. Where appropriate, and if done sensitively, Heads of Office and visiting members of the DFID hierarchy could be invited to make the case for social protection to their counterparts, as a means of communicating DFID's high-level of commitment to this agenda.
- 5.55 The most significant reform to DFID's strategy is required in the area of relationship-building. To the extent that social welfare-type ministries are important partners in establishing national level strategies and programmes on social protection, then DFID (and others) should make far greater efforts to help develop their institutional capacity to perform this and other roles that such institutions deem important.
- 5.56 However, DFID must work much harder to develop close working relations with policy actors operating within the Finance Ministry tendency (Annex 2). Although DFID is increasingly seeking to make the case that social protection can be a critical part of a productive growth-based agenda (e.g. see CPRC studies and policy briefs in Uganda), such efforts are likely to flounder unless stronger relationships are first built with finance ministry actors. One encouraging route forward here has been identified by UNICEF in Zambia, which has opened a dialogue on social protection with the Economics Association of Zambia, a think-tank that is listened to closely by the finance ministry. In Uganda, a consultant hired by DFID in the first phase of their strategy held a workshop with private sector actors as a means of persuading them of the potential benefits of a minimum wage (see Devereux 2004). Another relatively easy tactic would be for DFID to include their Economics Advisors within their efforts to influence social protection policy.
- 5.57 Wider research into the politics of successful social protection policies suggests that this bridging of policy tendencies is critical to successful and sustainable development policies. Finance Ministry buy-in is a minimum criterion for success, but deeper institutional links may also be required. For example, the pension department in Lesotho is run out of the finance ministry. A different type of bridging that could also be pushed much further within DFID's strategy would involve the promotion of ST/SP programmes via other more powerful sectors within the civil society tendency, particularly health and education. Such sectors have often had their capacity and expenditure levels increased in recent years, and some governments (e.g. Uganda) have exhibited a clear preference for more broad-based approaches.
- 5.58 DFID's incipient efforts to persuade civil society organisations and parliamentarians to play a stronger role as advocates for social protection could be usefully pushed further, perhaps indirectly via other institutions. Governments increasingly respond to domestically-generated pressures rather than those exerted by donors and such a strategy has the broader benefit of helping promote important processes of political development.
- 5.59 A general point that brings together many of the points made here is that DFID could be more usefully attuned to the politics of social protection in particular contexts. The most serious problems with DFID's strategic approach reflect a

failure to engage productively and sensitively with established political discourses on poverty, with policy processes (e.g. PRSP reviews), and with policy actors capable of securing the success or failure of the social protection agenda. It is possible that a prior and in-depth effort to analyse the politics of social protection might have helped here. DFID is well-positioned to adopt such perspectives, having trailed useful approaches such as Drivers of Change studies. However, and despite some application (e.g. Barrientos et al 2005), this approach does not seem to have become institutionalised within DFID practice.

Implications and Recommendations II: Measuring, Monitoring and Evaluating DFID's Policy Influencing Strategies and Activities

- 5.60 This study has sought to identify the outcomes that can be associated with DFID's policy influencing strategies and activities on ST/SP. During this process, interviewees have been asked to comment on the viability of and implications that might arise were a more rigorous approach to measuring, monitoring and evaluating this type of work introduced. On the basis of these two activities, the study makes some tentative suggestions regarding this agenda.
- 5.61 There is a clear willingness amongst advisors working on social protection to be held to account for their policy influencing work in this area. It would be possible to devise a lengthy list of quantifiable indicators that could provide some insight into whether or not DFID's influencing activities are achieving the desired outcomes (see Table 2). However, there is equally a concern that any mechanisms used for this purpose should be devised and applied via a 'light-touch' approach. Of those questioned, few feel that a more 'projectised approach' to policy influencing activities would have yielded significant dividends, as opposed to imposing extra burdens on their efforts.
- 5.62 For future efforts to evaluate DFID's policy influencing work in this area, claims can be made on behalf of the Outcome Mapping approach. Promoted by Canada's IDRC and in the early stages of being promoted in DFID via ODI, Outcome Mapping (OM) focuses on changes in behaviours and relationships (defined as outcomes) which will then lead to changes in actions. "OM accepts that the activity or the programme being evaluated contributes to rather than causes observed changes in behaviour". It sees this contribution or influence taking place through what it calls 'boundary partners' rather than through actions taken by the program managers themselves. Boundary partners are defined as '...those individuals, groups and organizations with whom the program interacts directly and with whom the program anticipates opportunities for influence'⁴ (IDRC n/d). An OM approach involves observing and noting the changes that emerge during a process of policy influencing (although without attempting to establish a linear causality between them and particular program activities) and "introduces new tools to try and monitor dynamic changes in behaviour and in relationships" (IDRC n/d). An OM approach would suggest that staff should not feel to closely constricted by stringently drawn-up achievement criteria, but should feel able to take risks and actively position themselves as part of a wider

⁴ Ibid.

venture (IDRC n/d).⁵ Here, monitoring should be attached to outcomes rather than inputs, to reflect the fact that the same objective might be reached via different means in different times and places.

- 5.63 It is perhaps just as important to consider mechanisms which can improve the incentives for strong performance in this area. Some already exist, such as the DFID Annual Review process which includes an assessment of an advisor's capacity in this area, notably under the heading of 'working with people and influencing'. This could perhaps be rendered in more explicit and detailed terms to give greater emphasis to this area of activity. It would also be possible to ensure that particular capacities that happen to be particularly germane to an advisor's strategic workload at any given time could be monitored on a more regular basis. Extra training could be useful, in terms of raising awareness of different policy influencing strategies and instruments, including those that have been successful in similar contexts.
- 5.64 However, DFID's success in achieving policy influence involves a joined-up effort within the organization, both within and beyond the country office and, as such, needs to be evaluated along with the Office's overall programme of work. It is also clear that the success of DFID's policy influencing activities and strategies is contingent on a much wider range of factors than can be fully controlled by DFID, including the capacity of partner organisations and the political context. Whether such factors enable or constrain, they must be taken into account within any balanced system of evaluating progress. So, although OM or another approach may provide a useful tool and approach to evaluating DFID's work on policy influencing, it remains the case that the best and most useful evaluations may result not from the framework or tools that are used but the level of analysis and contextual appreciation that those evaluating are able to bring to the task.

⁵ "An advantage of OM is that it allows, and even encourages, the program manager to take some calculated risks since it explicitly recognizes that he or she will not be able to control the behavioural changes the activity catalyses. More traditional evaluation methods tend to make program managers risk averse by forcing them to attempt to link each activity with a specified output and expected outcome" (IDRC n/d).

6. Ethiopia Case Study

The political context for social protection in Ethiopia

- 6.1 The regime is informed by a sense of ‘revolutionary democracy’ rather than liberal democracy, with an emphasis on communal and collective participation rather than individual rights and plural representation (Vaughan and Tronvoll 2003). Although the issue of who the regime represents is confused by the multi-party nature of the regime, the rural poor constitute a significant constituency for the EPRDF. Informed by socialist political thinking and an instrumental awareness of the legitimating nature and electoral benefits of being seen to distribute socio-economic benefits to the population, the regime can to an extent be seen as developmentalist. Government technocrats have a reputation as favouring evidence-based policy-making.
- 6.2 The advent of multiparty elections in 2001, with successive elections in 2005 (with more due later in 2008), have been marked by controversy concerning the ‘free and fair’ character. However, elections can be seen as one of the drivers for improved governmental approaches to social protection, particularly as food insecurity is seen as an electoral liability (IDL 2007). According to one donor official, “There is also a strong sense that the Government wants the PSNP to operate effectively in election years.”
- 6.3 The political discourse in Ethiopia emphasises the importance of development interventions increasing productivity. The particular history of emergency appeals and subsequent distribution of food aid in particular has raised government fears of generating ‘dependency’ amongst its citizens. While this fear helped persuade the GoE to move towards a more coordinated approach to social transfers, via the PSNP, concerns over creating dependency also ensured that the PSNP was designed with a heavy emphasis on conditional rather than unconditional grants and a reluctance to extend the programme beyond a relatively brief timeframe (see below).
- 6.4 Ethiopia’s political system operates according to an ethnically defined and decentralised federal system of government. Successive decentralisation reforms since 1991 have been introduced, ostensibly aimed at establishing autonomous, accountable and responsive local government. In theory, and given that the PSNP is administered by local governments, this could benefit the timely and responsive delivery of social transfers. However, according to some academic observers (e.g. Chanie 2007), the clientelistic character of party politics in Ethiopia has significantly undermined the progressive possibilities of the decentralised system of government, leaving political decision-making, revenue collection and resource expenditure heavily influenced by the centralised ruling party.
- 6.5 Until recently, donors have looked on Ethiopia since around 2000 as being a government that they can do business with. The apparent success in securing good rates of growth poverty reduction in recent years, aligned to Ethiopia’s perceived strategic importance vis-à-vis the ‘counter-terrorist’ strategies of the US and UK in the region, has helped accord it a high status within the

international development community. However, the apparent reluctance of the regime to open up political space to opponents, highlighted around the 2005 elections, has led to an increasing level of doubt amongst donors, with several countries (including DFID) reducing or cancelling budgetary support for a period. The continued high-levels of aid dependency have not led to a corresponding level of compliance with donor demands, and there is little evidence that influencing the GoE is an easy task for donors.

- 6.6 There is a particular politics to food security in Ethiopia. For example, prior to the onset of a series of serious food shortages and resulting major aid inflows since the late 1970s, Ethiopia had fairly good early warning systems and responsive mechanisms for food insecurity, with a suggestion that a contract had been established between the government and citizens around protection from famine at least (de Waal 1997: 34). In the intervening years, this was replaced by a series of short-term emergency responses and numerous but often small-scale cash/food-for-work programmes. Such responses belied the structural character of the country's perpetual food insecurity, a realisation that grew amongst both government and donors over the 2000s and directly informed the decision to design and implement the PSNP.

Promoting SP in Ethiopia: a chronological summary

- 6.7 The primary instrument of social protection in Ethiopia is the Government's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) which was been in operation since 2005. The PSNP operating on an annual budget of around \$300m, and reaches over seven million people across seven of the country's ten regions. It aims to 'graduate' people from food insecurity through an equal mixture of food and cash transfers, and to build community assets via the associated public works schemes. There are two modalities for these transfers: a public works (conditional transfer) and an unconditional transfer. Around 6.2 million people or 80-90% of programme participants are expected to contribute their labour in return for the transfers. Those who qualify for the unconditional transfers not only suffer from chronic food insecurity but also lack labour and other sources of support (IDL 2007).
- 6.8 DFID's influencing strategy on social protection in Ethiopia has been focused directly on the PSNP, firstly in terms of trying to ensure the successful implementation of the PSNP, and secondly in terms of using this as a window of opportunity to engage the GoE and other donors in a discussion of a broader and longer-term social protection strategy.
- 6.9 The analysis here focuses on three key stages related to the PSNP: the design and financing process; its institutional framework and implementation; and the current stage of moving the PSNP into a second phase and opening up broader debates on SP in Ethiopia.

The politics of designing and financing the PSNP

- 6.10 The food crisis in 2003 was a wake-up call for both international donors and a government which had pledged to address the food insecurity situation. In the same year, the Government initiated a "New Coalition for Food Security" which involved GoE, international donors and representatives from civil society.

The primary objective of the government's policy on food security was to increase agricultural productivity – a strategy consistent with the government's agricultural-led industrialisation strategy. The components of the programme included: a) safety nets; b) access to land/resettlement; and c) access to inputs and agricultural extension.

- 6.11 Both the GoE and donors were increasingly keen to move away from the “merry-go-round” of annual appeals. Donors argued that food insecurity was systemic rather than emergency-based, and that despite numerous programmes and appeals, the number of people who were food insecure was actually growing. The PSNP thus emerged out of a perceived need to promote agricultural productivity and to eliminate people's dependency on food “handouts.” Figure 3 describes the various actors involved in the process.⁶
- 6.12 Numerous donor reports and investment in technical assistance has been effective in influencing government policy. At the beginning stages of the PSNP, the World Bank's paper on “Smoothing Consumption” as well as USAID's “Beyond the Merry-Go-Round,” catalysed donors and government around the development of a safety net approach in response to ongoing food insecurity.
- 6.13 The World Bank's expertise in designing such programmes was also an influential resource at the early stages of the programme and largely shaped the donor debate. The World Bank initially led the design process for the PSNP. There was little sense of coordination and harmony amongst donors at this stage, with meetings only occurring during World Bank delegations to the country. This lack of deliberation and coordination amongst donors in the initial phases tended to create mistrust and polarisation within the group.
- 6.14 Nonetheless, donors, including DFID, tried to insist on certain ‘non-negotiable’ aspects of programme design, including a phased approach with an initial piloting of the programme. However, the GoE insisted on a national-level roll-out. As a result, there was no piloting of the program and it was rolled out to all targeted regions. The proposed conditionality of the transfers on health and education outcomes was also scrapped based on the argument that the government did not have the capacity to monitor such conditions. In a sense, the Government of Ethiopia, was able “to call the donors' bluff,” knowing that there was strong donor interest in the programme. It seems likely that the GoE's decision to roll-out the programme on a national basis was influenced by the then forthcoming 2005 elections, and fears within government that it could not be seen to be only supporting three states with this new programme.
- 6.15 The government places a strong emphasis on eliminating “dependency”. From the perspective of the Food Security Coordination Bureau, the PSNP is not a social protection scheme but rather an initiative to promote productivity. Recipients should work for transfers and should graduate from the programme. The Ethiopian government is reluctant for both fiscal and ideological reasons to establish what they understand to be a social welfare system; rather, policy is that it should be the responsibility of fellow community members to take care of those households who are sick or disabled. Many donors, particularly the World

⁶ This diagram is adapted from an earlier version provided to the authors by an external reviewer, Rick Davies.

Bank and USAID, share this view, although it runs counter to DFID's understanding of social protection as an entitlement and a means of tackling chronic poverty.

- 6.16 In terms of design and funding, DFID has focused on four main, interrelated objectives: to ensure that the PSNP would be implemented and evaluated according to a sound evidence base and would be run according to high-standards in terms of accountability and transparency; to fund it, both as a means of ensuring its success and to gain trust with GoE; to increase its influence vis-à-vis other donors, particularly the World Bank; and to achieve higher levels of harmonisation amongst donors.
- 6.17 DFID's efforts to ensure the proper design and running of the programme included working with the MoF on financial management issues; commissioning studies on fiduciary risk; and helping to support the development of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework.
- 6.18 In terms of funding the PSNP, DFID constitutes the second largest international donor (next to the World Bank) with a financial commitment which has reached £93 million as of April 2008. DFID lobbied hard to ensure that the PSNP was accorded its own budget line which would be monitored directly by the Treasury. This was deemed necessary as a means of ensuring adequate accountability and also to try and embed the programme within government processes, thus enhancing the possibility of extending the programme beyond the current 5-year time frame. The PSNP does have its own budget line but this is as a time-limited programme rather than as recurrent expenditure.
- 6.19 DFID has tried to build its strategic importance to the PSNP vis-à-vis other donors by commissioning studies; by emphasising a different perspective on SP compared to the Bank (e.g. an entitlements rather than a purely productivist focus); and by building close working relationships with key government actors. It has been aided in some of these activities by its more responsive mode of financial management compared to other donors, which has often enabled it to produce studies and technical assistance on demand. In particular, DFID's financial management arrangements meant that it was able to draw on funds of up to £1m in a rapid and responsive way. This seems to have been essential to building credibility with donor and governments, and is a distinct comparative advantage vis-à-vis other donors (e.g. compared to the World Bank's trust-fund facility).
- 6.20 DFID was also concerned to work towards a more harmonious working relationship between the different stakeholders and in 2005 it supported the creation of a MOU between Government and donors.

Implementing the PSNP

- 6.21 The programme is run by the Food Security Coordination Bureau, located within the Ministry of Agriculture. The government places a strong emphasis on the productive nature of safety nets, leading to an emphasis on the graduation of recipients, a preference for cash over food, and conditionality on public works. The community work projects could also be seen as a way for the government to finance rural infrastructure development at a minimal cost.

- 6.22 A Donor Working Group (DWG) was established in 2005, and is responsible for helping to monitor and fund the programme. It comprises the same membership as those international donor agencies involved in funding the previous annual appeals, namely DFID, the World Bank, USAID, CIDA, the EC, WFP and Irish Aid.
- 6.23 The Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) includes both donors and representatives from the Food Security Coordination Bureau. Both of these committees meet on a bi-weekly basis and provide a forum for discussing problems in implementation and this allows for regular monitoring of the programme. The DWG has also allowed donors to resolve differences in their own forum and has facilitated greater donor harmonisation in line with the Paris Declaration. This increased coordination allows donors to present a “common front” to the government during the JCC meetings.
- 6.24 DFID played a lead role in pushing for both the DWG and JCC, and has also taken a lead role within these fora. For example, while the chair of the DWG group rotates on a six monthly basis, not all donors have been able to commit to the heavy responsibility. DFID have been in a position to do so and has chaired the committee twice to date. DFID also pushed for a staff position to head the DWG which has provided an administrative anchor for the group and helped ensure that points of discussion are generally followed up promptly.
- 6.25 This in-country chairpersonship of the committee, along with DFID’s capacity in terms of resources and knowledge, arguably facilitated a shift in the balance of power away from the World Bank who had previously shaped the agenda. DFID has also functioned as a broker between numerous donors within the DWG. However, some respondents perceived a need for DFID to be more inclusive and to consult more regularly and meaningfully with smaller donors. Little effort has been made as yet to draw on the expertise of the World Food Programme which has a long history of food-for-work programmes in Ethiopia. Some efforts have been made to fund CSO advocates, and numerous British NGOs have been involved with implementing the PSNP.
- 6.26 However, DFID has taken important steps to encourage officials from the MoF to participate in DWG and JCC meetings on PSNP. This has enabled DFID to respond directly to the concerns of MoF as they arose, with resulting activities including the commissioning of two fiduciary risk assessments and worked directly with Government on the implementation of the recommendations arising from these processes; working (with other donors) on establishing standards of excellence with the MoF; and helping to ensure that the programme follows core MoF systems, in part to try and ensure that the programme could gain further political acceptability. This level of support has helped MoF to develop clear performance standards for the implementation of PSNP.
- 6.27 In 2006 DFID commissioned a series of reviews (institutional, social, and economic) via these fora to assess progress of the programme. These reviews for the basis of discussions with Government over WB second phase financing. DFID also supported the design and development of baseline survey (to be undertaken by Government own Survey Teams) and commissions (with the World Bank) IFPRI to provide analysis to the survey. This survey forms the basis for Governments debate over graduation (see below). The ability and

willingness of donors, including DFID, to provide immediate technical support to address “minor” issues in programme design, e.g. around fiduciary risk assessment, financial management and monitoring and evaluation, has been appreciated by GoE and helped to produce credibility and trust.

- 6.28 One example of DFID’s influence came in 2007 when the GoE, concerned that the PSNP was becoming too expensive, floated idea of managing the overall scale of programme by reducing the wage rate. This had World Bank support. However, using data from the official evaluation and by supporting civil society groups to support their stance also, DFID lobbied hard and successfully to change the Bank and GoE’s perspective. DFID was also a key player in negotiating the second phase of World Bank funding for the PSNP. DFID’s resolve yet openness to ongoing dialogue mean that they are highly respected within the donor group. As one respondent put it, “DFID is conciliatory but isn’t a push over.”
- 6.29 Some donors highlight that DFID has made efforts to build rapport with members of government, particularly leading members of the Food Security Coordination Bureau, and one donor representative identified the importance of taking time to socialise. Such relationships have been linked to DFID’s capacity to achieve increased levels of influence, although at higher levels, the involvement of high-level political figures in the JCC, whereby the Deputy PM receives six-monthly updates, has been as significant. For example, when the funds for transfers were being held up at the regional level, DFID’s call to the head of the Food Security Coordination Bureau, was then followed by a call to the Deputy Prime Minister and then to the Prime Minister and the funds were successfully released. This personal rapport coupled with the government’s high level commitment to the program ensured that one of the principles of the PSNP, the predictability of transfers, was upheld. Since that time, donors have been successful in ensuring that funds are front-loaded at the woreda level so that cash transfers can be released in a timely manner.
- 6.30 DFID has also utilised the visits of figures within the DFID hierarchy to push its points on the PSNP to GoE. For example, when there has been a pressing issue, DFID have ensured that their point on PSNP forms one of the first of the 4 or 5 points that a minister or ambassador will be able to make to their counterpart in GoE. There is recognition from HoO that DFID-E has a lot to lose if PSNP fails, so this tends to take priority. In 2005 when the system looked bad, didn’t look like it was going to deliver really applied a lot of ministerial pressure – helped ensure that procedures were followed around delivery of transfers – made sure that these were reviewed.
- 6.31 DFID has taken some measures to deepen ownership of the PSNP within both government and civil society. For example, the ToR for DFID consultancies are usually shared with GoE and the consultants that DFID hires are often charged with working directly with the GoE. Civil society organisations have also been resourced, e.g. to undertake livelihoods analysis.
- 6.32 In terms of the current level of government influencing, there is recognition by DFID as well as other donors that there is a need to be more engagement with other ministries within the federal government as well as with lower levels of

government, at the regional and woreda levels, who are actually in charge of implementing the programme. Engaging at the level may prove difficult given the hierarchical nature of the Ethiopian federal system but necessary to improve the programme and to ensure adequate monitoring.

Where next for the PSNP?

- 6.33 The attitude of DFID and some other donors is that the PSNP represents an entry point to a larger discussion on social protection in Ethiopia. Donors are currently engaged in a process of working with Government to establish a long term vision for PSNP. Although GoE initially saw this simply as a five-year programme which would help energise regional governments to invest in growth as a more permanent solution, there are signs that attitudes are shifting, particularly amongst technical officials. The key driver here is the evidence that graduation from the programme is actually a much harder programme than originally envisaged by GoE and that there is a significant number of very poor people who may never graduate.
- 6.34 The ongoing policy debate around the issue of ‘graduation’ includes discussions on benchmarks for graduation, the provision of services to support graduation, and wider enabling environment that will ensure sustainability of rural livelihoods. In addition, the Government has committed itself to a policy debate on long term support to households and individuals that will not graduate. There is now government recognition of a need for a 3rd phase for the PSNP which extends beyond 2009 – this represents a significant shift from the government’s previous perspective. The Government and donors are currently agreeing a policy process for the long term vision for social protection in Ethiopia, and CSOs have become increasingly involved since the Livingstone conference. However, the critical debate over financing is yet to come.
- 6.35 This debate derives in part from an earlier legal agreement (made binding within PAD) discussions over graduation must happen. It has also been stimulated by a number of studies, including some commissioned by DFID and the availability of strong baseline data. Studies conducted in the summer of 2006 on targeting and agricultural linkages have given the government “hard evidence” that graduation in 5 years time is extremely ambitious and that there may be a number of households who will always remain dependent on ST for livelihoods support. In 2007 DFID also supported studies on Gender and HIV (via DWG). In line with its understanding of social protection as an entitlement, DFID have sought to highlight the extent to which the poorest and most vulnerable are unlikely to graduate from the programme within the timeframe suggested.
- 6.36 Politically, however, there is actually little demand for the programme to become long-term. The federal government wants to avoid a sense that it exists to prop up regional governments or to form a social contract with people around the PSNP whereby people demand the programme benefits as an entitlement. Regional governments themselves are looking for growth rather than SP investments and further reliance on federal government. Even the majority of Ethiopians, arguably, want to get out of the PSNP programme in favour of more permanent livelihood strategies.

An Analysis of DFID’s Policy Influencing Activities in Uganda

6.37 DFID’s primary strategy has been to try and ensure a high-quality evidence base for policy discussions on social protection in Ethiopia. The subsequent commissioning of studies, support for informational activities and provision of expert technical assistance is in line with its broader country office strategy of promoting evidence-based policy processes, which responds directly to DFID’s perception that the GoE is responsive to evidence. Close observers note that DFID brings “brains and money to the table.” This focus has enabled DFID to move from the provision of information and knowledge to the facilitation of debate around specific issues, including graduation and the minimum wage. In both cases, DFID has been able (with others) to advocate around and successfully influence the direction of the PSNP in ways that should ensure its greater longevity, size and impact.

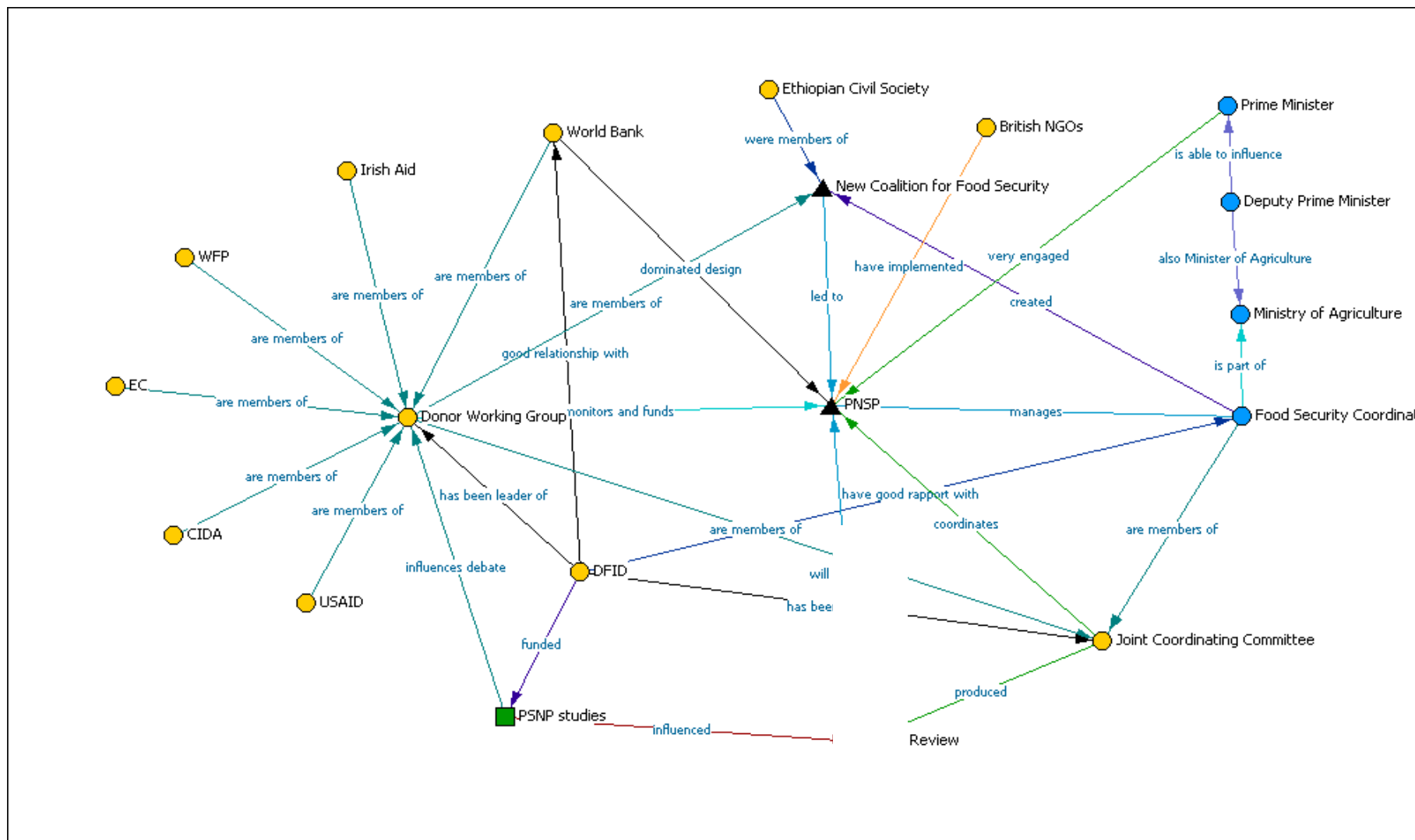
Table 3. DFID-Ethiopia's Policy Influencing Activities

Activity area	Specific activities	Associated outputs & outcomes
<i>Facilitation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the establishment of the DWG and help facilitate its administrative capacity • Take leadership within DWG • Funding for PSNP 	<p>Increased donor harmonization on ST issues Support general implementation activities</p> <p>Shift terms of debate on social protection towards a rights-based approach</p> <p>Builds trust with GoE and influence over donors; stimulates higher levels of DFID advocacy</p>
<i>Advocacy</i>	<p>Use of evidence base to promote its own view of SP as an entitlement for the poorest</p> <p>Ambassadors and visiting Ministers encouraged to discuss pressing PSNP issues with political leaders</p> <p>Some support to NGOs and CSOs for implementation and lobbying</p>	<p>Provoked ongoing debate on graduation and helped to prevent cuts to the minimum wage Increased knowledge-based on PSNP</p> <p>Help to keep DFID priorities on the political agenda</p> <p>A small but growing constituency for SP within civil society</p>
<i>Information and knowledge</i>	<p>Commission studies with other donors; conduct surveys; provide technical assistance. Support monitoring and evaluation systems</p> <p>Support NGOs to assess specific parts of the programme.</p>	<p>Help to ensure a high-quality of policy debate on the PSNP</p> <p>Improve PSNP management and M&E systems Help catalyse and shape the debate over graduation Help to prevent cuts to the minimum wage</p>
<i>Investment in relationships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed close working relationships with leading members of Food Security Coordination Bureau • Encouraged MoF officials to take part in DWG and JCC 	<p>Build trust and credibility with influential figures</p> <p>MoF concerns responded to as they arise</p>

6.38 DFID has also helped to facilitate discussions among donors and government on other key strategic issues including: the cash-first principle, the predictability of transfers and the primacy of transfers. DFID is recognised as a strategic thinker on ST/SP, capable of focusing the agenda on key issues and then using technical assistance to drive that agenda and influence government.

- 6.39 However, despite an apparently neutral focus on ‘evidence’, DFID is viewed by some donors as adopting an ideological rather than evidence-based position in relation to some debates, particularly the cash vs. food debate. Some view DFID (and other donors) as “fanatical about cash” and that such a position is not necessarily based on adequate field research.
- 6.40 DFID’s advocacy efforts have been carried out directly (e.g. via its chairing of the DWG and in contact with government officials) but also indirectly via ambassadors and visiting ministers. The high-level of importance given to SP within the DFID-Ethiopia office appears to have been more significant here than any direct influence from DFID-HQ.
- 6.41 An important part of DFID’s capacity to influence debates around the PSNP is the ability of DFID officials to build relationships among donors and especially with government. DFID’s relationship with the government is characterised as one of “trust and respect” while other donors “do not doubt the commitment of DFID.” Relationship-building has been well-targeted, with a particular focus on leading members within the Food Security Coordination Bureau and also within the Ministry of Finance (e.g. promoting the participation of MoF officials within the JCC, carrying out fiduciary risk assessments and working on financial management systems).
- 6.42 DFID’s large financial commitment to PSNP has enabled it to take on a strong advocacy role among donors and the government, although DFID officials have also sought to ensure that they tread lightly here and work towards the goal of ownership as much as influence.
- 6.43 Overall, it would be realistic to assess DFID as a lead agency in the PSNP process. From its own perspective, “(DFID’s) willingness to support government to make the programme work effectively combined with a commitment to exploring broader strategic initiatives aimed at placing the programme in the wider policy debates has worked well”.

Figure 3. Actors in the Ethiopian PSNP



7. Malawi Case Study

The politics of social protection in Malawi

- 7.1 The politics of development in Malawi are broadly unfavourable to coherent, pro-poor policy-making. According to a review of the drivers of change and development in Malawi carried out in 2005, “the state is informally captured by patronage networks...severely limiting the ability of public officials to make policies in the general interest.” (Booth et al 2006: viii). There are few signs that the introduction of multiparty politics in 1994 has led to more programmatic and developmental forms of politics and policy-making. Political parties remain personalized and weakly institutionalised. Over this period, political leadership has become less rather than more developmental and programmatic (Booth et al 2006). Nonetheless, it is possible that politicians, looking ahead to the 2009 elections, may view ST/SP interventions as potential vote-winners.
- 7.2 During the early period of independent rule, Malawi was renowned for its meritocratic and professionalized civil service. However, the subsequent deepening of personalised, patronage-based politics since the early 1990s had the effect of “progressively undermining the capacity (of civil servants) to generate coherent, technically-grounded policy approaches” (Booth et al 2006: ix).
- 7.3 In this political context, the likelihood of securing political will behind a coherent, coordinated and pro-poor policy process is clearly not high. Importantly, nor is this an objective that the aid community in Malawi has (to date) been particularly willing or able to achieve. Donors have seldom been consistent in their advice to GoM and have often adopted adversarial policy positions vis-à-vis each other and GoM; indeed, “donor approaches have not been free from the short-termism, competitiveness and personality politics that we have said are characteristic of state policy” (Booth et al 2005: xi). Aid harmonization levels are particularly low.

Promoting SP in Malawi: a chronological summary

From capacity-building and project funding to policy-influence

- 7.4 DFID has a long established history of supporting safety nets and various forms of social assistance (including ST) in Malawi. Before 2005 DFID supported a number of projects and undertook capacity-building work with the Safety Nets Office that sat within the Poverty and Disaster Management Department in the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC).
- 7.5 The 2004 drought prompted debate within and beyond DFID regarding the nature of poverty and vulnerability in Malawi, and of the appropriateness of donor and government responses. DFID-funded studies into vulnerability and social protection in Malawi, undertaken by a research team from the UK-based Institute of Development Studies (IDS), showed that approximately US\$100mn was being spent on safety nets every year without a significant impact. Nor were these efforts co-ordinated or ‘owned’ by GoM. This evidence helped build the case for a more systematic approach.

- 7.6 These moves coincided with an internal restructuring within DFID, whereby in May 2005 the Growth and Social Protection Team was established in place of the Agriculture and Livelihoods Team. Within this new team the SD Advisor took a lead on SP. At this stage, DFID did not see their work here as being about ‘policy influence’ but rather about supporting the GoM to come up with its own approach to SP. At the same time, the World Bank was carrying out a Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment for the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD).
- 7.7 A key turning point came in December 2005, when a DFID-organised workshop was held to examine the results of the IDS study and consider ways forward. The high degree of emphasis placed on this workshop by donors (DFID, World Bank, IMF) and UN agencies – who made sure that members of their national and regional office hierarchies attended – encouraged a similarly high-level response from GoM. The workshop was chaired by the Principal Secretary of MEPD, with academia and civil society also represented. A consensus emerged concerning the need to do business differently, and specifically to move away from short-term responses to a GoM-owned and coordinated response to the country’s problems with chronic hunger and poverty. Agreements were made to form an institutional framework and work towards a comprehensive national policy.
- 7.8 An immediate outcome was the leveraging of SP into Malawi’s second PRSP, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), which was then in its final stages of preparation. The Principal Secretary who chaired the SP workshop was also in charge of the PRSP process. The MGDS thus developed a focus on vulnerable groups (particularly orphans and vulnerable children, elderly people, people living with disabilities, people living with HIV-AIDs and chronically ill people). By the time of publication in 2006, social protection was one of MGDS’ five key themes.
- 7.9 The dialogue between donors and government continued after the December 2005 workshop and according to a DFID representative, “Champions (of SP) were identified in a number of Ministries including Ministry of Economic Planning & Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance”, as well as officials from OPC. Some were funded by DFID to attend the Livingstone conference in March 2006 and also a conference on Social Protection in Turkey in July 2006. Key government players were sponsored by DFID to attend the World Bank Institute course on Social Risk Management for three consecutive years from 2005.
- 7.10 In June 2006 government and bilateral donors met and GoM announced a new institutional framework on SP in Malawi which included the formation of a National Steering and Technical Committee on Social Protection and also a Social Protection Unit as a secretariat. DFID and the Bank were invited as members to the Steering and Technical Committee on Social Protection, after which DFID and World Bank facilitated the inclusion of CSOs in the Technical committee. The meeting further underlined the need to ensure that all ST/SP activities took place within this government-owned and coordinated framework.

The idea of piloting particular approaches was considered by DFID but ruled out on the basis that Malawi had already piloted a large number of different project-level responses and that any learning on new approaches to ST/SP could be done via other contexts.

Post-June 2006: donor disharmony and capacity-issues in GoM

- 7.11 From June 2006 onwards, DFID has undertaken the following activities in an effort to help the GoM develop its own strategic approach to social protection:
- 7.12 Provision of technical and policy-development support: this has included DFID's participation in several technical committee meetings on SP policy formulation; the sponsoring of some members of Technical Committee to participate in training courses; and the placement of two technical assistants in the Department of Poverty and Social Protection for one year. In April 2007 DFID co-led a Joint Country Programme Review on SP with OPC. In October 2007 DFID supported government to refine the draft policy, recruiting and paying for the consultants to help with this, and also co-funded (with the Regional Hunger Vulnerability Programme or RHVP) the Ministry for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly to refine the draft policy on Older Persons, including a workshop facilitated by HelpAge International (HAI). In March 2008 DFID chaired the Common Assistance to Budget Support discussion, and led once again a review of SP.
- 7.13 Building an evidence base: in October 2007, DFID approved £770,000 for the 2nd phase of the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC). This will enable MVAC to also provide more evidence based analysis of chronic vulnerability to inform social protection; extending its baseline to add dimensions of chronic and transient vulnerability to the livelihood profiles and provide improved details.
- 7.14 DFID continued its efforts to facilitate higher levels of awareness of SP within GoM, co-funding (with DFID-HQ and RHVP) members of Technical Committee on a study tour to Lesotho and South Africa and also to Kenya and Ethiopia. DFID has also increasingly extended its advocacy and relationship-building work beyond GoM into political and civil society. Since December 2007, DFID increasingly engaged with parliamentarians through RHVP. It has also tried to encourage CSOs to offer their support for SP in Malawi. According to DFID, its "Engagement with civil society has shifted the dynamics among donors."
- 7.15 However, DFID staff argue that these and other efforts to assist GoM in promoting a coordinated response have been undermined by the approach of UNICEF. In June 2006, UNICEF worked directly with the old safety nets unit, newly renamed the Poverty Unit and located in the Department of Poverty and Disaster Management Affairs in OPC, to establish a pilot cash transfer project. This programme is targeted at the bottom 10% of the poor and was designed by the architect of the Kalomo Cash Transfer Scheme in Zambia (which DFID currently funds). Despite being in operation for only three months the programme received cabinet-level support in August 2006 for a scale-up to eight districts with a view to institutionalising the project as a national safety net. This was approved using funds from National AIDS Commission.

- 7.16 DFID argue that UNICEF has been able to act outside of the agreements forged over 2005-6 because there are clear incentives for individuals to involve themselves in projects rather than broader (as-yet-unfunded) policy development work. This is further influenced by the institutional and individual intransigence around established modes of practice. In addition, the OPC's Department for Disaster Management Affairs within which the Poverty Unit sits is not generally considered to be a strong or strategically well-directed unit, and has apparently not considered its role within national policy development to be a particularly important or promising one. There was little incentive for a small, weak unit to take on a national vision; rather, the incentive to acquiring control of project budgets outweighs a vision for policy change.
- 7.17 One senior donor official stated that this move by UNICEF "has effectively undermined a unified voice from development partners" on SP. However, by September 2007, institutional responsibility for SP within the GoM had shifted from OPC to the Department for Poverty Reduction and Social Protection within MEPSD, a move strongly supported by DFID. This department is now the coordinating unit/secretariat for social protection related issues. However, it has yet to fully establish itself, not least due to staffing uncertainties: up to May 2008 the department had had three directors since being established in September 2007. Human resource levels in the department are also quite low; DFID has funded two technical assistants (from November 2007 for one year) while UNICEF are funding one officer on monitoring and evaluation.
- 7.18 By late 2007, an institutional architecture had been designed around the emerging social protection agenda, which includes the following bodies:
- The National Social Protection Steering Committee (NSPSC): responsible for setting the overall policy direction for the design of a Social Protection Programme (SPP); providing overall policy direction to the technical committee for social protection interventions; coordinating resource mobilization for social protection programmes etc.
 - The National Social Protection Technical Committee (NSPTC): responsible for developing and reviewing the Social Protection Policy and Programmes; monitoring and evaluation; commissioning periodic independent studies on issues of interest and concern etc.
 - The NSPSC and NSPTC are serviced by a secretariat known as the National Social Protection Unit (NSPU). This Secretariat is responsible for a wide range of tasks, from ensuring that regular meetings are held to developing and overseeing the implementation of the SP work plan and budget with approval from the technical committee.
- 7.19 It is now expected that all donor and GoM activity around ST/SP interventions will be carried out within this institutional framework. Recently, the World Bank and GoM officials responsible for the Malawi Social Action Fund were persuaded to operate within this institutional framework in the next phase of MASAF activities. UNICEF has now officially moved their ST activities within this overall institutional framework.

- 7.20 The GoM's proposed National SP Policy has already gone through a DFID-supported process of consultation with parliamentary committees (including chairpersons for all parliamentary committees). The current draft identifies social transfers ("the provision of predictable transfers of cash, shelter or food") as the key strategy for the first of its four themes, namely the provision of welfare support to those unable to construct viable livelihoods. Cash transfers, including some with a conditional element, are also considered a means of reaching a second policy objective, around enabling households to increase their productivity and build their assets. Public works and social insurance schemes are promoted as a means of enabling people to protect their assets (a third theme), while the fourth theme concerns establishing linkages between SP and other areas of GoM development policy, specifically those relating to economic productivity, social policies and disaster management.
- 7.21 Although no budgetary commitments have yet been made, the Department of Poverty Reduction and Social Protection's Roadmap envisages that a basket fund mechanism will be established by November 2008. DFID has also committed to support government in the development of legal bill on social protection. There has as yet been little discussion at the level of implementation and design, including issues of delivery, baselines, monitoring and evaluation and targeting.
- 7.22 One of the unresolved discussions that are only now arising in Malawi concerns the issue of whether ST/SP interventions should be delivered on a universal or targeted basis. Malawi has a long and often problematic history of implementing targeted programmes, and other possibilities are now being explored, including universal approaches via categorical targeting (e.g. a universal pension or child grant). For example, RVHP and others have chaired sessions on this issue, including the involvement of the Ministry for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly and HAI around the possibility of a universal pension. In April 2008 DFID supported two workshops organized by the same Ministry on a social pension, both facilitated by HAI at the invitation of the Ministry. The first meeting was held with the Eminent Elderly Group, CSOs, and GoM officials, while the second higher-level meeting included Cabinet Ministers from the Ministries of Finance, EPD and Local Government along with three deputy ministers.

An Analysis of DFID's Policy Influencing Activities in Uganda

- 7.23 DFID has taken a long term view of how things should develop around SP in Malawi, focusing in particular on trying to ensure that GoM moves the agenda ahead within a coordinated institutional framework. Within this approach, ST are considered to be one of a number of potential policy responses to problems of vulnerability and poverty that will emerge in time. A project-based approach to promoting ST/SP has thus been eschewed in favour of a more top-down, institutional development strategy and the generation of a broad-based policy. DFID is now considered by GoM to be, alongside the World Bank, the key development partner on SP in Malawi, and this is reflected in the fact that the outcomes to date are largely in line with DFID's strategy. Within this broader strategy, DFID has carried out a familiar range of policy engagement activities, the effectiveness of which are analysed below.

- 7.24 Information and knowledge: DFID has focused on providing evidence-based support to policy discussions on SP, notably via the initial IDS study on vulnerability and SP which directly influenced the critical workshop in December 2005. The funding of technical assistance and of training for government officials has deepened awareness of SP within key institutions and DFID is seen as the lead player in terms of technical knowledge on SP. However, observers note that the understanding of SP among GoM officials remains limited.
- 7.25 Facilitation: DFID has done much to facilitate debates around SP, particularly via its support for the December 2005 workshop and of study tours. Study tours within sub-Saharan Africa, and southern African in particular, appear to have been particularly influential amongst GoM officials, that exposing them to new ideas and providing the basis for heightened and more frequent discussion of these ideas within policy circles.
- 7.26 Advocacy: DFID has tended not to advocate for specific SP instruments and approaches, but it has increasingly funded CSOs and international agencies to take on this role (e.g. HAI and RHVP on universal approaches). It is too early to judge the impact of these efforts. DFID's engagement with CSOs and parliamentarians reflects a good understanding of the need to catalyse a broader constituency in favour of SP in Malawi, perhaps particularly so given the forthcoming elections in 2009 and the possibility that MPs might see such interventions as potential vote winners, and DFID was clearly informed by the influential DoC study on Malawi (Booth et al 2006).

Table 4. DFID-Malawi's Policy Influencing Activities

Activity area	Specific activities	Associated outputs & outcomes
<i>Facilitation</i>	Support GoM to hold workshops on SP (esp. Dec. 2005) Fund training in SP, study tours (Zambia, Brazil, Lesotho, South Africa) and conference participation (Istanbul 2006) for key government officials and parliamentarians	SP included as a key theme within MGDS GoM establishes an institutional framework for a co-ordinate approach to SP. These lead to the production of a draft SP policy. Increased awareness and/or knowledge of SP amongst key stakeholders
<i>Advocacy</i>	'Employ' DFID hierarchy to help promote SP debates Some engagement with CSOs and parliamentarians on SP	Encourages high-level buy-in within GoM (e.g. Principal Sec chairs meetings) from the outset A small but growing constituency for SP within civil and political society
<i>Information and knowledge</i>	Funded and co-ordinated IDS study into vulnerability and SP Provision of technical assistance to SP Secretariat Provide funds for the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee	Helped persuade GoM and donors to move towards a more co-ordinate approach to SP Help to push policy development forward Improved informational basis for policy development
<i>Investment in relationships</i>	Identify champions for SP in Min of Ag, MoF and MEPD and bring them into SP discussions	Helps ensure that institutional responsibility for SP shifts from OPC to MEPD Build trust and credibility with influential figures

7.27 Building relationships has been a key challenge for DFID at three levels: individual, with GoM institutions and with other international development partners.

- At the individual level, there has been consistent, frequent personal interaction between DFID and officials in relevant ministries, notably Agriculture, Finance and EPD. The long established history of DFID-Malawi's involvement in support of safety nets, disaster responses and different types of social assistance means that many DFID-government (and DFID-donor) relationships have an institutionalised life and form that complements time-bound relationships between specific individuals. DFID's Social Development Advisor had a good relationship with the Permanent Secretary (PS) in Agriculture and some

Malawian personnel within DFID had reliable connections at high levels of Government due to their personal and professional histories prior to joining DFID. The Head of Office invested much time in building relationships with key GoM officials. This investment in people meant that relationships of trust had been built between GoM and DFID, reinforcing DFID's credibility. A number of respondents believed that these relationships proved much more influential in proposing change than any workshops, evidence building or formal dialogue. On the downside, relationships with some individuals who disagreed with DFID's efforts to open up the debate on SP beyond the project level have been adversely affected.

- In terms of GoM institutions, DFID only belatedly realised that it needed to work more closely with the influential MEPD in order to secure a leading role for SP in GoM policy processes, having previously been locked into a relationship with a fairly weak unit within a less influential department.
- In terms of donor harmonisation, DFID has taken on the role of lead donor alongside the World Bank and seems to have secured the support of the EU and IrishAid; this augurs well for a coherent strategy and the proposed move towards basket-funding in late 2008. However, it has been unable to persuade UNICEF of the wisdom of its approach, something which has arguably left GoM in a confused position regarding which strategy to employ to move the SP agenda forward.

8. Uganda Case Study

The politics of social protection in Uganda

- 8.1 The political context for promoting SP within Uganda is enabling in many respects but has become increasingly constraining in others. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) regime that has been in power since 1986 has demonstrated a clear commitment to pro-poor policy-making, through a mixture of Presidential patronage and programmatically-informed policy processes. The NRM's key constituency is the rural poor and many have benefited from the regime's economic and social policies, including the decision to liberalise the coffee sector which proved highly successful in reducing poverty levels during the 1990s. Pro-poor policies involving universal primary education and the abolishment of health user fees, the latter of which could be framed as a SP initiative (Yates et al 2005), were introduced after successive presidential elections in 1996 and 2001. Uganda has been a global leader in terms of taking forward the PRSP approach, thus providing relatively well-institutionalised policy process with which advocates of new pro-poor policy agendas can engage.
- 8.2 However, the prevailing political discourse in Uganda tends to favour the 'economically active' segment of the population (see Presidential speeches and everyday discussions amongst policy actors), and underpins flagship poverty reduction policies such as the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (Hickey 2005). This can be seen as an obstacle to the uptake of a SP policy agenda, as it tends to obscure the claims of those who lack the required capital to benefit from productive measures.
- 8.3 Although Uganda is relatively rich in terms of the quantity and quality of its data on poverty conditions, this has only recently been extended to the issues of risk and vulnerability with which SP policies are most clearly associated.
- 8.4 Since the re-introduction of multi-party politics in 2006, the regime has promoted a new approach to development policy in terms of both content and process. In terms of content, the focus on poverty appears to have been increasingly displaced by the agenda of 'Prosperity for All' (known as Bonna Baggagawale), which finds its clearest definition in the Presidential promises to provide low-interest microfinance loans. In terms of process, the "Prosperity for All" agenda was developed within the NRM secretariat under close Presidential control, with a key role played by the current Minister of Finance. In contrast to the partnership-based poverty agenda, there was no donor consultation. The next PRSP revision process will result in a re-named National Development Plan, and provisionally has 'Prosperity for All' as a sub-title, and again donor involvement in this process has been limited. From what has been revealed to date, there is little continuity between with the established sectors and corresponding working/consultative groups, and rumours emerging in March 2008 suggest that the whole process will in any case be delayed. These moves can be seen as potentially progressive in terms of 'nationalising the poverty agenda', but have raised significant concerns amongst donors in terms of their continued ability to influence the policy agenda.

- 8.5 This follows a period of at least two decades within which donors have been highly influential within Uganda. It has often been difficult to identify significant policy differences between government and donors as a relationship of mutual dependence was established. The World Bank and DFID are seen as the most significant actors amongst the donor community, and DFID has credibility within government and the donor community as a significant provider of budgetary support and with long-standing expertise in the social development sector. However, the last two years may have seen a shift in state-donor relations. Throughout 2007, for example, the President stressed his desire to further reduce his government's dependency on donor funding as a proportion of government expenditure (in 2007 it stood at around 35% compared with around 50% for much of the late 1990s).
- 8.6 In terms of the underlying social conditions, Uganda has yet to experience the levels of urbanisation or income inequality that have historically been associated with the instigation of national SP policies in Africa, although inequality levels have been rising over the past few years. As of 2001, prior to DFID's efforts to promote SP, only a few SP-type instruments existed in Uganda, including a formal sector social security fund and pension scheme, although as noted above broader definitions might include the abolishment in 2001 of user fees in health. The term itself was barely known or referred to in policy circles, which gives a low baseline against which to evaluate changes since DFID's efforts began. This also meant that Uganda had few ready-cut policy channels to work through, a factor that has been helpful elsewhere in promoting or enlarging SP provision.

Promoting SP in Uganda: a chronological summary

Stage I: promoting SP as a policy agenda in Uganda

- 8.7 In 2002, the World Bank's initial efforts to promote SP in Uganda via training workshops on Social Risk Management in 2002 influenced DFID-Uganda's then Social Development Advisor. After attending one of the workshops, the Advisor devised a strategy of influencing GoU policy on SP via the establishment of a Social Protection Task Force (SPTF) within MGLSD. MGLSD is directly responsible for vulnerable groups and in 2000-1 its officials had begun to discuss issues related to SP for the development of a Social Development Sector Investment Plan (also under DFID's influence). Hosted by MGLSD, the SPTF included representation from the donor community, civil society and key government departments, including Health, Education and Finance. Its key role would be to promote SP as a cross-cutting issue within the review process for the third PEAP. DFID-Uganda would also provide capacity-building support to the Ministry, particularly in terms of developing its mission statement and strategic plan, as linked to a broader Social Development Strategy for Uganda.
- 8.8 DFID suggested that the SPTF hired a consultancy team to produce a series of studies which would provide the basis for their advocacy. Phase I involved the DFID-funded IDS team preparing general papers on vulnerability and SP in Uganda, while Phase II involved the production of papers designed to influence particular sectors (including health, education and agriculture) by showing the relevance of SP to their agendas. The process included some innovative activities, including efforts to persuade potential opponents of SP within the

finance ministry tendency of the viability and affordability of certain instruments (see Devereux 2004) and the holding of brown-bag lunches to promote an awareness of SP issues. However, the team was only in country for two short periods, and the timing of their hiring meant that they were always running behind the overall PEAP review process – for example, many sector plans that they were seeking to influence were already in second draft stage.⁷

- 8.9 The task of persuading other sectors to incorporate SP instruments within their strategies, particularly after several years of donors such as DFID promoting Sector Wide Approaches, proved a significant challenge. (DFID-Zambia avoided this particular problem, if not others, by framing SP as a sector in its own right). Officials from Health and Education made it clear that they already had full, and under-resourced, policy agendas. There were also policy and targeting differences (e.g. the MoH was opposed to direct support for the elderly in preference for a more general strategy, and also opposed community-based insurance schemes). Both Ministries tended to send low-ranking officials to the SPTF. MGLSD made few significant efforts to engage MFPED, which controlled the PEAP review process. Efforts to establish the Social Development sector more broadly, including the Sector Investment Plan, also yielded few immediate results. As such, the job of promoting SP was left within the hands of a weakly capacitated, politically marginal ministry and without a foothold in an established policy agenda.
- 8.10 In late 2005, the view of the DFID’s SD Advisor (who arrived after the process had started) was that the process of promoting SP as a policy agenda within Uganda was largely failing, especially when compared to the more successful efforts to mainstream gender as a cross-cutting issue within the same PEAP review process. This process had been synchronised to start alongside the PEAP and had a dedicated and influential champion within the powerful MFPED. The World Bank Social Protection specialist admitted that “Mainstreaming has been a struggle”, while the Chief Macroeconomics Advisor within MFPED stated that SP was “not a big debate” for the government. According to one member of the SPTF: “As a TF we are thin – we lack time and energy to engage with all sectors. We need to articulate SP at the sector level”.⁸ Against this, stakeholders within MGLSD speak of this initial immersion in SP concepts and ideas as being essential for developing their understanding of a new and often complex policy agenda.
- 8.11 Social protection did get several mentions in the revised PEAP, which gained Cabinet approval in November 2004 and World Bank approval in July 2005. This included a School Feeding Programme, a commitment to implementing Health Insurance schemes, the Domestic Relations Bill, a loose commitment to extend the existing legislation on a minimum wage for some sectors and a range of different measures targeted at various vulnerable groups, including victims of HIV-AIDS, the elderly, people with disabilities and also orphans and vulnerable children. However, few of these became policy or budgetary priorities thereafter. For example, the school feeding programme became only a minor pilot as MoE

⁷ Interviews carried out by the lead author with the IDS consultancy team (August 2005) and also the DFID SD Advisor (October 2005) for an independent research project.

⁸ These interviews were carried out by the lead author in October 2005 (the PEAP had been approved by the World Bank in July 2005), for an independent research project.

claimed that it had more pressing concerns, while the Domestic Relations Bill has remained mired in political controversy. The Social Development Strategic Plan, within which many of the other initiatives were located, was accepted by MFPED but it failed to get a Certificate of Financial Implication and was therefore accorded no funding in the budgets that followed the acceptance of the third PEAP (2005-6). The same budget also referred to the proposed Minimum Wage, but only to state that GoU will 'look at working conditions', while the then Head of Planning (and now PS) refused to countenance any discussion of the topic.

- 8.12 By April 2005 DFID had withdrawn its capacity-building support to MGLSD, and had its own capacity in social development advisors reduced from three to two. The World Bank continued to run its courses on SP, with limited places, and focused most of its energies in this area on its flagship social fund project for Northern Uganda (NUSAF). The Bank also resourced several training and professional development trips for MGLSD officials at their social risk management workshops (SRM) and other conferences (e.g. Tunisia 2005). In 2005-6, the Bank also housed a responsive training fund with money from DFID.
- 8.13 This initial effort was also hindered by the lack of an informational basis on which to base (and monitor) SP policies. The papers on vulnerability produced by the consultancy team during their Phase I was qualitative and desk-based in nature, and was not picked-up in policy discussions. Nor could they realistically provide a viable basis for national policy-making in the increasingly evidence-based process insisted upon within the PEAP. A report on vulnerability by EPRC (Mijumbi and Okidi 2001) had some influence in policy circles but it was not until after the PEAP review process, in late 2005, that vulnerability became a recognised term within policy debates.⁹ The World Bank sought to develop such an informational base, initially via the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment for the North (2004) and this has now been extended nationally (see below). The capacity to differentiate amongst the poor is critical for any targeted SP, and gains further relevance in Uganda given the Presidential tendency to talk of 'the peasantry' as an homogenous entity.
- 8.14 There was very little civil society involvement at either national or international levels. Apart from one researcher/civil society activist employed by the SPTF as a researcher within the consultancy team, neither Ugandan civil society groups nor international NGOs focused on SP as an agenda at this time. There was little parliamentary involvement in the PEAP revision process as a whole and the SPTF made little effort to involve them.
- 8.15 Importantly, the overall politics of the PEAP process at the time was largely cast against a SP agenda gaining a firm hold. MFPED was very resistant, viewing SP policies as very costly and preferring the productive potential of broad-based investments in human capital via health and education. Little evidence was available to dissuade them regarding the affordability of SP schemes or of their links to growth. It was thus very difficult to challenge the broader policy preference to target the 'economically active', a prevalent term in political discourse in Uganda.

⁹ Interview by the lead author with Development Economist, MFPED, October 2005.

- 8.16 However, hindsight might indicate a more favourable reading of the extent to which this initial stage of policy influence did actually achieve certain important objectives and set the stage for a further strategic push in favour of GoU increasing its provision of SP. One MGLSD official notes that although the treatment of SP as a cross-cutting issue made things difficult in the short-term, it has created a broad awareness of the concept across a range of stakeholders – this is now enabling things to move forward, as with the now-extended School Feeding Programme led by MoE.

Stage II: Piloting the cash transfer approach and developing a social protection strategy

- 8.17 Since mid-2006, DFID's efforts have focused on the promotion of a specific ST instrument, namely cash transfers, while encouraging partners within the SPTF (specifically the World Bank) to support development of a broader policy strategy document that brought together this pilot with other SP instruments. The decision within the SPTF to focus on cash transfers was made after ministers and officials from MGLSD (and also MFPED) attended the Livingstone conference in March 2006, where a visit was made to the Kalomo project and research on ST were discussed. The AU declaration of support for SP that followed the Livingstone conference is also cited by members of the SPTF helping to create an enabling environment. The commitment of MGLSD to promoting this approach was also strongly influenced by DFID's decision to put their focus and funding strongly behind this policy option. The idea that a ST pilot programme could be scaled-up as national policy was re-enforced amongst key ministers when five (two from MGLSD and one each from Finance, Education and Health) were taken on a DFID-London funded study tour of SP approached in South Africa and Lesotho in September 2007. The presentation by Mike Samson (EPRI) was cited as particularly inspiring for the visiting team. DFID has also facilitated a study tour to Malawi for government officials.
- 8.18 A Memorandum of Understanding between DFID and GoU to design and pilot a cash transfer was signed in August/September 2006 and design workshops were held in February and March 2007. Remarkably, no official from MFPED was in attendance at the main project-design workshop. DFID-Uganda contracted the task of project design to a consortium led by the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC), one of DFID-UK's Development Research Centres. The process was largely managed by CPRC's local partner, Development Research and Training (DRT), which runs CPRC-Uganda.
- 8.19 The plan that emerged was to develop six pilots in a regionally-representative selection of Uganda's poorest districts, which would target the poorest 10% of households. The design was influenced to some extent by the OVC programme in Kenya, and transfers would include supplements for children and older people. Selection would be via a mix of community participation and proxy means testing, one cross-checking the other. The cash would be delivered through the financial system and post offices, rather than government channels. The overall plans were approved by Minister of MGLSD in May and the specific ST pilot design was approved by SPTF in June 2007.
- 8.20 However, when DFID tried to transfer funds to MGLSD in August 2007, the Minister of Finance blocked this, apparently because of concerns over the affordability of the project over the long-term and its donor-led character. The

means of distributing the money and districts that had been selected may also have been points of contention here. In July unfavourable reports appeared in the press (following a briefing that one of the Ministers of Gender gave to press on ST) that a ST programme was to commence, increasing the pressure on Finance to avoid being seen to support an expensive scheme that was being characterised in terms of ‘handouts’. The unfortunate death of the Minister for Planning within MFPED – who had attended the study tours and looked set to advocate strongly for ST – may have further hindered the potential progress of the pilot within MFPED.

- 8.21 The pilot scheme has since been awaiting approval. In response to requests from MFPED, DFID funded further analysis of targeting options and this study, completed in December 2007, concluded that targeting by vulnerability would have better results than targeting by age. This provided the basis for MGLSD to prepare a Cabinet memorandum (in March 2008) that requested permission to implement a vulnerability-targeted ST. The memo requests that counterpart funding from GoU is included from the outset.
- 8.22 The changing political and policy context has provided a series of constraints to DFID’s approach, particularly regarding the growing influence of the ‘Prosperity for All’ policy agenda and its focus on low-interest loans. Efforts to promote cash transfers in this environment have caused confusion. For example, when MFPED officials attended a Social Development Sector review meeting where the ST pilots were under discussion, they argued strongly against what they saw as ‘handouts’, and insisted that poor people should be supported to build own capacity to be producers and consumers. Their argument that any donor funding for financial support to local people should be located within the Prosperity for All agenda rather than poverty agenda per se, is likely to reflect the view of their Minister, a key architect of this new agenda.
- 8.23 During this period, DFID-Uganda has attempted to secure a coherent position amongst key stakeholders in the SPTF on both ST and the broader SP strategy. This has been successful to some extent (especially with UNICEF, the World Bank and MGLSD), although several SPTF stakeholders feel that the Bank could have moved more quickly to deliver the promised draft of a strategic concept note. Finally presented to SPTF in mid-March 2008, this sets out how the ST approach might be combined with other SP instruments (including: social insurance, health insurance, existing social security systems, school feeding, and also pensions) to form a coherent national strategy on SP.
- 8.24 However, the SPTF has been challenged in terms of presenting a coherent ST strategy, and has been struggling since late 2007 to deal with the implications of an alternative proposal for a pilot ST project made by HelpAge International (HAI). HAI have proposed a non-contributory pensions scheme with a promise of funding support and have lobbied Ugandan MPs in favour of this option through their local partner organisation. Temporarily at least, this diverted MGLSD from clear commitment to a vulnerability-targeted ST; for example, a memo sent by MGLSD to the President on this issue included five different targeting options, including targeting by age. This protracted process has ensured that DFID and its allies have had time to generate a stronger basis of evidence

and arguments behind the ST agenda. However, it has also helped deprive DFID-Uganda and its allies of the concrete evidence that a pilot may have offered in support of scaling-up.

- 8.25 The informational basis for SP policies has been strengthened over this period, with the Bank spearheading the inclusion of vulnerability indicators within the national statistical system. This has involved integrating the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment as a module into the national household survey data collection exercise, where it has run for two years now. This makes it possible to model the impacts of both shocks and SP instruments at both household and community levels. Official statistics on worsening levels of inequality in Uganda, and also the broader research presented on chronic poverty by CPRC-Uganda, have also been cited as helping to prepare the policy case for SP.
- 8.26 Some of Uganda's civil society actors are now more engaged as a result of the networking undertaken by DRT, including the National Association of Women of Uganda, Family Support and Union of Disabled People of Uganda. DFID is set to fund a civil society forum from March 2008 onwards. Some international NGOs have become more interested in the agenda via SPTF discussions, including Plan International and ActionAid.
- 8.27 More informal efforts to promote SP have also been made by DFID and their partners over this period. This included an offer to facilitate breakfast meetings with Ministers from Finance, Education, Health and Gender (led by WB and DFID), although this was refused. When DFID's Under-Secretary for Africa visited during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting on November 2007, shortly after encountering the PSNP in Ethiopia, DFID advisors encouraged her to speak to the Minister of Finance about the ST proposal, and then followed this up with a letter to the Minister with further evidence of success from similar programmes elsewhere (e.g. PSNP). Ugandan civil society actors involved have also sought to utilise their informal contacts within MFPED to promote the ST option and SP agenda more broadly.

An Analysis of DFID's Policy Influencing Activities in Uganda

- 8.28 The process of influencing SP in Uganda remains very fluid and is currently at a critical stage. In mid-March 2008, the MGLSD was preparing to submit a Cabinet memo in further support of the ST pilot project and the World Bank submitted a draft version of a concept note for review by the SPTF as a first step towards developing a more comprehensive national strategy on SP. Tensions around the targeting issue remain. This fluid picture warns against drawing hard and fast judgements regarding the success of DFID-Uganda's efforts to date.
- 8.29 The acceptance of SP as a policy agenda within government remains uneven. According to the DFID SD Advisor, "MGLSD is fully committed to commencing a social transfer, but other parts of the government, especially MFPED, are less supportive". Although SPTF members claim that this opposition is primarily based on financial concerns, and a degree of policy confusion between this initiative and the focus on microfinance under the 'Prosperity for All' agenda, there is little hard evidence that MFPED has accepted that there is a strong case for national level ST policies in Uganda, or that such policies are viable.

8.30 As such, it remains easier to identify the activities and inputs associated with DFID's strategy to promote SP in Uganda than to identify tangible outcomes. However, the tables below give a clearer indication of the particular approaches that DFID has employed and their associated outcomes.

Table 5. DFID-Uganda's Policy Influencing Activities

Activity area	Specific activities	Associated outputs & outcomes
<i>Facilitation</i>	<p>Promotion of the SPTF</p> <p>Facilitation of study tours / international workshops – Livingstone; Malawi; Nairobi; South Africa; Lesotho</p> <p>Two workshops on cash transfer design</p> <p>Some engagement with civil society organisations (more funding for a civil society forum on SP from March 2008)</p>	<p>Growing commitment to SP within MGLSD</p> <p>Helped persuade Ministers and officials that SP as a viable agenda</p> <p>Secured commitment within MGLSD to cash transfers</p> <p>A growing civil society constituency for SP in Uganda; civil society paper on SP for National Development Plan</p>
<i>Advocacy</i>	<p>DFID-U participates in and supports SPTF, the key advocate of SP in Uganda</p> <p>Capacity-building support to MGLSD</p> <p>Design and attempted piloting of a ST scheme as a means of advocating for a national scheme</p>	<p>Growing commitment to SP within MGLSD; SP cited within PEAP</p> <p>MGLSD better able to articulate the case for SP in Uganda; specific input to analytical paper for new National Development Plan</p> <p>On hold</p>
<i>Information and knowledge</i>	<p>Funded studies of vulnerability and of links between SP and other policy sectors</p> <p>Provided documentation to cash transfer working group</p> <p>Funded study on targeting</p> <p>Financed WB fund for training on SP</p> <p>Study tours</p> <p>Supported the design of the cash transfer pilot</p>	<p>SP cited within PEAP</p> <p>Awareness of SP spread across different sectors</p> <p>Improved quality of debate over ST</p> <p>More GoU officials familiar with SP</p> <p>Helped persuade Ministers and officials that SP as a viable agenda</p> <p>Secured commitment within MGLSD to cash transfers</p> <p>None as yet</p>

<i>Investment in relationships</i>	<p>Relationships with other development partners (UNICEF, Irish Aid, World Bank);</p> <p>Relations with Ministry officials in MGLSD</p> <p>Relations with civil society actors (DRT, PLA, BRAC, Help Age...)</p>	<p>A strong degree of harmony and coherence amongst concerned bilateral and multilateral agencies</p> <p>MGLSD has increasingly claimed ownership of SP</p> <p>A growing constituency for SP within Uganda</p> <p>Continued dispute over SP targeting results in some confusion within MGLSD and delays SP-influencing process</p>
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Analysis: which activities have worked best so far?

- 8.31 According to most of the observers interviewed for this project, DFID has been the main player in seeking to influence GoU's position on SP, although the fact that it has worked closely with and through other actors makes it difficult to attribute either success or failure directly.
- 8.32 According to interviews with key stakeholders in this process, the most significant and positive factor in terms of the increasing policy focus on ST/SP in Uganda has been the growing evidence base on ST/SP (and its impacts) that has emerged within Africa and more broadly since the early 2000s. DFID has actively sought to mediate this evidence base through its policy influencing activities, termed here as 'facilitation' and enabling access to 'information and knowledge'. DFID has also taken astute advantage of the growing opportunities to frame SP as an African initiative (especially via the study tours to South Africa and Lesotho) rather than as an exclusively donor-led venture, to good effect in terms of progressing debates.
- 8.33 Advocacy efforts have been rather slower to yield fruit. This is partly because of problems with DFID's approach to advocacy within formal channels such as the PEAP review process (see below); partly because the key partner that DFID-Uganda chose to work with (MGLSD) is constrained by its relatively weak capacity and marginality within Uganda policy processes; and partly because it may simply takes a long time to gain a foothold for a new policy agenda, especially where other elements are not in place (e.g. the informational basis, relationships of trust with key stakeholders).
- 8.34 It is particularly difficult to assess the outcomes associated with DFID-Uganda's efforts to investment in relationships. Trust is a significant element of a partnership-based strategy such as this one, and it does seem that DFID's largely consistent involvement in this agenda since 2002 has helped persuade key stakeholders, particularly in MGLSD, of their long-term commitment to this policy agenda. Stronger relationships could have been built between SP advocates and key decision-makers within MFPED. DFID-Uganda has done

well to maintain good relations amongst most interested donors, and cannot be held responsible for the problems encountered around the vulnerability-pensions debate.

8.35 Overall, this suggests that the building of an informational base needs to be strongly prioritised from the outset as the key policy influencing activity, around which facilitation and advocacy efforts can then be built. Relationship building efforts need to be focused more clearly on actors who are likely to oppose SP, particularly when such actors are highly influential.

Table 6. Which type/s of channel have DFID-Uganda focused on?

Channels	Specific details	Associated outputs & outcomes
<i>Formal</i>	<p>SPTF activities including lobbying through SWGs during and after PEAP review process</p> <p>Workshops on SP</p> <p>Design and attempted piloting of a ST scheme</p>	<p>SP referenced in PEAP: includes a commitment to minimum wage; School Feeding Programme and proposed health insurance policy</p> <p>Increased awareness of SP amongst key stakeholders</p> <p>None as yet</p>
<i>Semi-formal</i>	<p>Livingstone conference</p> <p>Study tours for officials and ministers to SA, Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia</p> <p>Minister-Minister discussions</p> <p>Direct communications with staff in various donor agencies</p> <p>DFID Under Sec for Africa persuaded to meet with Minister of Finance to promote ST</p>	<p>Persuaded SPTF to focus on ST</p> <p>Persuaded key ministers (esp. Finance and Gender) that SP was feasible¹⁰</p> <p>As above</p> <p>A general coherence and harmony amongst bilateral and multilateral donors on SP</p> <p>Unknown</p>
<i>Informal</i>	<p>MGLSD at NDP meeting with DFID – approached MoF advisor to lobby on ST</p> <p>Also approached Chair of National Development Plan secretariat to advocate significance of SP for “Growth and Prosperity for All”</p>	<p>Unknown</p> <p>SP was listed as a key new priority by chair of NDP secretariat in meeting with Local Development Partner Group in February.</p>

¹⁰ This Minister of Planning from MFPED has since passed away.

Analysis: which channels have worked best so far?

- 8.36 DFID has usefully directed its policy-influencing activities through the full range of channels, in terms of the formal/semi-formal/informal typology employed here. To simply compare the three directly with each other is inappropriate, as they are not necessarily linked to the same types of actors, processes or types of outcome. However, the use of semi-formal channels does emerge as the most effective in achieving the desired outcomes to date. Working through formal channels has presented the greatest challenges and the fewest returns, while DFID has been reticent to work through informal channels.
- 8.37 Activities promoted through formal channels, such as the efforts to mainstream SP via the PEAP review process and promotion of a ST pilot, have tended to be subject to greater constraints and/or could have been better handled by DFID. The constraints have included the SWAp-based nature of policy discussions in Uganda, the resistance to SP within MFPED, and the lack of an informational basis on which to found policies (although the Bank's efforts on vulnerability analysis have helped here). However, elements of DFID's approach in each stage tended to exacerbate rather than overcome or avoid these constraints. In the first stage, the early work associated with the SPTF was poorly sequenced in relation to the PEAP review processes and could not provide the informational basis for national policy-making; the importance of persuading the most powerful policy actor in Uganda (MFPED) of the merits of SP was under-emphasised, and the on-off relationship with MGLSD left the strategy reliant on a particularly under-capacitated and politically marginal ministry.
- 8.38 In the second stage, it might be speculated that DFID has not necessarily played to its strengths by focusing on a project-based approach, which it has generally been moving away from in favour of sector-level and budgetary support.¹¹ The project approach was perhaps also undermined by the fact that Uganda lacked a similar scheme (e.g. the cash transfer model in Zambia was able to build on the PWAS that had been in place since before independence). Again, MFPED was not significantly involved in the design process. Finally, the focus on cash transfers was unfortunately timed with regards the deepening of a development policy agenda that strongly privileges microfinance for the 'economically active' rather than 'handouts' for the poorest.
- 8.39 This contextualised analysis does not easily lead to generalised conclusions, although some implications for DFID's policy influencing work more broadly could be as follows. It would clearly be remiss to ignore any type of channel entirely, and a judicious mixture seems to be appropriate. Formal channels cannot be ignored whatever the constraints they come with and the fact that they are generally amenable to analysis should mean that a higher degree of advance planning and risk management is possible here. The greater success achieved through semi-formal channels seems to reflect both the character of policy-influence in Uganda (where actors are often more influential than processes) and the strengths of DFID-Uganda in this field, and it could be advisable to build further on this strength. It may not be appropriate to suggest

¹¹ Project work is more clearly the expertise of the Bank rather than DFID in Uganda, which hypothetically (had it been more fully engaged) may have been able to push such a process ahead more successfully.

the increased greater use of informal channels by donor agencies, although opportunistic lobbying opportunities (by Heads of Office and the visiting hierarchy) should not be overlooked.

The DFID factor

8.40 There are several important dimensions concerning how DFID operates more broadly as an institution that were important here, most of them in a positive sense:

- DFID-HQ has played a supportive and enabling role vis-à-vis DFID-Uganda's efforts, particularly in terms of sourcing technical assistance, even if indirectly (e.g. the role of CPRC in ST project design).
- The professional qualities of the DFID staff involved in these policy influencing activities was cited as a positive factor by other key stakeholders interviewed for this research. The SD Advisor during the majority of Stage One was cited as an energetic and high-quality proponent of SP, and the fact that the successive (and current) SD advisor was an SP expert has lent further credibility and continuity to DFID's role.
- Importantly DFID-Uganda has been able to provide the required resources and technical assistance in a generally timely way, particularly during the second stage (2006-date). This responsive style has helped to keep the process moving, and stands in contrast to the more formal and bureaucratic structures associated with other agencies, including the Bank where the more stringent annual financial planning cycle makes it more difficult to operate a 'just-in-time' approach to their inputs.
- At the same time, it is clear that DFID's relative weakness in other areas (e.g. influence within MFPEP), have acted as a constraint, and may suggest alternative approaches in future.

9. Zambia Case Study

The politics of social protection in Zambia

- 9.1 The political context for promoting SP within Zambia is broadly unfavourable. The current regime cannot be described as particularly pro-poor – indeed, the current Minister of Finance has repeatedly stated that poverty does not exist, that ‘poor people’ are simply lazy, and that policy should focus on wealth creation than poverty reduction. Politics is personalised rather than programmatic, with decision-making, appointments and resource allocation shaped more clearly by neopatrimonial politics rather than by meritocratic or needs-based criteria. Political parties and leaders exemplify these characteristics. However, after a narrow victory in 2001, the 2006 elections granted the current regime a larger majority in Parliament and the President has now been able to effectively consolidate his power over his Party. This, coupled with the weakness of the opposition, may afford the regime enough legitimacy and capacity to push forward relatively ambitious policy agendas.
- 9.2 Zambia has undertaken two PRSP processes to date, the second of which was re-framed as the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP), and which present donors with a pro-poor and increasingly institutionalised policy process to engage with. Although the first PRSP was poorly funded, social sector spending has since increased as a proportion of the budget from 30% in 2006, 36% in 2007 to 39% in 2008 (JCTR 2008, from MFNP figures).
- 9.3 As in Uganda, and as indicated by the views of the Minister of Finance, the prevailing political discourse in Zambia tends to favour the ‘productive’ segment of the population. This is reflected in a variety of programmes targeted at ‘vulnerable but viable’ farmers; the productivist, infrastructure-oriented character of the FNDP; and also in the by-line for the 2008 Budget (“Unlocking Resources for Economic Empowerment and Wealth Creation”) which reveals little concern with distributional issues.
- 9.4 Concerns over ‘vulnerability’ have gained increasing currency in political and policy circles since the food crisis of 2002. However, the political economy of food aid in Zambia initially created difficulties for those seeking to promote ST as an alternative to the direct distribution of food (see Cliffe 2006).
- 9.5 The balance of power within GRZ does not lie with those ministries with responsibility for SP. MCDSS ranks 19th out of 49 listed institutions ministries in terms of expenditures via MFNP allocations, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (in charge of pensions etc.) ranks 43rd. In 2007, these two ministries received allocations of K72bn and K16.4bn respectively, a combined total that is less than the K97.9bn awarded to the National Assembly in the same year (JCTR 2007). So, although DFID’s policy-influencing strategy is embedded within the ministry with the clearest mandate to promote and implement SP, it is also one of the weakest in terms of power at the centre and capacity to deliver on the ground.

- 9.6 In terms of state-donor relations, DFID is perhaps second only to the World Bank in terms of significance. DFID has credibility within government and the donor community as a significant provider of budgetary support and with long-standing expertise in the social development sector. In 2007 foreign aid totalled \$503.6m (\$356.1m for projects, 147.5m dbs), while in 2008 donors will supply around 17% of total expenditure.
- 9.7 The 2006 elections saw a shift in the regime's basis of political support towards a reliance on voters in rural areas, where the majority of Zambia's poor reside. To date, the pro-poor policy gains of this shift have been mixed. On the one hand the Government removed health user fees in all rural areas from April 2006, a significantly pro-poor move, while on the other the 2008 budget reduced spending on agriculture (JCTR 2008).
- 9.8 Civil society has yet to apply significant pressure on GRZ to deliver on SP. The most influential research-advocacy organisation (JCTR) has produced some high-quality analytical work on SP, although its budget analysis and recommendations in 2008 missed the opportunity to press for higher allocations to SP. UNICEF has made contact with the Economics Association of Zambia on SP issues, which could in turn provide a potential way forward in terms of influencing MFNP. However, and although DFID and others have held discussions with many CSOs on SP and has made funding available to the Civil Society Social Protection Forum (which is largely GTZ funded and loosely linked to the SP-SAG TWG on Advocacy), very little actual advocacy has so far ensued, largely due to a lack of capacity within Zambian civil society.
- 9.9 In terms of the underlying social conditions, Zambia has historically experienced high levels of urbanisation and inequality levels have risen in recent years, particularly between rural and urban areas. These factors have historically been associated with the instigation of national SP policies in Africa (Hickey 2008/7). However, urbanisation has declined over the past one-two decades. The dominant perception amongst Zambian elites is that poverty is a mass phenomenon in Zambia, meaning that efforts to target particularly vulnerable groups as thus misplaced (Barrientos et al 2005).
- 9.10 Several SP-type instruments have been implemented in Zambia prior to the ST approach, including a formal sector social security fund, a pension scheme and also PWAS, which offered donors a ready-cut policy channel through which to promote the ST approach. However, despite receiving rhetorical support from politicians, the PWAS has a very limited political constituency at the centre and declining budgetary allocations have raised concerns that this programme may be under threat of being phased out, a prospect that should worry advocates of SP in Zambia.

DFID-Zambia's promotion of social protection: a chronological summary

Stage One: the SP-SAG and the FNDP

- 9.11 DFID started to promote SP in Zambia from 2003 onwards, and in earnest from January 2004. The incoming SD Advisor had attended a GTZ-workshop on what would become the Kalomo Cash Transfer Pilot scheme during a

familiarisation trip, and wrote a note suggesting that DFID should chair an informal donor group on SP that also involved the World Bank and GTZ.

- 9.12 In late 2003, DFID-Zambia and the Bank proposed to MFNP that they establish a Sector Advisory Group on social protection (SP-SAG) chaired by MCDSS, rather than promote SP as a cross-cutting agenda. MFNP agreed to what would be the only new SAG to be established during the review process for the second PRSP. At the same time, GTZ's was not only starting to pilot the Kalomo project but was also advising MCDSS on SP, helping the Ministry to set priorities and strengthen the institutional setup
- 9.13 DFID-Zambia's strategic objectives to influence GRZ policies on SP were incorporated directly into DFID-Zambia's Country Assistance Plan (2004-7). Key indicators included the integration of a social safety net and various SRM instruments into the FNDP; better information flows in terms of monitoring and evaluation; dialogue with government through the SP-SAG and also dialogue with CSOs and other donors. This work was not budgeted or linked to specific inputs.
- 9.14 The SP-SAG was formally established in June 2004. DFID funded and sat on the appraisal committee (two MCDSS staff and one DFID staff) for the selection of the consultant who would produce the full draft of the Social Protection strategy. This was directly informed by SP-SAG priorities and would later provide the basis for a chapter in the FNDP. DFID participated fully in discussions around the content of the chapter and also established an informal donor group on SP which often met before full SP-SAG meetings in order to discuss and forge agreements on conceptual and policy issues. Early meetings of this informal group included the consultant (who was funded by DFID and GTZ). The idea was to present a harmonised front and to work through issues of disagreement between themselves in order to reduce the risk that such debates would dominate discussions within the SP-SAG. However, some SP-SAG participants suspected that this was a way of sewing up the agenda and closing down debates in advance.
- 9.15 Commitment to the SP-SAG within MCDSS was variable across personnel and departments. On the one hand, the SP-SAG was effectively chaired by the Director of Planning within MCDSS throughout. On the other, some officials clearly found the new terminology difficult to grasp and there was little political support from the then Minister. One initiative that helped here to generate deeper understanding and a stronger sense of ownership was the attendance of MCDSS officials at the World Bank SRM conference in Tunis in 2005, where the draft SP strategy for Zambia was greeted with resounding praise.
- 9.16 Some efforts were made via the SP-SAG to engage other key ministries in this agenda, particularly MFNP, Labour, Education and Health, although these efforts rarely targeted high-ranking officials nor met with particular success.
- 9.17 National level statistical data on vulnerability in Zambia was lacking until the World Bank (co-funded with DFID) published initial reports from the first Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment in 2005 (which it was originally intended to underpin the FNDP but was not finally published until 2008).

- 9.18 To further assist in developing their strategy for promoting GRZ ownership of SP, DFID-Zambia commissioned a Drivers of Change Study into the politics of SP, which was carried out over July–August 2005 and reported in November 2005. However, with DFID’s strategic focus shifting directly to ST as the main means of securing credibility for a SP agenda (Stage Two), it appears to have little influence over DFID-Zambia’s activities until DFID’s attentions shifted back the current state (Stage Three). It is now seen by DFID as providing the basis for planning and further research around the politics of different targeting options. The report appears to have had more influence on GTZ, which according to the relevant Technical Assistant considered the recommendations closely and undertook “a huge shift to focus more on advocacy and strengthening ownership within MCDSS” as a result.
- 9.19 One of the study’s main conclusions was that: “social protection is not well understood or widely accepted, even among key stakeholders, many of whom struggle with its terminology, its relationship to poverty reduction policy, its scope and instruments. Social protection does not have wide currency among policy makers” (Barrientos et al 2005: 9).
- 9.20 The key civil society network (Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, CSPR) had not initially identified SP as an issue to be dealt with during its parallel consultation process around the FNDP, although the lobbying of DFID’s partner CARE ensured that it was considered during their consultations. An influential CSO, JCTR, has since been involved in producing research and advocacy in favour of SP (see JCTR 2007).
- 9.21 Nonetheless, the SP-SAG strategic plan was included in the final FNDP. This chapter commits GRZ to implement a long list of programmes, including: agricultural inputs for low capacity households, micro-credit schemes, public works projects, creation of a funding basket for informal-sector activities, rehabilitation programmes for street children, livelihoods training to orphans and vulnerable children, cash-based welfare scheme, free healthcare to vulnerable and incapacitated households, community health-insurance schemes, universal provision of free HIV-related tests, school bursaries to incapacitated households, scaled-up school feeding programmes, support of training-initiatives to paralegal staff, awareness exercises about human rights, among others.
- 9.22 Critics suggest that the funding commitments fail to match this promise (see above). Nonetheless, it does seem that the sectoral approach to promoting SP in Zambia’s FNDP was beneficial in carving out a dedicated policy and fiscal space for SP in Zambia, that at least now needs to be debated. The fact that there has been an official budget line for SP for the past two years could prove to offer a significant point of leverage for ongoing and future lobbying activities, and for donor engagement. The downside is that the obvious place to institutionalise such a sector (i.e. MCDSS) lacks the capacity of its sectoral counterparts.
- 9.23 Another important factor was the fact that successive Heads of Office have allowed Advisors to dedicate significant amounts of time and effort to policy influencing activities on ST/SP. Advisors note that they have been able to draw down on resources as and when we needed them and to arrange secondments and appointments with this strategy in mind. This has enabled them to respond quickly to requests as they have emerged from within SP-SAG.

Stage Two: extending the ST-pilot approach – towards a national scheme?

- 9.24 DFID became the co-lead donor on SP with GTZ under JASZ in 2006, and focused its efforts on improving the coordination of ongoing donor activities. These were largely focused on cash transfers, particularly the GTZ-supported Kalomo Cash Transfer Scheme, and visits/secondments to Zambia of DFID advisors from Ethiopia and Malawi further embedded a focus on cash transfers. DFID pushed ahead with this element of the NDP chapter via the SP-SAG. Other donors, particularly GTZ, were already in favour of ST. In early 2005 DFID-Zambia presented a concept note on cash transfers to a DFID team over from London that included the then Secretary of State and members of the Reaching the Very Poorest Policy Division Team. This proved quite useful later on, enabling Advisors to prove to stakeholders in Zambia that its ST approach had high-level support within DFID.
- 9.25 Building on the Kalomo experience, DFID started to fund three further cash transfer pilot schemes in early 2006, after MFNP had signed the MoU with DFID, and developed an Implementation Framework and action plan to coordinate work. This involved a PPA with CARE International to deliver three different types of pilot with MCDSS, one in an urban area, one in a remote rural area and one using age based targeting. A further pilot, which GTZ had originally founded, aimed at demonstrating if it can work at scale. The CARE PPA included broader work on other forms of social transfers/livelihoods support including sorghum marketing, seeds for work, community schools etc. As such, DFID has funded pilots through CARE from 2005, and through GTZ (for Kalomo and Monze) from early 2007, all through the PWAS framework. The MoU refers to the establishment of a pooled funding mechanism to fund all pilots using a common approach.
- 9.26 The actual signing of the MoU was delayed for six months until 2007. Explanations for this delay differ, with some observers citing a bureaucratic error within MFNP and others Ministerial reluctance. The DFID Advisor wrote to MCDSS on this matter, spelling out the implications of the delay, after which the PS for MCDSS approached the Minister of Finance at a cocktail party for the new World Bank offices. The MoU was swiftly signed but with reservations, particularly around the heavy emphasis that the MoU placed on studies, the apparent lack of clarity over financial management and the absence of a strong focus on monitoring and evaluation.
- 9.27 The pilot ST schemes are currently being implemented by MCDSS with technical support from GTZ and CARE in five districts under the auspices of the national PWAS programme. One scheme is targeted by age while the rest use community-based mechanisms to identify extremely poor and vulnerable households that lack the capacity to meet their needs in urban and rural areas. An independent impact evaluation of all five pilots is ongoing, with results expected by the end of April 2008.
- 9.28 The fact that DFID had the financial capacity to fund the whole scheme of pilots together was important to MCDSS as it eventually enabled them to avoid a piecemeal approach with potentially high transaction costs involving multiple partners. However, it is less clear that the decision to implement the pilot schemes through CARE – an international NGO with little practical experience

with cash transfers or through implementing projects via GRZ – was the best way to deliver a coherent and effective programme that helped build the capacity and credibility of MCDSS and to deliver a scaled-up version at national level.

- 9.29 The support of the Permanent Secretary of MCDSS (who took up his post in 2006) for the cash transfer model was gained through a number of means, including a fieldtrip to Kalomo, the study tour to South Africa and the many conversations with donors. The Livingstone conference of late March 2006 may have had some impact at the time, but this seems to have diminished, and it currently has little resonance within GRZ (although the MCDSS officials will attend the follow-up Livingstone II meeting in Kampala in April 2008). The PS for MCDSS is now viewed as an articulate support of ST and has independently undertaken several advocacy initiatives, including meetings with the Minister of Finance and taking MPs to pilot ST schemes. The Minister of MCDSS also visited one of the projects in Eastern Province recently in advance of a Presidential visit and seemed impressed apart from a concern with inclusion errors. One result here was a favourable reference to ST in a Presidential speech during the opening of a traditional ceremony in Eastern province. A senior officer within MCDSS cites the PS' strong support (and the appointment of a new Minister in 2007) as having been significant in terms of securing the buy-in and commitment of civil servants throughout the Ministry.
- 9.30 During this phase, DFID initiated the establishment of a technical working group (TWG) for Incapacitated Households to support the coordination of SCT pilots. MCDSS later established other TWGs (e.g. Disability and Advocacy) to help with its broader activities. The donor-driven TWG is far more active than the ones established later by MCDSS, reflecting to an extent the different levels of ownership and commitment to SP between donors and MCDSS.
- 9.31 A number of other initiatives have been undertaken to both deepen and widen the political constituency for SP in Zambia, including: a study tour for Ministers to South Africa and Lesotho in late 2007, and also the PS for MCDSS, 2 MPs (including one from pilot area) and PS for the Department of Labour; and a study tour for ten MPs to Kalomo in September 2007 (facilitated by MCDSS and GTZ). More practically, a further delegation from MCDSS including the MIS consultant attended a 2 day MIS workshop in Kenya organised by DFID. The tour to South Africa and Lesotho was described as particularly effective, with one presenter (Mike Samson of EPRI) cited as a particularly inspiring influence. DFID is also funding RHVP, which has launched several radio discussions on the topic. A television documentary by MCDSS and GTZ has also been created, launched and aired on local television channels. Finally, SP training workshops were held in Maastricht in late 2007 for MCDSS officials.
- 9.32 However, donor pressures to scale the projects up into a national ST scheme appear to have died down over this period due to a range of factors.
- First, the evidence base which seemed to support such a scaling-up has begun to falter under closer scrutiny. Questions have been raised concerning the quality of the baseline data for the Kalomo pilot that seemed to suggest a high degree of success. The decision to push ahead quickly with the other pilots

meant that they were launched without M&E systems in place, and may not be able to play the role they were intended to in terms of providing the basis for a national level scale-up.

- Second, the targeting studies commissioned by CARE on behalf of TWG for Incapacitated Households suggest that very different approaches to those adopted within the pilots will be required in different parts of the country (Watkins 2008), and that this will need to be accounted for in any scale-up.
- Third, GTZ’s withdrawal from broader policy discussions in late 2007 (due to priorities set in Germany; they still provide substantial technical support) meant that the strongest supporter for scaling-up the Kalomo model was now absent.
- Fourth, other pressures on DFID’s Advisors to move faster in scaling-up the pilots into a national scheme – e.g. from within DFID-Zambia and from DFID-HQ – were also either resisted or have now been reduced. In terms of DFID-HQ, this period of pressure coincided with the setting of targets for the White Paper, and has since reduced allowing a more contextually-driven approach to predominate.

9.33 So, while the pilots have been important for keeping a certain profile for SP, which according to the UNICEF advisor “would seem nebulous without them”, they are no longer seen by the co-lead donors as providing an unproblematic spring-board for a national policy on ST, whether or not MFNP would accept the funding required to support this.

Stage Three: one step back for donors, two steps forward for government?

9.34 According to DFID, it is now allowing debates and ideas to emerge from the SP-SAG and its TWGs without promoting ST as a priority concern for a national-level scale-up. The idea is that this has provided breathing space and room for discussion, and should allow MCDSS to take further ownership of the agenda. However, this strategy is somewhat belied by the differentiated experience of the TWGs, which suggests that DFID maintains a strong interest in ensuring that the ST pilots work effectively without offering similar levels of support to the other TWGs.

9.35 Under the donor-funded Joint Action Plan with GRZ on SP, MCDSS is responsible for promoting the SP agenda and organising the process of deciding the various ways forward. There is an impression that MCDSS is now more in the driving seat, particularly via the PS and within the two key Departments of Planning and Social Welfare, and that MCDSS officials feel more able to discuss alternative approaches without having to promote an approach (ST) that has brought them into conflict with MFNP. However, the Ministry lacks the capacity to push ahead on more than one or two fronts with regards this agenda and the TWGs that are not strongly associated with the ST pilots have received little donor attention to date. Donors still provide most of the energy behind the agenda, making sure that SP-SAG meetings are called, start on time and get through their business. The GTZ adviser in MCDSS has been replaced by two staff funded by UNICEF, i.e. still not government officials. The GTZ adviser still provides 50% time input through visits from Germany.

9.36 DFID have made further efforts during this period to secure a harmonised approach amongst donors with a working interest in SP, something made easier by the generally widespread acceptance of the Paris Declaration principles in Zambia.¹² UNICEF are now co-lead agency and one indicator of the lower transactions costs that result from relationships of trust is that the four-hour weekly donor meetings are now down to two-hour meetings once a fortnight, while TWG meetings are 2 hours once a month as opposed to weekly as in beginning. Although there is no pooled fund for technical support (which would mean going through GRZ procurement procedures), all donors do pool financial support which is used for financial assistance (transfers only). The Bank has engaged via Washington (e.g. participating in joint impact evaluation) but is noticeably absent from the majority of activities on the ground, not least because it has not had a SP specialist in country for the past two years. The harmonised approach is appreciated within MCDSS, as it reduces their transaction costs with a potential multiplicity of stakeholders and ventures.

9.37 Future planned activities include:

- An awareness day with MP's (Sept).
- Civil society discussions with Economics Association
- ILO draft SP expenditure review and social budget model now draft released
- The World Bank has agreed to support a comprehensive impact evaluation of the different pilot districts,
- Cooperating Partners Options Paper on future support to SP.

An Analysis of DFID-Zambia's Policy Influencing Activities

9.38 DFID-Zambia has, alongside and in partnership with others, achieved its formal objectives of securing a place for SP within GRZ's development strategy and of rolling out ST pilots. However, GRZ has committed very little budgetary support to SP programmes and there is little discernible progress towards a coherent national SP strategy, whether based around a national cash transfer scheme or a broader set of instruments. Any impacts in terms of reducing poverty and vulnerability have yet to become clear.

9.39 The SP agenda in Zambia is increasingly 'owned' by MCDSS, but this is not the case within the more powerful MFNP. Although some key officials within MFNP are supportive (for example, the current Permanent Secretary for the Planning and Economic Management Department takes a positive view of SP and made the decision to allow the setting up of the SP-SAG), the Minister retains ideological as well as financial concerns, and is known to object to the notion that poverty even exists in Zambia (as opposed to mere 'laziness' amongst the population). There is little buy-in across important sectors such as Education and Health, and Labour is primarily concerned with the (failing but recently

¹² Given the problems experienced in Uganda, it is interesting that HelpAge International have recently arrived and placed money in this pool without warning or discussion of where the priorities for social protection in Zambia might be.

boosted) formal sector pension scheme. Donors are increasingly harmonised behind the agenda and there is a small but increasingly vocal level of support for SP from elements of both political and civil society.

- 9.40 DFID is cited by all key stakeholders as the pre-eminent influence behind these outcomes. Below we review the key activities that DFID has employed in achieving these outcomes to date, and the channels it has focused on working within and through.

Table 7. DFID-Zambia's Policy Influencing Activities

Activity area	Specific activities	Associated outputs & outcomes
<i>Facilitation</i>	<p>Promotion of the SP-SAG</p> <p>Facilitation of study tours / international workshops – Livingstone; Malawi; Nairobi; South Africa; Lesotho; Zambian pilots</p> <p>Workshops for district, provincial and Ministry HQ staff directly linked to ST.</p> <p>SP presentation at Heads of Development meeting</p> <p>Media releases to promote ST</p> <p>Creation of TWGs</p>	<p>Secured growing commitment to SP within MCDSS</p> <p>Secured a chapter on SP in FNDP and a budget line on SP</p> <p>Helped persuade key ministers and officials in GRZ that SP as a viable agenda; now some MPs also</p> <p>Secured commitment within MCDSS to ST</p> <p>Increased expertise in SP within GRZ</p> <p>Improved levels of donor interest and harmonisation around SP</p> <p>Wider awareness of ST</p> <p>Increased coordination and GRZ leadership of technical development</p>
<i>Advocacy</i>	<p>DFID participates in and supports SP-SAG, the key advocate of SP in Zambia</p> <p>Piloting of CT schemes</p> <p>CARE support to SP civil society forum (through C SPR)</p>	<p>Growing commitment to SP within MCDSS; chapter in FNDP</p> <p>Provides a basis for advocacy (but strategy for scaling-up is unclear and little outcome as yet)</p> <p>A small but growing constituency for ST/SP within civil society</p>
<i>Information and knowledge</i>	<p>Studies funded by various actors including DFID: Drivers of Change, Fiduciary Risk Assessment, Independent Impact Evaluation of pilots, SPER (ILO); etc.</p> <p>RHVP policy briefs, radio and TV programmes</p> <p>Study tours</p>	<p>Deeper evidence base on SP in Zambia. That assists with both technical design and in addressing concerns of key actors in MFNP</p> <p>Higher quality of policy debate on ST/SP</p> <p>Wider awareness of ST</p> <p>Helped persuade key ministers and officials in GRZ that SP as a viable agenda; now some MPs also</p>

<i>Investment in relationships</i>	Minister and PS of MCDSS invited to Queen's Birthday Party	Unknown
	DFID senior staff encouraged to build relationships with key people in MFNP through PRBS interactions, and also use as a channel to influence on SP.	Unknown
	Relationships with other development partners (GTZ, UNICEF, Irish Aid, World Bank);	A strong degree of harmony and coherence amongst concerned bilateral and multilateral agencies
	DFID Advisor develops good relationship with Ministry officials in MCDSS, esp. the chair of the SP-SAG Relations with civil society actors	MCDSS claims has increasing ownership of the SP agenda Higher levels of trust between DFID and MCDSS A small but growing constituency for SP within civil society

Analysis: which activities have worked best so far?

- 9.41 DFID-Zambia's employment of the full range of advocacy activities reflects well on the high-level of energy that has been put into the process of seeking to influence SP policy. The most identifiable outcomes (the SP chapter in the FNDP and establishment of the CT pilots) resulted from a mixture of activities across the board, with one often re-enforcing the other (e.g. the provision of information and knowledge to use for advocacy purposes within the policy spaces that DFID had helped to establish and facilitate). The responsive nature of DFID's activities enabled the potential lag between these activities to be reduced – e.g. studies and consultancy reports could be commissioned and disseminated quickly enough for this information and knowledge to be useful for advocacy purposes and to ensure that good relations were developed with government officials.
- 9.42 The decision to facilitate a dedicated policy-space (the SP-SAG) through which to advocate for SP as a sector within the FNDP process and beyond (rather than deal with it as a cross-cutting agenda) was a strategically astute one. This has enabled the formulation and promotion of an increasingly tangible field of policy ideas and activities around which it is possible to organise and lobby. A key example here is the dedicated budget line on 'social protection' which allows for both public and policy debate to ensue on this issue (e.g. JCTR 2008). The inclusion of SP in JASZ as a 'sector' helps to facilitate further donor support and harmonisation.
- 9.43 The main trade-off here concerns an arguably weaker level of commitment from the other sectors (especially health and education) who have not been lobbied as strongly as they might had a more cross-cutting approach been employed. However, there are some signs that these sectors are buying-in to SP, a with the (limited) roll-out of the School Feeding Programme by MoE and the apparent

verbal support of health and education officials for SP in government fora. The removal of health user fees in 2006 was implemented by MoH outside of efforts to promote SP, but is included in the SP Chapter in FNDDP.

- 9.44 It is in two other areas that the most significant problems emerge: the use of the pilots as an advocacy strategy and the approach to relationship-building upon which the whole strategy was based.
- 9.45 The use of ST pilots as an advocacy strategy for gaining a national-level ST programme has had mixed results. On the one hand, it has given the agenda a degree of substance, and revealed that DFID in particular is committed to the issue. However, this in itself has not convinced GRZ that the funds will be there for a national programme over the medium-long term. Critically, it is unlikely that the M&E scheme for the pilots will provide the high-quality data on impacts that would be required to scale-up such an approach, or perhaps even to provide convincing evidence that the cash-based ST approach can work. The initial eagerness of donors to promote the ST approach – a new concept in Zambia until the Kalomo experiment – inevitably meant that the overall agenda was seen as a donor-driven affair, and this remains the case to a large extent. The decision to work the design and implementation process through an international NGO rather than directly through a government department is inherently poor preparation for a scaled-up national government policy on SP. However, this decision relates to serious capacity-problems within MCDSS (see below), and CARE has started the process of transferring some functions to MCDSS.
- 9.46 Although the current ‘wait-and-see’ approach of DFID and others has enabled government actors more room for manoeuvre in terms of setting the agenda, it has also revealed that the past four years has yet to produce a coherent broader strategy around SP. It is possible that the ST-focus has distracted from other viable SP instruments without achieving the goal of a national scale-up. And although the space may now exist for governmental actors to take the agenda forward in their own way at their own pace, it seems unlikely that DFID (and other interested donors) will allow the situation to develop at its own pace indefinitely.
- 9.47 DFID–Zambia’s relationship-building activities have proved to be effective in several respects, including those involving donors and now increasingly with civil society (often via other agencies such as CARE). However, its performance in terms of building relationships with parliamentarians and relevant government officials is less impressive. The main problem here is the decision to work through a notoriously weak ministry – MCDSS – as the main partner. This inevitably compromised efforts to ‘nationalise’ a SP, as indicated when it was not deemed capable of implementing the pilot schemes without high-levels of technical assistance. It also means that SP has a politically marginal advocate when it comes to getting policies and budgets and set in motion. There has been very little effort to develop the broader capacity of MCDSS other than in areas required to deliver the ST (e.g. UNICEF is currently funding two posts within the Ministry on this).
- 9.48 Although DFID Advisors have generally been able to develop good relationships with key personnel within MCDSS, it has been much less adept at building relationships with those in the powerful MFNP.

Table 8. Which type/s of channel have DFID-Zambia focused on?

Channels	Details	Associated outputs & outcomes
<i>Formal</i>	<p>Resourcing of and participation in SP-SAG activities during and after FNDRP review process</p> <p>Support to SP-SAG TWGs (uneven)</p> <p>Funding of officers within MCDSS to help run pilots</p> <p>Workshops on SP</p> <p>Commissioning of studies on SP</p> <p>Piloting of ST scheme</p> <p>Support and encouragement to civil society actors to advocate for SP</p>	<p>SP chapter in FNDRP; budget line on SP</p> <p>Dept of Social Welfare in MCDSS better informed and gain greater ownership of ST issues</p> <p>Increased capacity within MCDSS on management/delivery of ST</p> <p>Increased awareness of ST amongst key stakeholders</p> <p>Increased awareness of ST amongst key stakeholders</p> <p>Increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses of one approach to CT</p> <p>Heightened awareness of ST/SP amongst some CSOs but little outcome from this to date</p>
<i>Semi-formal</i>	<p>Livingstone conference and Kalomo visits</p> <p>Study tours for officials and ministers to SA, Lesotho, Malawi</p> <p>Direct communications with staff in various donor agencies</p>	<p>Increased awareness of ST/SP and vulnerability amongst key stakeholders</p> <p>Increased awareness of SP amongst key stakeholders</p> <p>Persuaded some key ministers and officials that national-level SP is feasible</p> <p>A general coherence and harmony amongst bilateral and multilateral donors on SP</p>
<i>Informal</i>	<p>Formation of an informal donor group on SP</p> <p>PS for MCDSS discusses with MoF at cocktail party following a formal letter from DFID to MCDSS</p> <p>Minister and PS of MCDSS invited to Queen's Birthday Party</p> <p>DFID senior staff encouraged to build relationships with key people in MFNP through PRBS interactions, and also use as a channel to influence on SP.</p>	<p>SP-SAG process moves faster (although is more donor-driven?)</p> <p>MoU for ST pilots signed by MFNP</p> <p>Unknown</p> <p>Unknown</p>

Analysis: which channels have worked best so far?

9.49 Again, DFID's energetic promotion of SP in Zambia has involved the use of all types of channels. Their achievement of outcomes to date can be associated with efforts via all of these channels, including the securing of a chapter on SP in the FNDDP (through mostly formal means), the moves towards creating a stronger constituency of support for SP (mostly through semi-formal means), and eventually gaining the MFNP's signature of approval to push ahead with the pilot ST schemes (informal). The fact that formal channels have achieved a degree of success here suggests that DFID Advisors have a good understanding of how to engage with mainstream policy processes, particularly in terms of galvanising actors from the civil society tendency. DFID has only occasionally been able to extend into the channels that would have reached more powerful actors within MFNP and could consider increasing its efforts through informal channels here. Operating through semi-formal channels has been critical to the broader role that DFID has played in opening up actors to the broader evidence-base on SP within Zambia and elsewhere in Africa.

Broader analysis: the DFID factor

9.50 DFID's policy-influencing work on SP in Zambia has been guided throughout by advance strategic thinking, as recorded in the CAP and the more recent Implementation Framework. To an extent, this has allowed for some clear planning and sequencing of activities. However, within the documents the activities are not systematically linked to specific intended outcomes, making it less useful as an evaluative tool.

9.51 According to advisors and other observers, DFID's reputation as a budget support donor has an enabling effect on its policy-influencing activities, while the fact that project-based work is still sanctioned by in this relatively new sector of SP (as opposed to DFID's more established areas of health (all direct budgetary support) or governance (all pooled), has also enabled this particular project-focused strategy.

9.52 DFID-HQ has played a supportive rather than instigating role here. It has helped to keep DFID-Zambia advisors updated on developments in SP in the region and its experience of working with different partners has helped to pull elements of the process together. A high level of technical support has been made available even after the dissolution of the Social Protection Policy Division team. Communication levels are high, particularly with the new Policy Team on Equity and Rights.

9.53 After a period during which the DFID hierarchy exerted pressure to push ahead with a particular approach, a more contextually-specific approach to policy-influence has emerged. This has yet to bear fruit and may (in the medium-term) come under renewed pressure to prove specific outcomes.

10. Country Level Insights

10.1 The following presents analysis from the brief country studies, drawing mainly on Drivers of Change studies, secondary evidence on DFID's influencing, and interviews (in the form of email exchange or telephone conversations) with DFID country staff. In line with our framework (part 2), we present brief details of the relevant historical and institutional aspects within each country, briefly present DFID's objectives in relation to the status of ST/social protection, and then highlight elements of the four areas of DFID's influencing activities, underpinned by resource inputs: 1) facilitation, 2) advocacy, 3) information and knowledge, and 4) relationships. The countries are grouped: those where DFID has little or no social transfer programme (Nepal); those where DFID is helping to build the ST agenda, with plans for pilot programmes (Tanzania); and those where DFID is helping to take forward a national strategy that builds on pilot programmes already running (Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan).

Countries where DFID has little or no ST programme

Nepal

ST

10.2 DFID does not yet have a coherent strategy for including ST in its ongoing efforts to reduce vulnerability in Nepal (DFID 2005b), which include its post-coup livelihoods programme and efforts to improve access to basic services for the poor and excluded, although there is some possibility of encouraging an expansion of the social pension.¹³ The promotion of ST is part of the Economics Advisor's strategic objectives, but this has not yet institutionalised in office strategy. The Government of Nepal (GoN) in the last budget slightly increased the value of the social pension, but has no clear strategy on social protection.

10.3 DFID is the second largest bilateral donor in Nepal, providing £30 million in assistance in 2006/07, through budget support and through NGOs and the UN. The current challenging conditions in Nepal mean that DFID's programme is under constant review, and the planned increases in financial assistance in the 2004-2008 Country Assistance Plan (CAP) have been cancelled following the coup in early 2005.¹⁴

Activities

10.4 Facilitation: DFID-N engages with the Ministry of Social Welfare to influence social protection policy, and encouraged government attendance at a HelpAge International/UNESCAP conference on 'Ensuring Social Protection/Social Pensions in Old Age in the Context of Rapid Ageing in Asia' held in Bangkok at the end of January 2007.

¹³ Email response from DFID-N Economic Adviser, received 09.01.07.

¹⁴ DFID website, <http://www.DFID.gov.uk/countries/asia/nepal.asp>, accessed 26.01.07.

- 10.5 Information and knowledge: Under the livelihoods programme, DFID-N supports the World Food Programme (WFP) monitoring food availability in hunger-prone areas, enabling targeting of quick impact food for work projects funded by USAID.
- 10.6 More extensive attempts to influence policy are constrained by the “limited time” of staff who are currently undertaking a review of all their work on inclusive growth.¹⁵ DFID-N’s future plans include influencing the government, explaining the benefits of ST, and taking advantage where possible of the changing political situation.

Countries where DFID is building the ST agenda

Tanzania

Historical trajectory and institutions

- 10.7 Oxford Policy Management has carried out a study on ‘Understanding Patterns of Accountability in Tanzania’ (Lawson and Rakner 2005). According to this study, electoral accountability dominates at the local level, re-election is strongly party based, and the ruling Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) is highly influential. They find some evidence that local administration functions well, but could be improved with greater transparency and smoother flows of information. Although there is a discourse of good governance around accountability and transparency, it “co-exists with other cultures of accountability, so its interpretation can be ambiguous.” (Lawson and Rakner 2005: 4) Nationally, the executive (comprised of President Mkapa and a small group of ministers) is highly influential in policy-making, although parliament exercises its powers of legislative scrutiny. However, parliament is dominated by the highly organised CCM, so the extent to which parliament holds the executive to account is limited. Nevertheless, where policy is perceived to be unpopular, the CCM can change it. Most members of parliament are wary of donor influence, and Lawson and Rakner conclude that domestic political factors exert a dominant influence over policy. Civil society is respected, but a weak source of social accountability.

ST/SP

- 10.8 Tanzania has a long history of commitment to social welfare and well-being under the Nyerere government, but recent commitments to social protection arose when the Tanzanian government issued a strong commitment to social protection (understood as improving services to poor people) explicitly in Cluster 2 of the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MKUKUTA). The PRSP was the result of mixed influences, including some government poverty monitoring, and it certainly includes the imprint of some government champions of social protection.
- 10.9 Efforts are now focused on translating these policy commitments into effective policies. There is a dialogue and process underway to develop a national social protection policy framework. This process is coordinated by the Ministry of Planning’s Poverty Eradication Division (PED), which is funded by DFID. It is

¹⁵ Email responses from DFID-N Economic Adviser, received 09.01.07 & 10.05.07.

now strongly government led, although some interlocutors, notably in the Ministry of Finance, remain somewhat sceptical on the role of social protection policies in growth promotion.

- 10.10 DFID-T is not involved in the two existing social transfer projects: the Tanzania Social Action Fund (funded by the World Bank) and the Most Vulnerable Children Scheme (co-funded by UNICEF and the Department of Social Welfare). However, DFID-T is a key player in influencing the emergence of a social protection agenda, and the development of the social protection policy framework. DFID-T's main aim is to build this agenda through dialogue with government, limited technical assistance, and civil society partnerships.
- 10.11 DFID's new Country Assistance Programme (CAP) for Tanzania has recently been approved. It contains a focus on social protection to improve equity and the delivery of basic services in line with White Paper 3. Tanzania is unusual in that almost all financial assistance goes to budget support (around 93%), and staff argue this makes it difficult to stimulate reform in a new marginal sector, where traditionally dedicated technical assistance has helped build momentum towards reform. Given the focus on budget support, it is difficult to make the case for additional resources at this stage, and it is not possible, given DFID-T's policy, to divert large amounts of targeted technical assistance directly to line ministries in Tanzania.

Activities

- 10.12 Facilitation: DFID-T has civil society partnerships with NGOs doing good platform work.
- 10.13 Advocacy: The PED has set up a formal Task Team on social protection that includes a DFID-T representative, and this team builds upon an informal network of donors and government officials, originally convened by DP representatives, including DFID. It incorporates representatives from the key social policy ministries, including the Ministry of Community Development and Gender, the Department of Social Welfare (in the Ministry of Health) and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Youth Employment. The Task Team is taking the social protection agenda forward and a framework was planned to be finalised by September 2007. DFID-T aims to support the government approach to social protection in this forum.
- 10.14 Information and knowledge: DFID-T is trying to improve the Tanzanian evidence base on social protection through funding REPOA (Research on Poverty Alleviation), a think-tank that opened up research on social protection, and is very close to and informs the government. In addition, a study commissioned through the DFID-supported World Bank Trust, will also conduct a comprehensive review of the social protection policy landscape, and signpost more detailed policy and resource impact work.
- 10.15 Investing in relationships: Through the partnership with the ILO on the Global Social Security Project, constructive work is underway to extend social security provision, and survey the incidence of social transfer schemes in the region. The politicised nature of policy-making in Tanzania noted by Lise and Rakner (2005) is a significant constraint to influencing policy, because although DFID-T has

good connections with the bureaucracy, its access and impact at the political level on policy issues such as social protection is more limited. The CCM manifesto is felt to be a perhaps more important document than the PRSP. Importantly, the president has made youth unemployment and Orphans and Vulnerable Children a particular concern, and DFID-T have been feeding positive presidential statements into the social protection agenda.

10.16 However, these inclinations towards social protection are not yet translating into fiscal space in the national budget alongside vertical donor funds. A key factor here is the low credibility of social welfare ministries. They tend to have small budgets, poor managerial capacity, and perceived poor quality staff, all of which make it hard to secure appropriate funding and to argue their case for increases with the Ministry of Finance. DFID-T staff stress the importance of all development partners raising the issue at a much higher level and are striving to use opportunities to do so. For instance, after the 2006 drought DFID-T wrote to the Prime Minister in an attempt to open up a dialogue on social protection in the medium term rather than use food distribution as an alternative policy response. This was not directly responded to but the Food Insecurity Unit in the Prime Minister's Office is involved in the Ministry of Planning-led process of developing the national social protection framework.

Countries where DFID is helping to take forward a national strategy containing ST

Bangladesh

Historical trajectories and institutions

10.17 In 'Bangladesh: supporting the drivers of pro-poor change', Duncan et al (2002) argue that the quality of institutions and governance is likely to be critical to the rate of poverty reduction. They find the central obstacle to improved institutions and governance is the lack of effective demand: those who benefit from the current arrangement are more powerful than those with a strong influence in change. Although this is a "massive obstacle," reform can be stimulated in at least two ways (2002: vii): "by promoting broader processes of social and economic change (such as education in particular of women); and through identifying and supporting champions of change (including NGOs, community organisations, reform-minded elements of the political parties and of the civil service, the media, the private sector, the research community and the Bangladeshi diaspora)." Although the report does advocate building coalitions with members within government, the recommended focus is on building demand for effective government, rather than supply.

ST

10.18 DFID-B's objectives in Bangladesh include the objective of removing people from 'Extreme Poverty'. Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh implies an income of \$0.26-\$0.29 depending on region,¹⁶ but this approach appears rather specific to Bangladesh and the concept is not found so explicitly in other countries. DFID staff in Bangladesh indicate that DFID's specific objectives on influencing social protection (and ST) are 1) to support the World Bank initiatives in support of

¹⁶ Tauhid, S., 2007, Definition and monitoring of extreme poverty and poverty in DFID Bangladesh.

Joint Strategy Coherence, 2) to develop cost effective models for lifting people out of extreme poverty and putting them back in touch with national development processes, and 3) to contribute to overall poverty reduction.¹⁷ These objectives grew out of concern from donors that existing safety net provision is neither efficient nor effective, and from a growing realisation from poverty analysis that there are significant numbers of people who are effectively cut off from the benefits of national economic growth. However, Bangladesh has had various social transfer programmes, and examples, such as the Female Secondary School Stipend Programme, are cited approvingly in DFID Briefing Papers on Social Protection (e.g. DFID 2006a: 3). The Country Assistance Plan identifies the reduction of extreme poverty and vulnerability (especially in women and girls) as a key priority with two outcomes for success: that 6 million lift themselves out of extreme poverty by 2013 and that seasonal hunger (monga) is eliminated by 2015.

- 10.19 In relation to these objectives, and the policies recommended in DFID (2006), one clear indicator of limited success is that although social protection is mentioned in the PRSP and there is a ‘target’ to reduce extreme poverty by half, there is “no significant indication of a coherent Government of Bangladesh (GoB) commitment as yet,”¹⁸ and the PRSP remains a technical document and rather “friendless” outside Parliament, with Ministers and politicians “little interested in such issues.”¹⁹ Given the political exclusion of the extreme poor, “there is a real danger that the bold challenge set by the PRSP will be criticised as “too ambitious” and sidelined.”²⁰ It is hoped that “by working directly and at scale significantly to reduce extreme poverty, DFIDB will be able to engage with Government to convert the rhetoric of the PRSP into political action.”²¹
- 10.20 Influencing is problematic. First, the current State of Emergency may endure and there is still a ‘Caretaker’ government. Next, staff feel the development discourse contains too much reliance on general economic growth (currently 6%) to bring benefits. Finally, the sheer scale of extreme and chronic poverty in Bangladesh has raised concerns about the affordability of ST amongst the government and donors.

Activities

- 10.21 Facilitation: DFID-B has participated in and supported a BRAC/Chronic Poverty Research Centre workshop on chronic poverty, and an international conference (partly DFID-funded), on approaches to extreme poverty.²² It has also funded (with the World Bank and World Food Programme) and participated in a GoB-convened conference on safety nets in June 2006 that contributed to the PRSP. DFID-B plans to support a policy level workshop with the GoB on targeting seasonal hunger. A further safety nets conference is also being planned, with the GoB as a key participant, which is hoped will improve the coherence of the national social protection strategy. Evidence of

¹⁷ Email response from Senior Social Development Adviser, DFID-Bangladesh, received 17.01.07.

¹⁸ As above.

¹⁹ Email response from Senior Social Development Adviser, DFID-B, received 30.01.07.

²⁰ DFID-B, 2006, DFID Bangladesh Strategy Paper on Reducing Extreme Poverty, page 2.

²¹ Ibid, 2.

²² DFID-BRAC Extreme Poverty Workshop, BRAC, 26.06.2006.

concrete impacts of economic and social empowerment generated by ST will be fed into national policy via the Poverty Monitoring Unit in the GoB Planning Commission. In addition, DFID-Bangladesh has a major programme to upgrade programme analysis and reporting in support of the draft Country Assistance Programme Commitment on demonstrating progress on ‘deliverables’, which will strengthen the production of evidence around ST.

10.22 Advocacy: In terms of coordinating national activities around ST, DFID staff reported that key donors and NGOs maintain informal contact as a “key part of our mix.”²³ DFID-B are involved in various formal bodies, including the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF, the apex body for donor dialogue and aid coordination), and the Local Consultative Groups (LGC), a body composed of representatives from 32 bilateral and multilateral donors and the GoB that meets to follow up on BDF meetings and discuss development strategies.²⁴ DFID-B is part of the sub-LGC on Poverty and has tried to make progress in this forum through presentations on their Extreme Poverty approach (which takes an asset transfer approach). However, this cannot yet be taken to the main LGC since its validity has not been agreed. Donors’ reactions included asking whether health and education was sufficiently poverty focused, and, from the World Bank, indicating confidence that economic growth would be sufficient. In addition, DFID-B will lead on the extreme poverty objective in the joint World Bank, Asian Development Bank, JICA/JBIC, DFID-B Country Assistance Strategy (CAS).

10.23 Information and knowledge: DFID-B is trying to expose the GoB to a series of events to try to influence the government’s thinking around safety nets. Research and dissemination are seen as central to DFID-Bangladesh’s attempts to influence policy on ST, partly since DFID is still trying to establish the validity of a focus on Extreme Poverty and there are as yet no official channels through which to proceed (although these are also being cultivated).²⁵ The Extreme Poverty Reduction portfolio, for which £250 million is committed over the next five years and £100 million has been disbursed, contains the BRAC Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction (CFPR, now moving to CFPR2); the Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP, delivered through NGOs and local governments); Urban Partnerships; and Economic Empowerment of the Poor Challenge Fund (both pre-implementation). The portfolio is explicitly designed to test different approaches and encourage dialogue between them, and with the GoB, in order to inform the GoB’s move towards a more comprehensive approach to its ‘Social Assistance Strategy’.²⁶

10.24 DFID-B contributes to an evidence base to agree a focus on extreme poverty. Poverty-related data and analysis have been “critical” in this process. This builds on the work of large NGOs, such as BRAC and Concern, and is partly undertaken through UK-based research networks, such as the Chronic Poverty Research Centre (CPRC) in partnership with the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies and BRAC. The CPRC receives central DFID funding, and DFID-Bangladesh support supplements this, and BRAC receives “funding

²³ Refer to footnote 19.

²⁴ The LGC website provides details: <http://www.lcgbangladesh.org/lcg/index.php>

²⁵ Refer to footnote 19

²⁶ Email from Senior Livelihoods and Infrastructure Adviser, DFID-B, 17.05.2007.

and encouragement.” The “main focus” is on NGOs pursuing innovating approaches, but there is also emphasis on “dissemination to other organisations, particularly donors and agencies interested in replication, including international.”²⁷ Whilst the GoB participates in this, it is “not specifically targeted.” Research has been commissioned on regional seasonal hunger, and a workshop is planned to develop national consensus on medium/longer term strategies. DFID plan to disseminate the lessons from BRAC CFPR and the CLP nationally and regionally.

- 10.25 Investing in relationships: Cultivating government champions has been tried, but with little success. Under the previous government, direct contact of DFID-B staff with ministers and senior officials had been rare. Ministries tended to be concerned with “what’s in it for my ministry.”²⁸ Under the Caretaker government a champion had been identified in a new Secretary but was transferred shortly after. However, DFID-B is engaged in a very active programme of semi-formal meetings with the Advisers (ministers) of the Caretaker government.

Box 1 Progress through NGOs in Bangladesh

DFID has been involved in the creation a significant body of country-specific evidence from social transfer programmes in Bangladesh (such as the Female Stipend Programme) that is fed into national policy debates through formal, if not entirely embedded, institutions (such as the Poverty Monitoring Unit). Increasing numbers of workshops and conferences create expectations of the continuation of a fairly vibrant discourse around social transfers. Donors appear relatively well co-ordinated in institutions and informally, and NGOs are closely involved in the process, generating programmes and evidence, although there are basic discrepancies in donor approaches. The government has not yet responded with the generation of a coherent strategy, and the Duncan et al (2003) study indicates that there may be enduring reasons for this. There are not yet stable relationships with social transfer champions within (the temporary) government with sufficient influence over policy. Although the government has formal institutions addressing the issues around social transfers, social transfers are not yet institutionalised into the policy process. However, through BRAC and other NGOs, DFID and other donors have been able to pursue social transfer pilots and generate evidence to move the agenda forwards.

Kenya

Historical trajectories and institutions

- 10.26 The Drivers of Change report for Kenya, ‘Strengthening the Incentives for Pro-Poor Policy Change: An analysis of drivers of change in Kenya - Summary report,’ (Ng’ethe et al, 2004) argues that the critical obstacles to bringing about pro-poor change in Kenya lie in the capture by the political elite of public institutions and resources to serve their private interests. They argue that the types of policy reforms that are required to reverse this decline are fairly well understood though the political elite, who benefit from the status quo, have generally opposed desirable patterns of change.

²⁷ Refer to footnote 17.

²⁸ Refer to footnote 19.

10.27 Ng'ethe et al (2004: 4) suggest that “pro-poor change will require a shift in the nature of incentives and restraints facing the political elite, and supporting changes in donor behaviour.” The report argues that pro-poor change will require a shift in the nature of incentives and restraints facing the political elite, and supporting changes in donor behaviour. There are several types of processes that are critical to bringing about such a transformation:

- Creating demand for change by strengthening the voice and organisation of all citizens, the poor in particular, to exert pressure on the elite;
- Strengthening response to demand by reforming the party system, devolution and broad public sector reform;
- Creating broader public accountability by restoring democratic checks and balances, strengthening institutional accountability and improving access to information, broadening the tax system and tackling corruption;
- Changing elite perceptions;
- Strengthening external sources of influence through both regional organisations and donor engagement.

ST

10.28 Currently, the Government of Kenya has social protection programmes in various sectors, e.g. National Social Health Insurance Fund, National Social Security Fund, which are employer-employee contributory funds, free primary education, and various decentralised funds. This is within the Government's Economic Recovery Strategy which is the main poverty reduction strategy document since 2003. One of the pillars of the Economic Recovery Strategy aims to tackle poverty and inequality through improved and affordable services in education and health, and to address development of the Arid and Semi-arid Areas in northern part of Kenya, where poverty and vulnerability are disproportionately higher than the rest of the country.

10.29 The overall goal of DFID Kenya's social protection strategy is the reduction of extreme poverty in Kenya, and the purpose is to establish a government led national system for long-term and guaranteed ST to the poorest and most vulnerable 10% of households in Kenya.²⁹ DFID-K's objectives of the proposed Social Protection Programme are:

- The development of a National Government of Kenya (GoK) social protection strategy and implementation framework;
- A cash transfer programme to 30,000 orphans and vulnerable children to improve child welfare through increased fostering and adoption; and
- A Hunger Safety Net Programme delivering long-term and guaranteed cash transfers to 300,000 chronically food insecure people.

²⁹ Email correspondence with Asst. Social Development Advisor, received on 26.01.07.

10.30 DFID-K has proposed a ten-year funding timescale in order to demonstrate commitment and attract attention from key players in GoK. The DFID input (£82.4m) represents 24% of the estimated total annual requirement.

Activities

10.31 Advocacy: DFID-K has used various tools to advocate for the uptake of ST. These include supporting pilot projects, participation in national steering committees and donor group meetings, focus group meetings with Members of Parliament, permanent secretaries as well as conversations with other key senior ministry representatives. Technical assistance has also been used to strengthen capacity of government ministries involved.

10.32 Facilitation: There is increasing interest in social protection by key development partners who will establish a Donor Group to harmonise programming and focus constructive engagement. DFID-K has expressed interest in leading this group. A project steering committee will align with existing GoK structures and comprise key GoK, donor and civil society representatives. A unified secretariat will support the committee, a national Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, and the Donor Group.

10.33 Information and Knowledge: DFID has commissioned some studies to inform the design of SP programmes. These include a gender study and financial access study, and there are also plans to undertake a beneficiary profiling and livestock market analysis study.

Conclusions

10.34 The constraints to influencing cited by DFID Kenya are similar to those highlighted in the Kenya DoC report.³⁰ Firstly, there is a limited capacity of the Ministries involved to implement, manage and monitor programmes. As Ng’ethe et al (2004) put it, there is need to strengthen the response of government to the demands of citizens. Secondly, there is a lack of political will and leadership to implement a rights-based system for social protection. This is linked to the lack of incentives for political elites to implement pro-poor policies which are not seen to be in their interests (Ng’ethe et al, 2004). Thirdly, DFID Kenya highlights the resistance of the current humanitarian system to pro-actively financing predictable emergencies through safety nets.

Pakistan

Historical trajectory and institutions

10.35 Nadvi and Robinson (2004) synthesise nine background papers on the “principal levers of and impediments to pro-poor policy change in Pakistan.” Their main conclusion is pessimistic: “the potential drivers of change in Pakistan are limited in number and scope.” (2004: iii). They find limited sources of pro-poor change in the short to medium term, and a lack of powerful agency to institute enduring change (see Annex X for more details). However, some potential catalysts of incremental change are identified. Decentralisation of power to elected officials may increase the influence of marginalised areas over policy, but non-elected

³⁰ Refer to footnote 29.

power is centralised, and local bureaucracies are often weak. New political parties are growing in significance, and the middle class is enlarging, though yet to find political voice. Geo-strategic developments may also have a positive impact.

- 10.36 They recommend (2004: vi) donors approach the pro-poor change agenda with “some degree of caution and modesty” but provide concrete suggestions. They suggest dialogue, policy engagement, financial support through intermediaries, and strengthening the administration through, for instance, building capacity in policy analysis and implementation. In terms of removing structural impediments, they argue that space is much more limited, but that policy interventions to redistribute land or improve agricultural productivity may have an impact.

ST

- 10.37 DFID-Pakistan’s (DFID-P) current main aim of influencing policy around social protection is “to ensure that social protection programmes are rights-based.”³¹ The current social protection agenda in Pakistan can be traced to a World Bank-commissioned study of weak safety nets in the context of poverty reduction efforts and the presence of social protection as pillar four of PRSP 1. The former Planning Commission Chief Economist was interested in moving policy beyond safety nets to look at a social protection strategy addressing the needs of the poorest. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) brokered a joint working agreement between the World Bank, the ADB, and DFID to take up this agenda, and DFID-P has for two years been working in this group to support the Government of Pakistan (GoP) in developing the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS), recently approved by the Prime Minister. DFID-P’s focus going forward will be in support of this. A lack of government capacity is a significant problem (Nadvi and Robinson 2004; RC 25.01.07), to some extent plugged at the country level by good Pakistan-based international consultants. DFID-P has under consideration a £50 million programme to support the GoP’s implementation of the NSPS, and to continue GoP capacity building and action planning in the provinces.

- 10.38 There is formal donor coordination group. DFID and the World Bank disagree on whether social protection should be rights-based, implying a significant lack of harmony of donors’ objectives. One of the reported constraints to DFID’s influencing here is the lack of political influence needed to contest the World Bank’s approach.³²

Activities

- 10.39 Facilitation: DFID-P supports the NSPS through supporting capacity building initiatives, which is in line with Nadvi and Robinson’s recommendations. The initiatives aim first to improve the capacity of the GoP to develop robust plans and make good decisions in relation to the NSPS, and second (in partnership with UNICEF) to assess and improve the capacities of government social protection service providers in earthquake affected areas. DFID-P attempts to

³¹ Email response from DFID-Pakistan Social Development Adviser, received 25.01.07.

³² Refer to footnote 31.

target a range of institutions to realise its ST objectives, including bureaucrats, ministries, donors and NGOs, via DFID-P funded countrywide consultations on the NSPS. As well as pilots, DFID-P arranges workshops and round-table discussions to foster an understanding of the concept of safety nets, social protection, and the NSPS, but also uses formal and informal interactions with individuals in target institutions to promote its view of ST.

- 10.40 Information and knowledge: The substantive content of DFID-P's support for the NSPS has to date largely involved research and pilots. One significant pilot is the Child Support Programme (CSP), which is a cash transfer programme (conditional on school enrolment) implemented by the Bait-ul-Mal, a federal government agency under the Ministry of Social Welfare, and supported with technical assistance funded by DFID-P through the World Bank.³³ The CSP is an add-on to the Food Support Programme, Pakistan's largest cash transfer programme, targeted on the chronically poor, that pays an annual subsidy of US\$50 to 1.45 million households. From August 2006, the CSP has been piloted in 5 districts (covering around 40,000 households), and may be expanded to the whole country in 4 years depending on evaluations and budgetary allocations (del Ninno 2006: 3).
- 10.41 Investing in relationships: DFID-P identifies and cultivates social protection champions within government. However, one constraint on DFID-P's attempts to influence policy is the political economy of social protection programmes, which win fewer "votes and friends" than large-scale safety net programmes.³⁴ In addition to this, corruption within current social protection and safety net programmes complicates building upon them.

³³ As above.

³⁴ As above.

Table 9. Policy Influencing on ST: a descriptive overview

COUNTRY <i>Indicator</i>	Bangladesh	Ethiopia	Kenya	Malawi	Nepal	Pakistan	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia
Existence of ST/SP working groups involving govt	Not explicit but, sub-Local Consultative Group (donors + govt) on Poverty	Yes, JCC meets bi-weekly on PSNP	Yes, project steering committee being set up	Yes, set up X years ago; meets every X weeks	No	Yes	Yes, govt Poverty Eradication Division has set up formal WG on SP that meets regularly	Yes, SP Task Force meeting for 3-4 years	Yes, SP Sector Advisory Group; Technical Working Group on ST
National SP strategy: Planned; draft; in effect	SP in PRSP, but PRSP not implemented	No overall SP strategy, but MOU on PSNP	Yes, planned	Yes, currently being drafted	No	Yes, NSPS recently approved by PM	In PRSP, dialogue for national SP strategy	No overall strategy, SP in PEAP	Draft (2005)
Coherent policy documents	Yes but not implemented	No	Yes, part of Economic Recovery Strategy	Yes: MGDS,	No	Yes	Only PRSP	Only PEAP	FNDP, and draft NSPS
DFID-influenced or other ST project(s): planned; adopted	Yes, through NGOs	Yes, adopted	Yes, planned	Yes, but outside govt	WFP hunger monitoring	Yes	No	Pilot planned	Yes, Kalomo
ST scaled up? planned; in effect	NGO projects enlarging	Yes, in effect	No	Yes, but not through DFID influence	No	Planned	No	No	Planned
Donors harmonised on ST?	No agreement on best approach	Yes	In process	In the main	No	Focus on donor coordination		Yes	Yes

Donor working group on ST?	No	Yes, meets bi-weekly	Yes, DFID is hoping to lead	Yes, set up X years ago; meets every X weeks	No	Yes, ADB, WB, DFID developing SP strategy for 2 years	Informal network preceded SP WG	Yes	Yes
DFID funded:									
- training on ST	-no	- yes	- yes	- yes	- no	- yes	- yes	- yes	- ?
- workshops on ST	-yes	- yes	- yes	- yes	- no	- yes	- yes	- yes	- yes
- exchange trips	-?	- no	- yes	- yes	- yes	- ?	- yes	- yes	- ?
- commissioned studies	-yes	-yes	- yes	- yes	- no	- yes	- yes	- yes	- yes
DFID financial support to govt unit working on ST?	No govt unit	Yes, support to FSCB	Yes	Yes, substantial support was given to SNet's unit	No govt unit	Yes, more considered	Yes – 93% funding through budget support	No	Yes, lead donor in JAS, and £2m to MCDSS
Strong relationships with development partners:					ST agenda too nascent to say				
- bureaucrats	-no	- yes				- yes	- yes	- yes	- yes
- politicians	-no	- no				- ;	- no	- no	- yes
- donors	-yes	- yes				- ;	- yes	- ?	- yes

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<http://www.gsdr.org/go/topic-guides/drivers-of-change>

ANNEX 1 : ToR FOR THIS STUDY (Excerpt)

Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of DFID's efforts to influence social transfer policy in Africa

Overview & Objectives

It is increasingly recognized by donor agencies that whether or not governments commit themselves to social protection interventions is an intrinsically political decision, shaped by a wide range of political concerns. Critical issues here may include the type of regime in place (in terms of stability and legitimacy), the stage of the electoral cycle, the way in which poverty is framed within political discourse, and the balance of power between key policy actors at the centre of national governance, including international donor agencies. In order to answer the key question within the Terms of Reference (5.2): What have we learned about approaches to influencing policy change and to implementation, in different environments, by donors to promote ST must be understood within the particular political contexts in which such policy influencing strategies are undertaken. So, in reviewing DFID's approaches to influencing policy change on ST within Africa, this evaluation project will seek to:

1. Characterize the type and range of policy influencing strategies employed by DFID in particular African countries.
2. Evaluate their effectiveness and impact regarding the uptake of social transfer policies.
3. Explore the extent to which these strategies were attuned to the politics of social protection in given contexts.
4. Offer recommendations regarding future strategic directions for DFID's approach to influencing policy on ST in Africa.
5. Offer recommendations regarding future evaluation of DFID's policy influencing activities more generally.

The country case-studies under investigation will be Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia.³⁵

Outputs

The specific output will be a c.40pp report that will include: details of the analytical frameworks and methodological approach employed; the findings and analysis from each case-study (with cross-cutting findings drawn out as they arise); and key recommendations. The consultants will also present the key findings at a seminar to be held at DFID HQ.

³⁵ Research into the Ethiopia and Malawi case-studies has already been carried out. This project will incorporate these findings, and provide some updates/elaboration where required.

Key stages and analytical approaches

This research will proceed in four main stages, and will be driven by a series of methodological and analytical frameworks adapted specifically for the purpose of this project.

- x Stage One: Characterise the political context for social protection in each case;
- x Stage Two: Identify the key policy influencing activities and strategies undertaken by DFID, the resources expended in pursuit of this, and the outcomes of these activities in relation to DFID's broader objectives for policy influence around ST;
- x Stage Three: Analysis of findings;
- x Stage Four: Recommendations.

Stage One: The politics of social protection

Given the intrinsically political character of national government decision-making around ST, it is important to have a clear understanding of how donor activities and strategies for influencing policies relate to particular politics of social protection in given contexts. This involves exploring the extent to which DFID's approach was politically-attuned to the specific political conditions in each case, and if/how this shaped the success of these policy interventions around ST. This should enable a structured and contextualized understanding of the politics of promoting social protection in these two cases to emerge, and offer a cognate perspective to those offered in the existing reports. With reference to the ToR, this framework of political analysis is required to properly explore the key question 5.2, which asks: "What have we learned about approaches to influencing policy change and to implementation, in different environments?"

Recent research, including work commissioned by bilateral aid agencies such as DFID, has begun to identify systematic ways of understanding these relationships between politics and social protection, in ways that may assist such agencies to identify entry points when seeking to promote social protection (see References). This work has been influenced by the broad "drivers change" approach championed by DFID, but is closely informed by the more specific political experiences of social protection interventions in Africa in particular. The basic framework to be employed here to understand the politics of social protection in Africa can be depicted as follows:

Figure 1: Conceptualising the Politics of Social Protection in Africa (from Hickey 2008)

Undertaking such an analysis offers insights into other (non-DFID) influences on social protection. Given the potentially huge research agenda suggested by the above framework, this project will limit itself to certain key dimensions, including the underlying politics of development in each case (e.g. the politics of policy processes); the immediate political context within which policy-influencing activities took place (e.g. timing in the electoral cycle); and the wider societal pressures around generating an impulse for social protection.

Stage Two: Investigating DFID's approach to policy-influencing: activities, resources and outcomes

Activities and strategy

Policy influence can be understood in terms of four main forms of activity, namely (from Eyben 2003, 2006a, 2006b):

- x Facilitation providing space and informed support for policy makers (in the broadest meaning of the term), helping them debate, negotiate and exchange ideas and experience. Space can be thought of at particular levels of the state, and activities linked to government such as formal policy consultations, or they may be civil society forums and processes outside of government.
- x Advocacy supporting advocates for change regarding ST, through moral support, bringing their views to the attention of policy-makers, and, when appropriate, providing funds and/or technical assistance
- x Information and knowledge supporting the development of evidence-based policy, and helping policy-makers secure access to the information and knowledge they want; it also means constantly analysing the policy environment, learning from others and using this learning for our facilitation and advocacy work.

- x Investing in relationships identifying allies who may share a common policy objective and building non-instrumental relations of trust and friendship. What types of relationships/alliances have been built to influence policy change?

This project will evaluate the extent to which each of the above activities was employed in each case, and with what results. This will include a focus on the (estimated) amount of resources expended by DFID staff and offices in relation to each activity, although this will be difficult to account for in a precise manner. This focus will enable recommendations to be made regarding the future deployment of resources in pursuit of policy influencing objectives.

The above activities can be strategically undertaken in a direct or indirect manner, and through channels that are more or less formal, as indicated in the table below.

	Formal channels	Semi-formal channels	Informal channels
Direct on government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Aid negotiations x Policy oriented studies x Conditionality x Briefing sessions called by head of state / minister 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Direct communications of states / people / DFID staff with ministers / civil servants etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Friendships with government officials x Margins of meetings
Indirect through other donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Donor groups meetings x Joint programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Direct communication of DFID staff with other donor staff x Policy oriented studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Friendships with donor staff x Margins of meetings x Leadership by example
Indirect through domestic stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Joint programmes x Conditional funding x Briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Direct communications with staff x Policy oriented studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Friendships x Margins of meetings.

Adapted from White (1999: 37)

Understanding the effectiveness and impact of these various strategic approaches, again in relation to the relative energy and resources expended on each, will underpin recommendations for future policy influencing activities. A particular concern here is to explore the extent to which DFID's policy influencing activities were strategically organized and the links between these commitments and outcomes. DFID staff will be invited to identify the factors they thought helped and hindered their activities.

Resources

DFID is keen to understand the level of resources associated with policy-influencing activities, particularly vis-à-vis their outcomes. This project will therefore invite DFID staff to estimate the level of resources (human and financial) expended in pursuit of policy influence over ST, although it is anticipated that this will generate guesstimates rather than precise findings.

Outcomes

Respondents will be asked to identify the outcomes associated with DFID's policy-influencing activities (and the associated resource-expenditure and strategic approach), and to try and explain the causal linkages between them. DFID staff will be invited to expand on which factors (including those of DFID's own activities) explained these outcomes. Whether or not such outcomes can be quantified will also be explored.

Stage Three: Analysis

This stage will be undertaken first by case and then comparatively. In order to integrate the findings of Stages One and Two, part of this analytical effort will involve exploring the extent to which DFID's efforts to promote ST was politically attuned to the underlying politics of social protection in each context (e.g. what forms of evidence, knowledge and discourse were used? Which actors were identified as the most important to persuade? Issues of timing regarding ongoing political and policy-related processes, types of relationship/alliances etc).

Stage Four: Recommendations

This stage will seek to generate useful recommendations from the foregoing research and analysis, in order to inform both (a) DFID's future policy influencing strategies around ST and (b) the measurement and evaluation of policy influencing (including suggestions regarding the types of indicators that might be used to measure and evaluate policy influence).

Methodological approach

The key methods used here will be the circulation of questionnaire to key DFID personnel within each country, key informant interviews with DFID staff in each country plus other close observers, and documentary analysis. Primary research is particularly important in terms of gaining the perspectives of different stakeholders involved in the processes under examination, also in terms of trying to understand the often informal and underlying types of strategy and politics that mattered in each case. Given resource constraints, this research will be limited to a series of semi-structured interviews conducted via telephone and email with around 5-8 key informants per country. Given the importance of gaining an objective evaluation of DFID's influence in this area (as far as possible), some key informants will be drawn from non-DFID personnel involved in the process of forming policies on ST in each

case (e.g. government officials, other staff). The interview questions will be derived directly from the analytical frameworks outlined above, including approaches to outcome mapping.

Case-studies

The four country case-studies examined here are Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia.

Timeline

The first draft of the report will be submitted by 31 March 2008 (revised). Subject to the consultation process, it is envisaged that the final report will be delivered within four weeks of this date.

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ANNEX 2: THE NATURE OF DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN POLICY PROCESSES: KANBUR (2001)

The Finance Ministry Tendency	The Civil Society Tendency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Ministries (also Trade) • Economic analysts, economic policy managers and operational managers in the IFI's and the Regional Multilateral Banks. • National banks • Trade and manufacturing associations Financial press • Academics: many (not all) economists trained in the Anglo-Saxon tradition ... e.g. overseas economics advisors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social sector ministries: Health, Education, Gender etc. • Some aid agencies, or sections/members thereof: UNDP, UNICEF, DANIDA etc. • NGOs: operational and advocacy based • Academics: most non-economists.

Kanbur (2001) argues strongly that disputes between these two tendencies are often at the heart of policy differences within developing countries. Broadly speaking, they illustrate the divide between more •economic• as opposed to more •social• approaches to development. Struggles between these tendencies have closely shaped and defined development debates at a national level, as suggested by the shift between the Washington and Post-Washington consensus.

For Kanbur, the key dimensions of difference between the groups pivot around three key issues: the level of disaggregation that each employs with regards their key units of analysis; the time horizons over which each tendency views development progress and problems; and the issue of market structure and power. For example:

In terms of the level of disaggregation, officials within the finance ministry tendency might use household survey data to show that the national poverty headcount has fallen, while members of the civil society tendency (particularly those working at the local level), will point out that the absolute numbers of the poor are growing, that national statistics hide the fact that the poverty headcount itself is likely to have increased in rural regions/cities, and that national measures do not account for problems regarding service provision etc.

With regard to time horizons, the finance ministry tendency looks towards the medium-term (5-10 years) over which any shocks of liberalisation may be evened out, while the civil society tendency perspective would be to argue against both the potentially fatal outcomes of short-term shocks and the long-term implications of intensive growth-oriented policies (e.g. in environmental terms).

Market structure and power is conceived within the finance ministry tendency in terms of a competitive market structure of a large number of small agents interacting without power over each other. Against this, members within the civil society tendency instinctively perceive markets as being structured by unequal power relations between

agents, with capital holding the upper hand over labour. The impact of reform that presumes free market competition, particularly liberalisation, is therefore seen by this tendency as a means of strengthening the power of the strong market agents over the weak.

Kanbur argues that each side at least needs to understand the very different starting points that each side is coming from but appears to underestimate the power differentials between the two sides that shape such encounters in practice.

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