RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL PROTECTION IN UGANDA

Lessons from the International Conference on Social Protection for the Poorest in Africa

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“What consciousness do we have about the inalienable rights of our fellow citizens to a decent life?”

(Keynote address, James Ogoola, Principal Judge)

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List of Acronyms

CBO-	Community Based Organisation
CCF-	Conditional Cash Transfer
CPRC-	Chronic Poverty Research Centre
FFE-	Food For Education
GDP-	Gross Domestic Product
IDP-	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO-	International Labour Organisation
LEAP-	Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty
MDG-	Millenium Development Goals
NGO-	Non- Governmental Organisation
NUSAF-	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OVC-	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PSNP-	Productive Safety Net Program
SP-	Social Protection
UPE-	Universal Primary Education
USE-	Universal Secondary Education

List of Boxes

Summary

In September 2008, 130 participants from government institutions, civil society organisations and academic institutes from 19 countries converged in Entebbe for a two-day international conference on “Social Protection for the Poorest in Africa: Learning from Experience”. Conference presentations and discussions proved relevant to our national efforts to develop and implement social protection initiatives. This paper attempts to bring these lessons together, and draw conclusions.

1. Our efforts in Uganda are not isolated

In Africa, an increasing number of social protection initiatives aim to institutionalise systems that guarantee assistance for the very poor and protect the vulnerable from livelihood risks and social discrimination. There is therefore a growing body of experience to learn from. This includes experiences from several African countries that are potentially relevant to the Ugandan context and that show that many initiatives are no longer isolated pilot projects and have started to reach hundreds of thousands of very poor people.

2. We need conceptual and terminological clarity

The conference highlighted the broad nature of ‘social protection’ and the pitfall of equating this only with cash transfers, which is often how it is interpreted within the broader public. Policy discussions therefore need to be grounded in terminological clarity. Social protection was thus defined as “all interventions from public, private, voluntary organisations and informal networks, to support communities, households and individuals, in their efforts to prevent, manage, and overcome a defined set of risks and vulnerabilities”. These interventions will therefore have protective, preventive, promotive and transformative aspects

3. We need to document and communicate the importance and good sense of social protection

The conference re-affirmed that social protection is “exceptionally important” for Africa: evidence was presented that this is not only from a moral and ethical perspective, but also because it makes sound sense to foster national economic growth and well-being, to accelerate poverty reduction, and to ensure social stability.

4. Culture and history provide important foundation stones

There is a danger, when designing and implementing social protection measures, of borrowing more from elsewhere, thus neglecting the cultural context and failing to build on existing indigenous protection mechanisms that could be strengthened. In spite of the disappearance of some informal solidarity mechanisms, values survive and traditional social protection mechanisms continue to provide welfare and to safeguard social capital within specific cultural contexts in Uganda. These could be harnessed.

5. Social protection is affordable

It is widely thought that African countries cannot afford basic social protection for the poorest. Much evidence was however presented to the contrary. Thus, universal access to essential health care services; basic child benefits; basic social assistance providing 100 day employment guarantee to 10% poorest household heads in the working age, and universal basic old-age and disability pension would altogether cost in the range of 4.3% to 10.6% of GDP (for Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Senegal and Tanzania). The cost of essential health care constitutes in most countries the largest cost component in the total package. The non-health component of the package, would cost between 3% and jut over 6% of GDP. Nevertheless, the projections show that fully introducing a complete package of basic social security benefits requires a level of resources that is higher than current spending in the majority of low-income countries. Therefore, a considerable joint domestic and international effort is needed. Several papers outlined ways in which the burden of financing SP might be eased, including sequencing of interventions, rationalisation of public expenditure, and considering financing 'mixes'. It was further pointed out that, in the long run, the net fiscal costs of providing a basic set of social security benefits may even become zero or negative, as costs may soon be offset by positive economic and fiscal returns.

6. Social protection measures do not create dependency

It is frequently argued that "free hand-outs foster dependency" among the poor. Evidence was produced to the contrary, but it was recognised that allaying this fear is important: partly by sharing the evidence, but also by ensuring that social protection measures have transparent targeting and delivery mechanisms, and that, where appropriate, 'graduation' out of a social protection benefit is clearly articulated.

7. Sustained political support for social protection is vital

"Political sustainability", for which a design in tune with public attitudes about poverty and redistribution, and an established record of transparency, effectiveness and impact were singled out as necessary, and provided a strong focus of discussion. Public 'buy-in', as well as 'government buy-in' were thus felt to be crucial. In this respect strong monitoring and evaluation systems from the start were underscored, both to learn from experience, and communicating these experiences, and to demonstrate strong accountability mechanisms. A number of prerequisites for Uganda's progress towards achievement of a comprehensive and coherent social protection framework were noted, including creating government institutions that are dedicated to social protection, subscribing to internationally set standards, and enhancing coordination within government and with civil society. Mobilising politicians to visit the country and understanding the realities of poor people was noted, as well as having well-designed pilot projects.

8. Another vital issue: targeting

A number of conference papers explored this important area, which was highlighted by Minister Mwesigwa–Rukutana in his opening address to the Round-table that followed the conference, as of immediate relevance for Uganda. In many cases, the selection of the 'right method' stemmed from a thorough piloting process and a recognition of the different categories of households and the different vulnerabilities they face. It was also recognised that, the fewer the conditionalities, the simpler and administratively undemanding, suitable for a situation where there is limited implementation capacity. Individual assessments (direct assessment of the household or individual, means testing, and community based targeting) have their advantages, while categorical targeting (e.g. by age, gender, social status) can avoid divisiveness and be closest to a rights/entitlement approach.

9. There is much to gain from considering combinations and a phased introduction of complementary social protection instruments

Delivery of social protection can Includde a combination of different instruments .A number of presentations preffered to the existence of a number of possibilities (such as strengthening surviving informal solidarity mechanisms at family, clan and community levels; mutual health organisations and micro-insurance for the very poor). Nevertheless, these different instruments must be linked into a coherent overall policy framework, where possible maximising synergy, including synergy between social protection instruments and agricultural/smallholder policies. But there is no blueprint approach: the appropriate response depends on the social and policy context of the country, including different levels of economic activity, infrastructure and market development.

10. Delivery mechanisms must centre on strong, dedicated, collaborative government institutions

The foregoing discussion raises issues about what is feasible in terms of administration, human capacity and finances. Overall, there was consensus among conference participants that social assistance should be seen as a core Government function, to ensure uniform, reliable and sustainable delivery. Several experiences refered them to the advantage of having a Government institution that is both politically well-established and has potential that can be strengthened by systematic and long term capacity building at the core of the delivery system. Capacity for decentralised service delivery was also seen as important. In several cases presented at the Conference, relevant government ministries/departments, NGOs, donors and the private sector collaborate on issues of policy, design and coordination in programme implementation. Two specific cases appear relevant to the Ugandan context: the role of NGOs in promoting a rights-based agenda and the role of the private sector in delivering cash transfers.

Several presentations stressed the importance, not only of carefully designing the administration apparatus of any scheme, but also the need for building a 'capacity-building agenda' from the outset into social protection initiatives. Building capacity is essential for ensuring political legitimacy and credibility (as when avoiding 'leakages'). Pilots proved an important strategy for capacity-building and 'learning by doing'. Capacity deficits may necessitate a long-term, gradual approach to delivering an eventual comprehensive social protection cover in our country.

The following Recommendations appear relevant for Uganda

1. Objectives and linkages

With regard to the overall design of social protection initiatives, we can usefully:

- Embed social protection into the broader growth and poverty reduction strategies and prioritise the development of a national framework to integrate social protection within broader social policy outcomes
- Adopt an institutionalised, gazetted approach
- Adopt an empowering, people and rights-based approach, beyond a 'welfarist' stance, and reflect the wider problems within the political economy
- Clarify objectives to match them effectively with selected (often existing) programmes and instruments.

2. Political buy-in

If 'political buy-in' is necessary to ensure that social protection is given priority and is sustained, we need to:

- Explicitly link the social protection agenda to Government's aspirations, for instance its potential contribution to growth and employment, as per the National Development Plan themes
- Build the necessary public demands and social will, by increasing awareness of the political, social and economic rights to, and benefits of, social protection among political leaders, civil society groups and the private sector;
- Highlight the opportunity costs of not moving forward and the necessary political/technical trade offs.
- Target the Ministry of Finance and compute relative rates of return to social protection compared to other investments, such as infrastructure and use rigorous evidence (from pilots, other countries), on how people can move out of poverty through social protection.
- Target other sector ministries (Agriculture, health and education among others) and demonstrate the contribution of social protection in realising broader social policy outcomes such as in health, education, employment and labour productivity.

3. Prioritising and resourcing

In view of tough competing demands for scarce resources, we need to prioritise by:

- Seeking convergence between different actors' needs, costs, links to growth, and to social cohesion (what is politically attractive is key, not necessarily what is technically sound or fiscal-efficient or cheap).
- Developing policy guidelines (reflecting, for instance, the need for simplicity; to build on existing cultural practices; the need for coordination and transparency: for a government driven and owned process; for equity in terms of equal opportunities and treatment; progressive benefits for the poorest compared to the less poor)
- Seeking a phased introduction, that is affordable; politically and fiscally sustainable in the long run
- Reviewing policies and programmes to assess the extent to which they respond to the social protection agenda; switching public expenditure from less effective poverty reduction programmes, and consolidating fragmented initiatives (including donor-supported programmes).
- Increasing budget ceilings for the social development sector to accommodate new funds for social protection and enlisting long-term donor support for social protection

4. Targeting

Targeting benefits is potentially highly contentious. We therefore need to:

- Develop agreed clear, transparent eligibility, outreach, selection and exit criteria, ensuring low inclusion and exclusion errors and reflecting the social contract nature of social protection.
- Acknowledge the diversity of pathways out of poverty, as well as the changing nature of vulnerability, in both formal and informal sectors
- Mainstream child protection and other needs in the broader social protection framework, thus helping to break the inter-generational transmission of extreme poverty.

5. Social protection instruments

- There is a need to seek synergy and complementarity of instruments within an overall coherent policy framework. Income transfers can be combined with other forms of support (basic education, asset transfers, etc.). 'Ladders' can be built, from consumption to productive tools.
- While there is a need to broaden the menu beyond cash transfers, it is important to recognise that money empowers and that conditionality risks excluding the most marginalised
- There is a need to build on, and complement existing cultural, traditional and community-owned solidarity mechanisms to ground national social protection initiatives.

6. Delivery mechanisms

Delivering social benefits is challenging and we therefore need to:

- Favour mainstreaming, rather than sporadic, short-term, often externally driven social protection initiatives.
- Combine social protection with other programmes (as with the agricultural sector and employment policies) leads to better outcomes: policies and programmes need to be harmonised and coordinated across sectors to ensure vertical and horizontal linkages.
- Establish alliances with civil society organisations and the private sector in seeking solutions and learning – inter alia - from their experiences.
- Carry out pilot programmes to identify issues and learn lessons on such challenges as targeting; the efficacy of alternative instruments; and reviewing existing policy and institutional frameworks. Pilots need to; be owned and implemented by Government and supported by partner organisations; have the potential to be scaled up; be cost-effective and incorporate permanent evaluation and discussion mechanisms
- Develop delivery mechanisms that elicit trust, limit administrative costs, are reliable (as in timely transfers); and be free of suspicion of financial 'leakage'.
- Involve communities in the design, targeting mechanisms and management of social protection initiatives, but this should not be at the expense of strengthening the social contract between the state and the citizen.

Participants of the International Social Protection Conference,8th - 10 th September 2008,held at Imperial Resort Beach Hotel,Entebbe ,Uganda

Why this paper?

In September 2008, 130 participants from government institutions, civil society organisations and academic institutes from 19 countries converged in Entebbe, at the invitation of Development Research and Training, the Chronic Poverty Research Centre and the Brookes World Poverty Institute .

This was for a two-day international conference on “Social Protection for the Poorest in Africa: Learning from Experience”. In the course of this event, 45 papers were presented, describing and analysing social protection experiences in over 20 countries.

Some of these presentations and discussions proved relevant to Ugandas national efforts to develop and implement social protection initiatives. This paper attempts to bring these lessons together, and to draw conclusions. It focuses on the following key questions, which were identified as particularly relevant to move Uganda’s social protection policy context forward:

1. What is social protection and how can it contribute to realising growth and development objectives?
2. How can one finance social protection measures?
3. How does one target social protection in a country with a high prevalence of poverty?
4. What is the best combination of social protection instruments that can be implemented?
5. What are the appropriate institutional mechanisms to deliver social protection?
6. How can one galvanize political will to foster social protection measures?
7. What role can the private sector play in delivering social protection?

This paper presents observations, conclusions and recommendations linked to these key questions, in 10 short chapters or ‘lessons’, and a section of summary conclusions. All references are to papers presented at the Conference.

1. Our efforts in Uganda are not isolated

First, the conference provided evidence that there is a growing recognition of social protection as an essential component of national poverty reduction and development strategies worldwide. Thus, on our continent, an increasing number of social protection initiatives aim to institutionalise systems that guarantee assistance for the very poor and protect the vulnerable from livelihood risks and social discrimination.

Emphasis to-date has been placed on social assistance – regular, non-contributory cash or in-kind payments provided to individuals or households - and projects at sub-national level, mostly financed by bilateral or multilateral donors and implemented by international NGOs. In spite of this, there is a growing body of wider experience to learn from. This includes experiences from across Africa, that are potentially relevant to the Ugandan context and that show that many initiatives are no longer isolated pilot projects and have started to reach hundreds of thousands of very poor people (Box 1), with or without external donor assistance.

Box 1: Some current SP experiences in Africa

The conference provided an important opportunity for a number of experiences to be presented and shared. Among Government-led initiatives:

- Malawi: Input Subsidy Programme and Social Cash Transfer Schemes being piloted in 7 districts.
- Zambia: pilot social cash transfers in five districts.
- Kenya: Hunger Safety Net Programme (Phase I 2007 - 2012): design and pilot in four districts; Phase II (2012-2017) is expected to roll out to 300,000 households. The Kenya pilot cash transfer programme for vulnerable children, scaling up to over 40 districts by 2008, with 80,000 households likely to be enrolled by the end of the 2008/09 financial year
- Ethiopia: Productive Safety Net Programme, which now reaches 8.3 million Ethiopians, 12% of the national population, the largest social protection programme in Africa, outside South Africa. Provides cash or food, either in the form of public works (for people able to work and their families) or as free transfers (for people unable to work with no household member able to work on their behalf).
- Rwanda: Government is designing a national social protection framework.
- Mozambique: Programa de Subsidios de Alimentos (food subsidy programme) is a cash transfer programme that targets various vulnerable groups including the elderly, sick and female-headed households.
- Swaziland: Old Age Grant scheme targets Swazi citizens over the age of 60, who do not have pension income from other sources. In 2006-07 there were 49,000 recipients.
- Lesotho: introduced a social pension for all citizens aged 70 in 2005.
- South Africa: individuals qualify through 'means testing' for any of 7 types of social grants (Old age grant, Disability grant, War veterans grant, Foster child grant, Care dependency grant, Child support grant, and Grant in aid). By mid 2006, about 11 million grants were being paid each month (to a quarter of the population of 45 million) and expenditure on social assistance represented 3.5% of GDP. No other developing country redistributes as large a share of its GDP through social assistance programmes (Surender et al paper).
- Ghana: has launched a National Health Insurance Scheme, a school feeding programme, and a Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) social grants programme. It has also developed a National Social Protection Strategy.

[1] *The conference was co-hosted by the three organisations, with the collaboration of the Uganda Government, DFID in Uganda, Swiss Development Agency, Economic Policy Research Centre, UNICEF and the World Bank, Uganda Country Office.*

2. We need conceptual and terminological clarity

Policy discussions need to be grounded in conceptual and terminological clarity. The conference highlighted the broad nature of 'social protection' and the pitfall of equating this only to cash transfers, a common perception within the broader public.

This is especially relevant to Uganda, where a social protection policy is at design stage and where a number of initiatives are currently being implemented or being planned, including, for instance, Universal Primary Education, health care reform and a health insurance scheme, the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund, interventions for vulnerable children, a Functional Adult Literacy programme, the National Social Security Fund, a proposed cash transfer scheme, etc.

Social protection was thus defined as "all interventions from public, private, voluntary organizations and informal networks, to support communities, households and individuals, in their efforts to prevent, manage, and overcome a defined set of risks and vulnerabilities (…) It is grounded in the view that vulnerability (…) is a primary factor explaining poverty"(Barrientos paper). Social protection must address vulnerability associated with 'being poor' (for which social assistance is needed) and vulnerability associated with 'becoming poor' (for which social insurance is required). For Uganda, a possible phased approach might make sense (see section 8).

Box 2: Social protection goes beyond cash transfers….

The objectives of the full range of social protection interventions can fall under four headings:

- Protective (providing relief from deprivation e.g. disability benefit, non-contributory pensions),
- Preventive (averting deprivation e.g. through savings clubs or risk diversification),
- Promotive (to enhance real incomes and capabilities) and
- Transformative (which seek to address concerns of social equity and exclusion e.g. through anti-discrimination and sensitisation campaigns). (see box 18 for further examples)

Operationally, social protection can be defined by sub-dividing it into three key components:

- Social insurance involves individuals pooling resources by paying contributions to the state or a private provider so that, if they suffer a shock, they will receive financial support. Examples of social insurance include unemployment insurance, contributory pensions and health insurance.
- Social assistance involves non-contributory transfers to those deemed eligible by society on the basis of their vulnerability or poverty. Examples include social transfers (non-contributory pensions, children welfare grants), public works and school or health fee waivers.
- Standards refer to the setting and enforcing of minimum standards to protect citizens (such as labour market regulations) (cited in the Holmes and Jackson paper)

3. We need to document and communicate the importance and good sense of social protection

The conference re-affirmed that social protection is "exceptionally important" for Africa (D. Hulme address), not only from a moral and ethical standpoint, but also because it makes sense to foster economic growth and well-being, to accelerate poverty reduction, and to ensure social cohesiveness and stability. Its importance is currently being re-emphasised, because of global challenges, creating high levels of insecurity and vulnerability, while signs also emerge that growth is faltering and that other global forces, including climate change, is affecting the poorest most.

Box 3: Climate change and social protection: what's the link?

According to Heltberg and Siegel, efforts to enhance community resilience need to feature prominently in the response to climate change and social protection interventions hold promise for this purpose. Some responses must be at national or international levels (e.g. development of new crop technologies), other responses need to be local (say, adoption of new crops or water saving techniques). Five main areas for further testing are mentioned:

- Use social funds as a way to scale up external support for community-based adaptation.
- Improve social safety nets for coping with natural disasters and climatic shocks by building country capacity for effective delivery of post-disaster and counter-cyclical cash transfers. Cash transfers, both conditional and unconditional, workfare programs, and disaster insurance are some of the available instruments for household support
- Facilitate the necessary changes in livelihoods via skills development, micro-finance, and assisted migration. As the productivity of many natural resource based livelihoods declines, the transition into new sectors and urban areas may need support.
- Explore synergies between social protection and health insurance, and the private sector for better (climate) risk management, by improving access by the poor to health services, especially preventive health care. This is a 'no-regrets' intervention to reduce vulnerability in current and future climate.
- Expand promising pilots with insurance and other conditional financial instruments. The use of life insurance against idiosyncratic risk is also an area of growing interest and is often marketed by microfinance institutions, partly as a way to insure their outstanding loans. (Heltberg & Siegel paper)

If "social protection and particularly social assistance, has a crucial role to play in reducing chronic poverty" (CPRC, 2008), then this is also especially relevant to Uganda where, conference participants were reminded, well over 7 million people live in chronic poverty and where vulnerability is also on the rise. Recent drivers of vulnerability were noted to include climate change (see Box 3) , growing numbers of urban migrants, returning displaced persons, landless peasants and increasingly food insecure communities, as well as growing numbers of children from very poor households *(Beekunda and Lwanga-Ntale papers).*

While the moral argument is echoed in our Constitution, in the UN Declaration of Human Rights , in Government's commitment to the Livingstone Call for Action , in the implementation of the MDGs, and in the Government's anti-poverty strategy, conference papers similarly highlighted the impact of social protection on growth and development, both in Uganda and in other countries in the region. Minister Madada thus noted in his address that

"Social protection is key to reducing poverty and increasing growth, redistribution and equity."

Much evidence was indeed presented that social protection measures can make a positive contribution to the incomes and labour productivity of the poor (and thus have an immediate impact on inequality and extreme poverty), they can enable households to manage risks, to make better investment in future (e.g. child nutrition and schooling) and can even help governments make beneficial reforms (e.g. removal of inefficient distributive programmes) (Box 4, with regard to cash transfer schemes). In Northern Uganda, for instance, evidence from 2005-7 on the impact of alternative primary school Food For Education programmes on nutrition and education outcomes

"lend support to the potential for FFE programs to achieve their primary goals of increasing school participation and attainment. It is also encouraging that these programs worked so effectively, even in the difficult setting of IDP camps." *(Adelman et al paper)*

Box 4: The impact of Cash transfers schemes on the poorest

- "Evidence from the Zambia and Malawi schemes and from other social cash transfer schemes in different parts of the world indicates that the impact of cash transfers on the livelihood and well-being of poor households is immediate and significant (…) External evaluations of both the Zambia and the Malawi pilot social cash transfer schemes report significant positive impact with regard to food security, health, shelter and education of the members of the beneficiary households. They also show that the assets of beneficiary households have increased dramatically. This has improved their productive capacity and reduced their vulnerability to shocks. Non-recipient households have benefited because the burden of caring for destitute households has reduced and the high economic multiplier effect of cash transfers has strengthened the local economy". (Schubert paper)

- "We live in a world where cash transfers to the poorest are a cornerstone of social programmes outside of Africa, notably in Europe and the Americas, both north and south. The reason they have proved so popular is due to their demonstrable good value, not only in fulfilling the state's duty to reduce poverty, but in stimulating economic growth in often depressed pockets of the economies, creating jobs and more income and hence ultimately improving tax collection." (Pearson et al paper)

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[2]Article 25 "Everyone has a right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care, and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance."

[3] In March 2006, this Call for Action, agreed by 13 countries and supported by the African Union, urges the inclusion of costed social transfer plans in national budgets and policies within three years.

[4] See Grosch et al paper

This reflects conceptual advances: social protection is thus no longer only seen to be about helping people to solve their short term problems. It has medium and long term implications, such as enabling the poor to become productive and to contribute to growth that is pro-poor. Social protection can help to ease the process of rapid economic growth, facilitating population movements and urbanisation. Evidence was also presented on the impact of social protection on social capital (Box 5).

Potential synergy between social protection and smallholder policies, which is of particular relevance to the Ugandan context, was also highlighted. This can arise where, for example, social protection interventions also have beneficial effects on agricultural production. Various instruments can alleviate liquidity constraints for smallholders, create demand for farm products, and create multiplier effects throughout the local economy. Social transfers can improve the family's food security and nutritional status, thus improving labour availability and productivity at farm level. In a pilot cash transfer programme in Zambia, participants were thus reported to have invested almost 30% of the cash received on purchasing seed for planting and goats for breeding.

"While local sourcing of food can generate demand for local production, cash transfers are likely to have more positive secondary and multiplier effects than food aid, because cash is spent on purchasing goods and services which in turn creates employment and income for the providers of these goods and services. These multipliers apply equally to transfers given to economically inactive groups (e.g. social pensions or child support grants) as to transfers given to small farmers."

(Sabates-Wheeler et al paper) (Box 5A) Conversely, effective investments in agricultural development reduce budgetary requirements for social protection programmes and/or, by promoting growth, increase resources available over time for financing social protection. Thus, as the donor group pointed out in their statement at the end of the conference,

"Social protection is increasingly recognised as being an integral component of public spending, helping other forms of spending achieve their objectives."

Box 5A : Social protection and building social Capital for the poorest

- In Nsamba (Tanzania), "the impact of social transfer goes far beyond improvement of livelihoods. Social transfers to children enhance their status as citizens and the material support in the form of cash transfers and loan/savings makes significant contributions to psychosocial well-being". (Madoerin paper)
- In Kenya, "there were many important features of life that were said to have improved such as health, poverty, food security, hope, and feeling of self-worth. The participatory process that enhanced involvement of the communities in developing specific activities for the support of vulnerable orphans made the communities to become "OVC competent". (Mwasiaji et al)
- In Mexico, the CCT (Conditional Cash Transfer) programme resulted in communities pressuring teachers to reduce their absenteeism; In Kenya, CCT programme communities have the right to suspend conditionalities if teachers abuse children; In Brazil, after expansion of the CCT programme, voter turnout among the poor was higher than before. (Grosh et al paper)

Box 5B: Synergy or not? The example of a school feeding initiative

"Take the example of school feeding schemes. School feeding transfers food to the poor, encourages investment in human capital through education (building resilience), and to the extent that the transfer is stable and durable, provides an insurance function against consumption shocks. It also provides a kind of 'old age insurance' for parents, in the sense that there is evidence that families that have at least one child who has completed primary school are much less prone to food insecurity. (…) if the necessary food commodities are purchased locally, school feeding schemes provide market outlets and production incentives to smallholders in the area. There are, however, also potential conflicts (…) local sourcing of food might be preferable in theory, but too expensive and cost-inefficient in practice" (Sabates-Wheeler et al paper)

Is the evidence, however, unqualified? Several notes of caution were made:

- By itself social assistance will not solve the problems that wider development, poverty reduction, or economic growth should be solving. Thus, "'Social assistance PLUS' is a very important message" (Shepherd paper)
- In their emerging case study on NUSAF, Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey highlighted the danger of social protection initiatives adopting a symptomatic and 'residualist' approach, at the expense of addressing structural, relational poverty causes, and the politics of 'adverse incorporation' . This then puts responsibility for poverty reduction onto local responses (and non-state-driven mechanisms), often by those least able to help themselves, leading to increased social tensions within communities and to little progress in 'responsabilising' the state. Similar sentiments were echoed in the Civil Society statement issued at the conclusion of the Conference: "(…) we, together with other participants cautioned about the danger of looking at, and promoting social protection approaches that are largely remedial and symptomatic in nature and instead advocate for those that focus on the underlying causes and drivers of the undesirable situations to which social protection programmes are meant to respond."
- This point illustrates the political consideration, with social protection fostering (or not) a 'social compact' between state and citizens. As Yablonski also pointed out: "Social protection is at risk of only becoming instrumental to growth. Social protection as a right, with an end objective of protecting against vulnerability can be overlooked, and the push for productivity has the potential to impact on the time horizon expected for returns from social protection interventions."
- Finally, it was observed that there is much 'flag planting' by donors and NGOs on pilot projects that deliver social assistance to a few thousand people, creating temporary islands of access to internationally financed social welfare. Much less research has been invested in cash transfer programmes that are operated and financed by national governments without donor support (Devereux and White paper)

But, can countries afford to do nothing? A paper presented by Grosh et al put emphasis on the cost of malnutrition: this can amount to 1-3% of GDP, it locks affected children into a cycle of impaired cognitive development and physical growth, lower productivity, less education, lower earnings and higher health care needs. Where malnutrition is high, it locks the whole country into poverty for another generation at least, and, even where malnutrition lessens, there are often parallel issues of school attainment, and social inclusion *(Grosh et al paper and Box 6).*

Box 6: Can African Countries afford not to have social security?

"We know that social security is declared as a human right and accepted as an international labour standard. We know from world-wide experience, both historic and current, that social security is a powerful tool not only to alleviate poverty but also to prevent poverty and reduce inequality. We know social security generates growth. Social security transfers serve as cash injections to local economies and have a positive impact on their development. The guaranteed basic social security allows very poor men and women undertaking economic activities they would not undertake without such guarantee (…) We know social security interventions enhance peace, stability and social cohesion by preventing and alleviating poverty and by making the outcomes of economic forces more equitable. Thus we know ensuring access of all in need to basic social security provisions is a human right and a social, economic and political necessity for any country wishing to develop." (ILO paper)

4. Culture and history provide important foundation stones

Another commonly advanced argument in favour of social protection measures is linked to the challenges experienced by community solidarity mechanisms. Thus, the Kenya cash transfer programme for vulnerable children "stemmed from the realisation that some of the elements of social protection in Kenyan society, especially family and communal mechanisms, were breaking down in the face of the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic" (Pearson paper). Further, although 'horizontal' support networks (among the poor) remain widespread, their ability to aid is weakest in times of covariate crisis, e.g. drought *(Adams, quoted in Shepherd).*

However several presentations suggested a somewhat different conclusion: in Ghana for instance, an interest in micro-finance (see below) reflects the fact that "there are numerous funeral societies and other informal groups that provide insurance to their members. Private, both commercial and non-profit, initiatives are therefore essential mechanisms to support communities, households and individuals, in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome vulnerability' and hence to provide social protection to the people…" (Arun & Steiner paper) In the same country, the very poor have long had to rely on the extended family, religious and community mechanisms for help: "These systems continue to play significant roles in social protection" *(Sultan paper).*

In Uganda, 21% of households look after an orphan without public support. The Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU), in its paper titled 'Social protection is centuries old!" shared results from research in 3 areas of Uganda to investigate how the poorest survive, in the local cultural and value context. This inquiry was based upon an assumption that social protection initiatives might (i) borrow much from elsewhere; (ii) neglect the cultural context and (iii) fail to build on existing indigenous protection mechanisms that could be strengthened.

This research established that, in spite of the disappearance of some informal solidarity mechanisms, values survive and traditional social protection mechanisms often continue to provide a persistent spirit of sharing and collective responsibility, the assurance of absolute minimum requirements for the poorest, ensured individual recognition, and sense of security stemming from being known and accepted (although this can also result in dependency creating and master-servant relationships, and in exclusion, where mechanisms become more money driven).

"If these today appear insufficient to address all the economic and social challenges that the very poor face, they can nevertheless (at least at times and for a time), turn to the opportunities such mechanisms offer, or at least invoke the values of solidarity that have (and do still) inform them, for support".
(De Coninck & Drani paper, CCFU)

In another submission, on "The impact of the AIDS epidemic on the families and households of the oldest people in rural Uganda", Seeley et al note that

"Higher socioeconomic status, large family size and reciprocal relationships with kin and neighbours were particularly important in shielding the elderly from the negative effects of AIDS-related deaths among their children; elders without these factors fared particularly badly."

The authors therefore suggest that the best way to extend the reach of social protection may be by improving general public services (and also) it is important that respect for age and experience is sustained so that the oldest people in do not feel discarded by family and society. That is as important as meeting their practical social protection needs." Can synergy then be built between formal and informal social protection mechanisms?

"In Zambia, Schubert (2004) finds that cash transfers enabled participants to engage in local rotating savings clubs, known as 'Chilimba', by forming groups and paying a portion of their cash transfers into the fund each month. In Ethiopia, the Productive Safety Net Programme has fostered the regeneration of a rotating savings scheme known as 'ikub' (…) used to purchase livestock and agricultural inputs (Guenther, 2007). So it seems plausible that cash transfers that increase income in poor households may rejuvenate informal social protection mechanisms, rather than displacing them." it seems plausible that cash transfers that increase income in poor households may rejuvenate informal social protection mechanisms, rather than displacing them." *(Sabates-Wheeler et al)*

Hence a plea that "informal social protection by communities, NGOs and Faith-based organisations that relate to community needs in a holistic way must be revitalized and strengthened immediately" *(Enamu paper)* and the observation that "Some mechanisms have indeed shown resilience, adaptability and a degree of inclusiveness that can provide opportunities for future growth."
(De Coninck & Drani paper, see also Box 7)

Box 7: Linking 'traditional' and contemporary' social protection in Uganda

"Social protection initiatives could usefully take Uganda's cultural context into account. Social protection policy could build on cultural values, practices and systems associated with the tradition of social protection. The recent restoration of the kingdoms and other cultural institutions in Uganda offers a favourable context for some of these practices to be revived in a way that responds to current challenges (…) Thus, the clan often provides a potentially effective system through which common values and principles of solidarity can be reinforced, such as with regard to collective initiatives for food security, support to the very vulnerable, and education and responsibility for children / orphans". The paper also indicates that cultural leaders in some areas still derive legitimacy – especially in domains relevant to social protection – that point towards a need to include them in policy implementation. "They often provide a recognised source of information and can act as a point of information dissemination. They also frequently retain responsibility, for instance, to mobilise collective action geared towards addressing critical concerns of the very poor."
One could, for example, consider

- Revitalising and capitalising on the community spirit of collective responsibility for food security, orphan care, protection of assets, youth responsibility towards the elderly.
- Recognising and empowering traditional institutions (e.g. a seat on local councils for kingdom and chiefdom representatives) to protect the very poor and provide relevant information
- Involving clans in food security, and cash transfer scheme management (CCFU paper)

5. Challenging the resistance to social protection (1): it is affordable

If social protection initiatives make sense and can fit with the cultural context, why has there not been more progress than what we see today, including in Uganda?

Three main objections are regularly advanced:
(i) social protection schemes are unaffordable in poor countries; (ii) they promote dependency and (iii) they are difficult to implement . Evidence was produced at the Conference on all three issues.

With regard to costs, conference participants acknowledged that it is widely thought that African countries simply cannot afford to give cash to the poorest members of society. As Shepherd points out, "governments recognise that social assistance involves long term financial commitments, which must be substantially tax based, and are worried that they will not be able to sustain the costs over the long term. Donors, keen to see social assistance measures in place, have not been able to offer convincing enough financial commitments to persuade governments to take on the risks in some cases".

Much evidence was however presented to the effect that basic social protection packages could be afforded, even in low income countries. Thus, the paper presented by the ILO shows that countries in Africa can have social security systems that provide a basic package. It presents results from a recent study on costs of a basic package for low income countries, including selected countries in Africa, consisting of a universal pension (of US$ 0.5 per day), a disability benefit of US$0.5 per day, and universal child benefit (of US$0.25 per day), universal access to basic health care, and (3) basic social assistance providing 100 day employment guarantee to 10% poorest household heads in the working age.

Taken together, these would meet the most basic needs of the population. In all of the African countries considered, the initial annual cost is projected to be in the range of 4.3 to 10.6 per cent of GDP by 2010 (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Senegal and Tanzania). The cost of an essential health care constitutes in most of these countries the largest cost component in the package. The non-heath, cash benefit component would cost between three and up to over 6% of GDP. Another ILO study, conducted in Zambia, analysed the cost of a similar package of cash benefits (however with a child benefit restricted only to the first child and thus less costly) and showed that it would cost in the longer run not more than 1.5% of GDP (excluding administration costs). A similar exercise for Tanzania costed the same package at 1.8% of GDP. In both cases, costs at start-up would be in a range of 3-4% of GDP, as it was assumed entitlements to child benefit would less restrictive at the beginning.

For a cash transfer programme, the proportion of GDP and government expenditure if a country implemented a programme providing the equivalent of $15 per month per household to the poorest 10% of all people would represent for Kenya 0.5% of GDP and 1.7% of the government yearly expenditure (using 2004 figures). For Tanzania, the figures would be 0.7% and 3.1% The amounts required as a proportion of the overall economy or government expenditure are therefore “smaller than one might have guessed”. (Pearson paper) In relation to public expenditure, the LEAP in Ghana, a cash transfer programme, with $8 to $ 15 per month for 160,000 households will cost $ 4.2 million p.a. or 0.1-0.2 % of government expenditure.

“It is notable here that the cash transfer elements, which are generally more controversial than basic services, are substantially cheaper than basic services, which states and donors have already committed themselves to finance. Looking at revenue projections for this period, they show that international aid for financing will be needed in poor countries in the medium term but by the mid 2020s, the need for external financing will have decreased substantially.”*(Hobson paper)*

Thus, estimates show that extending a minimum national package (child benefit, old age allowance and disability grant) to all low-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa would cost 3% of the $25billion increase in aid to Africa agreed at the G8 in 2005.

[5] *In the context of Uganda, obstacles were listed as elite attitudes, predominant economic and political paradigm, and limited capacity (Lwanga-Ntale paper)*

Box 8: Financing Social protection in Uganda

Financing social protection was highlighted as a specific challenge in the Ugandan context (Beekunda paper). The following provides pointers and relevant remarks:

- Financing mix: "The central issue is to set in place an effective and sustainable financing mix for social protection institutions and policies. There are many sources of financing for social protection, including aid from international donors, revenues of national governments, private, community, and NGO financing, and household saving and out of pocket expenditures. The main issue is the evolution of the financing mix, rather than 'new money'. While growth can help generate resources to raise these expenditures, the options in the absence of sustained growth involve improving the efficiency of tax collection and shifting resources from less effective programme - and external finance might be essential, especially for the start-up funds needed. (Barrientos paper)
- A sequential approach: "Even if a basic social protection package cannot be implemented at once, a sequential approach can generate immediate benefits (…) A national forward-looking social protection strategy can help to sequence the implementation of various social programmes and policy instruments and ensure that these are integrated in broader development frameworks". (ILO paper)
- Rationalisation and re-assessment: "In most African countries there is potential to increase the available resource envelope. Sub-Saharan African countries increased on average domestic revenue from 15% to 19% of GDP between 1997 and 2006, mainly through improved effectiveness in tax collection. It is obvious that much more can be done". This could include (i) Rationalising existing social programmes by making them less costly and/or more effective in achieving poverty reduction objectives (such as avoiding overlap and waste; decreasing administration costs in existing contributory pension programmes, improving design and overall governance); and (2) reassessing all existing government spending programmes: to verify if the existing spending programmes are serving broader policy objectives of decreased poverty and inequality and eventually phasing out some of them to make room for the priority ones and ensuring that the tax systems working in favour of social policy goals of less poverty and inequality." (ILO Paper)
- Donor support is likely to remain essential. In their message at the conclusion of the Conference, donor representatives present noted their willingness to help Government in different ways, including identifying the best interventions for the challenges Uganda faces over the coming years, building support for social protection among the policy community and the public. They also noted: "Uganda has the opportunity to try approaches to social protection, including cash transfers in line with similar developments in many other African countries. We are ready to support the Government of Uganda in this task."

Such expenditure may reduce the need for aid expenditure on humanitarian assistance, while providing an estimated poverty reduction impact of 40% within less than a decade (Barrett paper). Indeed, as the ILO paper points out, it is an investment: in the long run the net fiscal costs of providing a basic set of social security benefits may even become zero or negative: this is because the costs may quickly be offset by positive economic (and fiscal) returns, enhanced productivity by a better educated, healthier and better nourished workforce. And, as pointed out above, the opportunity costs would be higher (weaker labour force, unhealthy children, social tension, high mortality, human suffering etc).

Nevertheless, the projections show that fully introducing a complete package of basic social security benefits requires a level of resources that is higher than current spending in the majority of low-income countries (that rarely spend more than 3% of GDP on health care and rarely more than 1% of GDP on non-health social security measures). As a discussion group at the Conference pointed out, although 1.5-2% of GDP sounds small, it can be very difficult to free up. A considerable joint domestic and international effort is therefore needed to invest in basic social protection. Several papers outlined ways in which the burden of financing might be tackled, with relevance to the Ugandan context (Box 8) "All these steps have started to be taken in a number of low-income countries in Africa and elsewhere (recent developments in countries like Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique or Nepal are just a few examples) and there are signs that the process will accelerate in the nearest future." (ILO paper)

6. Challenging the resistance (2): Social protection does not create dependency

Several presentations highlighted the challenges posed by the prevailing belief that "free hand-outs foster dependency": this was specifically mentioned in Ghana as an obstacle in launching LEAP, a social grant targeted at the extreme poor, seen as "free cash for the poor" by many (Sultan et al paper); in Rwanda,

"There is considerable resistance to the appropriateness and effectiveness of regular cash transfers to individual households – within government and civil society".*(Yablonski paper)*

Surender et al similarly describe how in South Africa, there is growing media and political concern that the existing social grant system might create a culture of 'dependency and entitlement' and act as a disincentive to the unemployed in seeking work. In Sierra Leone too, Holmes and Jackson describe:

"The arguments for cash transfers may seem convincing, but there are some fundamental blockages around their political acceptability. This can be largely attributed to the associated fear of creating dependency arising from years of humanitarian aid in the country".

To this fear can be added another one: how will the beneficiaries use the 'hand-outs'? In Kenya, for instance, Pearson shows that one of the constraints in starting a cash transfer programme were

"doubts expressed by several members of the national OVC national action plan steering committee that poor people could be trusted to make good use of cash handed to them".

In Uganda, Lwanga-Ntale summarises these fears:

"Hitherto concerns about adopting a comprehensive Social Protection policy and strategy for Uganda have centred more on the financial issues of affordability; the fear that Social Protection would divert scarce resources from "the productive sectors"; worries about possible "leakages" during implementation; and apprehensions about creating dependency or even a sense of (unprincipled and unsustainable) entitlement among the poor".

Such fears partly explain the popularity of 'conditional cash transfers' in many countries when used to justify social protection expenditures to local elites and middle classes. (Box 9)

"This also explains the reluctance of many major donors and national governments to embrace a rights-based approach to social protection."*(Sabates-Wheeler paper)*

Given these misgivings, what evidence was made available at the Conference? Shepherd notes that, while it is also important to acknowledge that there can be real issues (grants may be spent on alcohol; beneficiaries may reduce their participation in the labour market), such fears are often reflecting a Western context and they are often advanced with little or no evidence to back them. There are indeed "prima facie arguments that dependence is unlikely in developing countries".

Box 9: Conditionalities and managing "Social Protection creates dependency" fears

- In Rwanda, "consultations repeatedly stressed the importance of community and in-kind transfers, accompaniment of recipients, and short time horizons for transfers to ensure that families made productive investments (…) The design included elements to promote self-reliance among those receiving cash transfers by providing skills development, savings schemes and other support for income-generating activities". (Yablonski paper)
- In Sierra Leone, "Whilst there is no evidence that aid has created dependency or made people lazy, it is a real factor driving policy and programme objectives, not only in the case of cash. With this is mind, many stakeholders argue for strict targeting criteria and explicitly linking cash transfers to processes of growth." (Holmes and Jackson paper)
- In Ethiopia, "the government insisted on participation in public works for people able to work, and the government is also determined that programme participants will 'graduate' from the PSNP after no longer than five years. Both conditions are intended to prevent dependency." (Sabates-Wheeler et al)

Shepherd further points out that there are several reasons why generalised dependency is unlikely: the amounts provided to beneficiaries are usually too small to depend on and the majority of poor people work in the informal sector and do not pay income tax (and will therefore not hesitate to enter taxable employment). If people work less, there may also be good reasons for that, and good consequences "which we should explore. There are clearly groups of people who will be dependent – the ultra poor. (…) not everyone will be able to 'graduate'. (…) Their dependence on the state may reduce their dependence on family, and displace some private transfers, but further investigation suggests that these will be generally well used within wider kin networks" (…) Social assistance can make it more possible for poor and vulnerable people to participate in the labour market, it helps improve social networks, and it supports savings, human capital development, investment and enterprise: "Clever scheme designs can facilitate that". In another conference paper, Surender et al empirically explores the relationship between grant receipt and paid employment in South Africa and find that both those in and out of work placed a high value on paid employment and all groups agreed that work promotes dignity. Joblessness had not become 'normalised' and all the unemployed groups were extremely motivated to get work, including women, 'lone mothers' and 'disability' claimants. Presentations also tackled the issue of 'graduation' and the need to clearly articulate when exit is possible for the poorest (see Box 10 A).Providing evidence is crucial, but making sure that the agenda is owned at a national level is even more so. We turn to this presently.

[6] There is also a widespread worry – that informal social protection will be crowded out, and society would become dependent on formal social protection, an unnecessary tax burden given the vitality of the informal. (Shepherd)

Box 10A: The need for clear graduation criteria

Hobson explains, in his discussion of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme, that "graduation from the PSNP is when a household can afford to meet all household members' food requirements, without the resources it receives through the PSNP. This means consideration needs to be given not only to wealth and all the various types of income earned (properly valued when in kind) but also how income is earned, how assets were acquired and how both wealth and income might be affected by shocks and other issues". In other words, any definition of graduation should include "the ability of a household to look after itself on a sustainable basis, be resilient to shocks and provide sufficient access to a healthy diet for all of the members of the household (…) In practice, graduation from PSNP should only take place when:

i. all members of the household, regardless of age, can access sufficient quantity of food;
ii. all members of the household, regardless of age, can access food of a quality that enables a healthy and active life;
iii. households can afford to access sufficient quantity and quality of food without the cash/food it receives through the PSNP"

7. Sustained political support for social protection is vital

A number of papers grappled with the issue of political 'buy-in', reflecting the importance of 'political sustainability', for which a design "concordant with public attitudes about poverty and redistribution, and an established record of transparency, effectiveness and impact" were singled out as necessary *(Grosh et al paper).* Such imperative resonates in Uganda since, as Lwanga-Ntale notes: "the country is awash with policy statements and prescriptions in favour of the poor and marginalised, translating these noble objectives into practice has remained an illusory target".

In their paper, "Building Support to have Targeted Social Protection Interventions for the Poorest", Sultan et al describe how the Ghanaian government moved rapidly from policy and ideas to actually implementing programmes, and scaling them up, whether it is youth employment, health insurance or LEAP. This was possible with a strong government ownership and leadership of these agenda, demonstrated by the fact that in most cases, government designed these initiatives and provided the bulk of the funding for their implementation. This has happened, the authors argue, partly because of demand from citizens for better social services and partly because the government recognised the economic benefits of investments in health, education and other services.

Public 'buy-in', as opposed to 'government buy-in', was singled out as crucial in Swaziland and Lesotho: 'Politicisation' is usually characterised negatively, as interference in policy processes (but…) Lesotho's Old Age Pension and Swaziland's Old Age Grant exemplify the idea of 'positive politicisation'. The popularity of both programmes forced the government to respond positively to opposition campaign pledges to raise the payment level (in Lesotho), and to a public outcry when pension payments were delayed (in Swaziland)" *(Devereux and White paper).*

The same paper highlights two examples where strong government leadership overcame donor hesitations: the input subsidies programme in Malawi (where powerful political momentum behind input subsidies, the positive impacts on agricultural production and government determination, led several donors to reverse their position and to volunteer their support) and The Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia, funded almost entirely by donors, but where the government has exerted strong ownership, ensuring that the PSNP is 'nationalised' rather than 'donor-driven'. The government for instance insisted on immediate implementation at scale, on delivering the PSNP through public structures, and on the provision of labour in exchange for cash rather than 'welfare handouts.'

Many presenters argued that sustaining political buy-in will be an on-going task, depending on an ability to demonstrate that social protection instruments are feasible, effective and efficiently managed. In Kenya, political buy-in for a cash transfer programme thus rested on presenting a feasible case:

"The main arguments in favour was, first, that the state did have the capability to send small amounts of cash on a regular basis to large numbers of people over a wide geographic area; approximately 600,000 retired civil servants receive their pensions via the post office network with over 400 outlets in Kenya. Second, Kenya is a country where citizens pay a considerable sum in taxes".

(Pearson paper; see also Box 10 B)

Box 10B: Lessons from Kenya on Strategic elements to gain and sustain political support.

"The Kenya cash transfer programme for vulnerable children was conceived at the end of 2002. (…) From an allocation of around $800,000 in 2005, over $9 million is budgeted as a contribution from Kenyan taxpayers in the 2008/09 budget year. How could such a programme, innovative for Kenya in its design and ambition, grow so quickly?

"Four key strategic elements required action by the promoters of the programme from inception in 2002 to 2008 and will continue to receive attention as the programme (…) moves into an accelerated expansion phase

- First, stimulating discussion among a wide set of stakeholders on the pros and cons of such a programme with a focus on forcing a political choice to either support or reject in an informed way the scaling-up; the use of information rich media campaigns at the time of the 2002 and the 2007 parliamentary elections were a key trigger for widespread debate in Kenyan society. Actions included furnishing information, calling for meetings, producing information notes and inviting the media and policy makers to observe the pilot programme in action.
- Second, more detailed technical discussion on the costs and impacts of the programme and how this might vary using alternative programme models and ensuring that they are included in designing the evaluation work that would help to answer these questions; the aim here being to ensure that policy makers have all the information they need (…)
- Third, focusing on the capacity to implement a programme design that can be taken to scale; this requires high levels of investments at the front end (…)even when outcomes, in terms of numbers of beneficiaries reached are low at the beginning. This is a required risk (…).
- Four, working intensively at community level on a targeting mechanism that can be replicated across different communities and cultures and that is demonstrably efficient and fair both to central level managers and programme funders, and to communities themselves (…)The borderline group of families who have just failed to qualify, and whose circumstances are usually not all that different from those enrolled, is always an issue that requires sensitivity and community mechanisms where reviews of decisions can take place." *(Pearson et al)*

[7] *"However, publicity and enthusiasm can lead to demands for a faster role out or even for an immediate national coverage before implementation capacities on all levels have been capacitated. This danger may be most virulent in an election year." (Schubert paper)*

Secondly, the consensus was that moving from discretionary NGO grant to statutory right could only be achieved if social protection instruments could be demonstrated to contribute to both growth and equity. Learning from experience, and communicating these experiences, often proved decisive in this respect: in Ghana, for instance,

"learning from other countries, and visiting countries where such programmes work, such as Brazil, has been important to generate new thinking on social protection, help design new programmes, but also to convince people in Ghana of the benefits of cash transfers. The Ministry of Manpower had to launch a strong advocacy campaign to explain to the public that LEAP was not about "free handouts" and it was not money to buy votes, but social security for the chronic poor, especially those who could not work."

(Sultan et al paper) Similarly, in Zambia and Malawi,

"the most powerful tool to generate political support are field visits (exposure to beneficiary households) of high level Government representatives, members of parliament, civil society, donor agencies and journalists." *(Schubert paper).*

In addition, putting in place strong monitoring and evaluation systems from the start is crucial:

"It is only positive results that will convince the public, and the Ministry of Finance to allocate more and more resources for its expansion." (Sultan et al paper) In Kenya, a mini-pilot provided actual ground experience: "By December 2004, a targeting mechanism had been devised for the pilot (…) 500 households were enrolled in each of the three locations and were being provided with KSh. 500 (approximately $6.50) per child per month on a "pre-pilot" basis. That there was now a programme on the ground became a major boost to encouraging political discussion and policy debate on the merits and worth of such a programme." (Pearson paper) The role of NGOs, particularly international NGOs, in the development of social protection policy and programmes appeared deficient to some in this respect: while developments around civil society participation leading up to the Livingstone II meeting were a promising development, "engagement of national civil society and the public more generally has been virtually non-existent" *(Yablonski).*

Third, an ability to demonstrate strong accountability mechanisms was mentioned an important. Thus, Barrett states with regard to Kenya's Hunger Safety Net programme that "suspicions about governance standards have frequently been proven correct and the prestige of cash transfer programmes has often been damaged by the absence or inadequacy of independent quality assurance provisions linked to mechanisms that promote accountability, transparency and appropriate public participation.(..) Therefore, while it is inevitable that such programmes are used as a political resource in any society, it is crucial for the longer term effectiveness and political sustainability of the programme that incidents of abuse and manipulation are detected through a monitoring process and that vulnerable groups are actively supported to hold service providers to account." In this case, the programme included a Rights Component, handled by an international NGO *(see Section 10.3).*

These remarks all appear to have relevance in the Ugandan context and potential action points are reflected in the Kenyan experience (Box 11). But, as Lwanga-Ntale further points out, the challenges are considerable: the Ministry of Finance is still not enlisted, neither are key line ministries, and neither is the public. Opportunities however exist too: the existence of legal and constitutional instruments; and of a plethora of relevant policies mentioned earlier on.

Box 11: Enhancing political support in Uganda: The Right to Social Protection

"The first primary objective for us all must, therefore, be to fully recognise Social Protection as a human right and to do all actions which are necessary to incorporate it into both our conceptualisation and design (…) In other words, the policies and programmes must adhere to the principles of "Universality"; "Indivisibility and interdependence"; "Equality and non-discrimination"; "Participation and inclusion"; "Accountability and rule of law"; and "Availability, adequacy and accessibility".

"Specifically the state has the duty to respect, protect and fulfil the right to social protection. The obligations to respect and protect have immediate effect. The obligation to fulfil (…) can be met progressively according to resources and capabilities. But even here, the state must clearly describe how it intends to achieve this. This transparency of planning and strategy is essential to avoid policy fragmentation and piecemeal initiatives. A time-bound "road-map" could in this instance be developed to guide the process of developing a national social protection policy and strategy.

"Such concern must motivate not only civil society and NGOs, but perhaps even more importantly the political leadership of our countries – men and women who are charged with the responsibility of setting the political priorities for our countries' development and for translating those priorities into actions". *(Justice J. Ogoola - Keynote address)*

In her paper on "Constraints and Opportunities in Developing Sustainable Political Support for Social Protection in Africa", Keene-Mugerwa identified a number of prerequisites for Uganda's progress towards achievement of a comprehensive social protection framework: "The future of sustaining political will requires [the] existence of champions within Government, creating government institutions that are dedicated to social protection (…) stakeholder partnerships as well as assignment of [an] ombudsman to ensure the rights are respected and that duty bearers fulfil their roles (…) Government subscribing to internationally set standards exerts pressure on the state to deliver on its commitments. Coordination within government and civil society is critical since it deters division within the polity and enhances voice. Effective coordination also combats fragmented social protection policies and legislation. Working with technocrats within Government leverages other factors to keep the agenda active. Partnerships, development assistance and private sector all intensify political commitment by bringing together diverse organisations (…) Lastly continuous awareness raising keeps the public involved in the debates. Mobilizing politicians to visit around the country and understand the realities with the people is key to success".

8. Another vital issue: targeting

If political support can at least in part be generated by transparent and effective targeting, which categories of households should social protection interventions focus on, and what are the main social protection needs of the prioritised groups? The importance of the issue was underlined by one of the presenters who argued: "Don't worry too much about impact. The concern should be to just get the cash to the right households in a predictable and reliable manner."*(Schubert paper)*

How can the various groups in need of assistance be 'covered' equitably (so that those who are equal in important respects are treated equally, and those who are poorer are provided with more generous benefits than those who are less poor? (Grosh et al paper) A number of conference papers explored this important area, which was highlighted by Minister Mwesigwa-Rukutana in his opening address to the Round-table that followed the Conference, as of immediate relevance for Uganda (Box 12). It was also highlighted as a challenge by the Acting Director for Social Protection *(Beekunda paper).*

The importance of the discussion was also reflected in the presentation by Gooloba-Mutebi and Hickey, and their contention that NUSAF might have excluded the poorest, given the emphasis on funding pre-determined types of income-generating activities, which the chronically poor lack the capacities to engage in.

Box 12: Targeting choices in Uganda?

"My Ministry [has been able] to develop a proposal on a Cash Transfer Scheme. We identified a number of options [on] which we would base our interventions of Social protection. These include:

1. Vulnerability option targeting the poorest 10%of the poor;
2. Universal Old Age Pension Scheme;
3. Targeted Old Age Pension of Households headed by Older Persons;
4. Targeted Old Age Pension of the Older Persons Living in Poverty;
5. Disability Grant.

Having consulted the Ministry of Finance, we have zeroed on option Number 1 for the start.
The main challenge however will be how to select and target the 10% to benefit from the scheme, given that there are over 7 million chronically poor persons.
(Remarks by Hon. Mwesigwa–Rukutana, Minister of State for Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations)

Several methods can be used to target cash transfers to beneficiaries, including individual assessments (direct assessment of the household or individual, as with means testing or community based targeting (Box 13)) and categorical targeting (e.g. age, gender, social status). Categorical targeting is also sought under self-selection programmes. Here, access may be unrestricted, giving the appearance of not targeting, but the design makes the programme attractive only to the poorest. (Holmes et al paper) South Africa provides a model of a social protection concept based on a multitude of categorical schemes *(see Box 1).*

In many cases, the selection of the 'right method' stemmed from a long piloting process: thus, the objective of Phase I (2007- 2012) of the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme is to design and pilot cost-effective mechanisms for beneficiary targeting, payment delivery and grievance management in four districts. Such piloting will allow for a comparison of the cost-effectiveness of three different types of targeting methodology: a social pension (for all older people aged over a certain age threshold), community-based targeting, and targeting based on 'dependency ratio' (ratio of children, older people and disabled people to overall household size. *(Barrett paper)*

An example of the 'individual assessment' method was provided by the Malawi piloting experience and where a national programme is planned to target 10% of the ultra poor households, estimated at 260,000 (both suffering from ultra-poverty and having no household member able to perform productive work – they are 'labour constrained'). A similar approach is used in Zambia:

"Malawi and Zambia have chosen to concentrate on ultra poor households because these households include the worst off cases of all types of vulnerable people (elderly, disabled, HIV and AIDS affected persons and OVC). This approach is cross-sectoral and inclusive. Both, the Zambia and the Malawi schemes can be considered 'child welfare schemes' because approximately 65% of the beneficiaries are OVC, mostly orphans. They can also be considered as 'HIV and AIDS mitigation schemes' because approximately 70% of the beneficiary households are HIV and AIDS affected. Other types of vulnerable groups benefiting from the scheme are older people (approximately 20% of the members of beneficiary households are 65+) and the disabled. The schemes cover neither all OVC, nor all HIV and AIDS affected households nor all older people, nor all disabled persons in the pilot areas. But because one of the targeting criteria is extreme poverty – the schemes reach the worst off, neediest and most vulnerable persons of all the vulnerable groups listed above". (Box 14) This method was said to be suitable for a low income African country with limited implementation capacity [where] the schemes have to be as simple, straight forward and administratively undemanding as possible. Conditionality, which has to be monitored, is one example of unnecessarily complicating a scheme." *(Schubert paper)*

Box 13: Community-based targeting methods

Although it was pointed out that community involvement in targeting "can expose the process to elite capture, and places costs on those charged with making the ranking – not merely costs of time and effort, but also of potential conflict with any who feel that they have been classified to their disadvantage" (Holmes & Jackson paper), and that community-based grievance mechanisms have been insufficiently resourced or insulated from targeting processes (Barrett paper) communities have been involved in several instances:

- In Kenya, "The borderline group of families who have just failed to qualify, and whose circumstances are usually not all that different from those enrolled, is always an issue that requires sensitivity and community mechanisms where reviews of decisions can take place. By December 2004, a targeting mechanism had been devised for the pilot, using a community driven mechanism with public participation in making the final decision on which households should be enrolled. (…) Within the locations, a committee is formed, they are told what the budget allocation is for the location and hence approximately how many households can be enrolled in the scheme. A survey is carried out to determine which are the ultra poor households, based on a combination of community knowledge and objective criteria such as the quality of building. Extra weight is given to households with no able bodied persons, with disabled children, with foster children and so on. *(Pearson paper)*
- In Rwanda, "Households are identified through the Ubudehe process, a community-centred approach which identifies and prioritises vulnerable households which should be eligible for the different components(…) A new element proposed by the child-centred model is to require children's representatives in the Ubudehe committees to ensure that children's perspectives are heard in the targeting and monitoring of the programme, based on SCUK's experience of working with children's forums and child protection committees. *(Yablonski paper)*
- In Malawi, The targeting process will involve a multi-stage participatory approach: (i) Community Social Protection Committees (CSPCs) at village cluster level list, visit and interview all households that seem to meet the targeting criteria. They then rank all households that have no labour or have a dependency ratio of more than 3 according to degree of need. (ii) The CSPCs present the households selected and the ranking to a community meeting in order to ensure that no households meeting the criteria are left out, that ineligible households are deleted from the list, and that a consensus on the appropriate ranking is achieved. This methodology has shown to be effective in identifying ultra poor labour constrained households. (iii) . A Social Protection Sub-Committee (SPSC) at district level (sub-committee of the District Executive Committee) assisted by extension workers, checks if the targeting process has been fair and transparent and if the results are correct. The SPSC then approves the 10% neediest households.
 (Schubert paper)

While a case was made that the household should be targeted, rather than the individual, even to effectively reach children, the discussion on conditionalities often contrasted the situation in Latin America (where conditions are used extensively, for instance to encourage the very poor to send their children to school). This, it was felt, might rarely work in the low-income African countries, because of supply side obstacles. Further, conditionality can place additional costs on the poor.

Box 14: Cash transfers: conditions, process and size of benefits

Cash transfer programmes typically transfer an amount equivalent to about 5%-20% or less of the poverty line in Kenya, RSA, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi or about 10%-40% of the per capita consumption of these ultra poor households (UNICEF West and Central Africa paper)

- In the Zambia pilot, the monthly transfers for households amount to USD 7.5 – 10, based on the average price of a 50-kg bag of maize It is assumed that beneficiaries will spend the money wisely and that the heads of the beneficiary households (most of them are elderly women) spend most of the transfer on orphans and other vulnerable children living in their households. Evaluation results indicate that both assumptions are realistic. (Schubert paper)
- In Kenya, the cash transfer programme for vulnerable children (Phase 2 pilot) provides a flat rate of Ksh 1,500 per household whatever number of eligible children (it turns out that, on average, beneficiary households have just over three children). It was a pragmatic choice leading to a simpler programme to administer, than one with a variable scale depending on numbers of eligible children (Pearson paper)
- Malawi pilot: The monthly cash transfers vary according to household size:1 person household MK 600 (USD 4), 2 person household MK 1,000 (USD 7), 3 person household MK 1,400 (USD 10), 4 and more persons MK 1,800 (USD 13). For children enrolled in primary school a bonus of MK 2007 is added, for children in secondary school a bonus of MK 400. This bonus is meant to encourage school enrolment and attendance, and to discourage child labour and premature drop-outs. On average, the transfers amount to MK 2,000 (USD 14) per household per month. This amount is sufficient to fill the gap of MK 1,343 between the ultra poverty line of MK 6,447 per month for a 5.8 person household and the average monthly expenditure of MK 5,103 of households in the lowest income quintile. The costs per household per year are USD 168 for the transfers, plus USD 30 for operational costs. (Schubert paper)

The drawbacks of a “10% poorest approach” were also highlighted, starting with the observation that it may create divisiveness and departs from a rights/entitlement approach (Box 15): in contrast to a more ‘discretionary’ approach, other experiences are based on an implicit ‘social contract’ between governments and citizens.

“Government-run social pension schemes are a prime example. In southern Africa, social pensions are operational in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland (…) they represent a recognition by society as a whole that older people need and deserve support, and this finds expression in the delivery of regular and predictable ‘old age grants’. Once underpinned by legislation, this rapidly assumes the status of a legally enforceable ‘citizenship right’. For this reason, all five national social pension schemes in southern Africa are fully funded out of domestic fiscal resources –they constitute an inter-generational transfer from younger to older citizens – and they are politically impossible to reverse once introduced”

(Devereux & White paper).

It was further observed that, "targeting categories of people through social status differences (e.g. based on gender, age, etc.) is unhelpful in addressing the root causes of social exclusion and discrimination in Sierra Leone because poverty and vulnerability also lie in unequal social relationships amid ruling and dependent lineages" *(Holmes, Jackson paper).*

Given these caveats, another relevant observation is made by Sabates et al: "social protection programming should be designed and targeted according to different categories of households and the different sources of risk that they face. For instance, destitute people who are unable to work or farm will not benefit from public works or input subsidies, while smallholders who face occasional livelihood shocks could benefit from social insurance or private insurance mechanisms such as weather-indexed crop insurance or price hedging through commodity futures markets".

Box 15: "We are All Poor Here" – targeting and social divisiveness

"Examining inter-decile per capita consumption differences for Malawi, Zambia and Ethiopia (where) the sentiment 'we are all poor here' accurately reflects the very small differences in personal and family circumstances separating everyone falling within the bottom 50-60% of per capita consumption.

"Existing pilot cash transfers (…)are unable to achieve their destitution reduction goals without inevitably creating some 'leapfrogging' by recipients above the levels of per capita consumption of non-recipients in adjacent income deciles. Social divisiveness is explained by small economic difference. The findings place some doubt on the merits of the 10% rule that has been used to establish cut-off points in pilot cash transfers in Zambia and Malawi (and most recently Kenya).

"Categorical targeting (child support grants, old age pensions) avoids to a considerable degree the social divisiveness (as well as the administrative intricacy) attendant on trying to separate out an especially deserving sub-set of the poor from amongst the larger proportion of poor people that are little differentiated from each other (…). Categorical targeting has the considerable added advantage of establishing a right to the social transfer for all those who meet the simple criterion that defines the category (such as the age threshold in the case of social pensions). Moreover, in the case of social pensions, social invidiousness does not occur because all citizens understand that if and when they reach the age threshold, they, too, will be entitled to the benefit". *(Ellis paper)*

Ultimately, targeting methods will thus have to be informed by the objective sought. Thus, cash transfer schemes that target the poorest 10% in Zambian and Malawian rural communities report only marginal effects on agriculture, because people in this decile rarely engage in agricultural production, although because "they are (i) easily identifiable as extremely poor, and (ii) dependent on others for support, targeting this group is usually uncontroversial or even popular, since it alleviates a heavy burden of care from the community" *(Sabates et al).*

Similarly, the authors point out that social protection initiatives "have intended and unintended gender implications that are often ambiguous. There is less disagreement on the benefits of targeting women with transfers rather than men (…given women's) higher propensity to allocate incremental food or cash to their families, especially their children (such as when old age pensions in South Africa given to grandmothers had disproportionately benefited girls under their care).

On the other hand, if the objective of a programme is to raise household productivity and incomes, the case for targeting individuals who own and work with productive assets is stronger. For instance, if women have no access to land and men are responsible for ploughing, a programme that transfers draught oxen for ploughing to farmers might be more logically targeted at men than women, in order to maximise synergies between social protection and agricultural productivity."

Many conditional and unconditional cash transfer initiatives target poor families in order to benefit their children. Nevertheless there are very few experiences where children are targeted directly as recipients of cash transfer and subjects of microfinance operations. Different authors stress that micro-finance institutions should retain their integrity as financial institutions, regardless of any special situation.
With this in mind the question of orphans as a target group that could benefit from microfinance services becomes a very difficult and tricky question (see box 16). *(Madoerin paper)*

Box 16: Targeting children as active participants

HUMULIZA, an organization based in Nshamba village in Tanzania, started in 2000 to introduce cash transfer to children as 'payment' for the support they give to elderly people in the community. One year later the orphan's organisation, VSI, started to operate a 'children's bank' where children were able to get small loans. Based on evidence of the VSI-experience, the paper proposes that children should be considered as direct target group and beneficiaries of measures of social transfer which have to be adapted to their special conditions. Although much training and monitoring is needed, the paper also shows that the impact of social transfer on children goes far beyond improved livelihoods. Social transfers to children enhance their status as citizens and material support in the form of cash transfers and loan/savings makes significant contributions to psychosocial well-being. "As an assumption it can be postulated that cash transfer and loans/savings to children deploy their full impact only if they are embedded in a child directed organisational framework". (Madoerin paper)

What are the implications of this discussion in the Uganda context? Several recommendations were made by presenters. In their study on the implications of social protection on "the impact of the AIDS epidemic on the families and households of the oldest people in rural Uganda", Seeley et al remark:

"The best way to extend the reach of social protection may be by improving general public services not specifically targeted at older people. Improvements in the quality of free primary education, for example, provide a good example. Not only could better education improve the level of support for elderly people by freeing parental resources allocated to education, but it could also reduce the cost to parents of fostering children with the rural elderly since it would not mean having to sacrifice the quality of education. Improving public health systems is critical and would provide direct as well as indirect benefits for older people, as time and money is saved in the search for good care. Improved roads, and greater access to mobile telephones, can help older people keep in contact with relatives and summon help when needed."

To the contrary, a case was made to target children specifically, especially to break the inter-generational transmission of poverty (see also Box 18 in next section). Enemu agrees that "there is an intricate link between child participation and social protection. Rather than just being seen as beneficiaries, children should effectively participate in community-delivered social protection". While Ugandan children constitute the majority of the very poor, "universal programmes do not necessarily benefit all vulnerable children. UPE, USE and other such universal schemes must give special attention and where applicable provide affirmative action for vulnerable children." This must take into account intra-household dynamics, which often exclude children. Other lacunae in social protection for children in Uganda include child health and nutrition, child protection, psycho-social support and disaster management, which all need coordinated attention, including informal social protection by communities, NGOs and Faith-based organisations that relate to community needs in a holistic way, a national therapeutic feeding programme for critically malnourished children and investment in pre-primary education, among others. (Enamu paper)

9. What combination of instruments?

There is an increasing recognition that a combination of social protection measures, are necessary to make a real difference to the lives of the very poor. A number of conference submissions therefore centred on what is the right 'mix' to address the vulnerabilities poor people face in particular contexts.

9.1. A number of possible instruments exist

The conference first provided an opportunity to recognise the variety and range of possible social protection instruments: price subsidies, fee waivers for essential services, input subsidies, asset transfers (Box 17), employment guarantee schemes, contributory insurance schemes, school feeding, and transformative interventions such as protection of labour rights. Even so far as cash transfers are concerned, we have seen that these may be conditional or not, targeted or not. Further, while cash transfers to households and/or individuals were said to provide one of the most effective social protection instruments in Southern Africa, some countries experiment with pooled cash transfers to local communities. (Yablonski paper, Kenya CCCT paper) The De Coninck & Drani paper also mentioned a number of surviving informal solidarity mechanisms at family, clan and community levels. One paper focused on Mutual Health Organisations (MHO) or Community-based Health Insurance (CBHI) schemes, which are non-for-profit schemes mainly run by cooperatives, churches or community self-help groups and enjoy a growing popularity in West and Central Africa, currently covering about 2 million people:

"In many communities these schemes have assumed an important role not only in improving access to health services, but also in achieving participation of the respective communities in the health care development process". *(Hörmansdörfer & Rompel paper)*

One innovation of note amongst the panoply of social protection instruments discussed at the conference was the use of micro-insurance for the very poor, since "(1) micro-insurance schemes may achieve redistribution through internal cross-subsidies or by channelling public subsidies to their members, (2) micro-insurance schemes may have a significant socio-economic impact on members and non-members, and (3) micro-insurance schemes can play a role in the empowerment and participation of their members Nevertheless, only 2.7% of the poor population in Asia was covered by micro-insurance; and the coverage of the poor in Africa and Latin America was 0.3% and 7.8%, respectively. (…) we believe that the potential benefits of micro-insurance in extending social protection are best reaped when governments include them in national social protection strategies, linking them to other social protection components to create a progressively more coherent, efficient and equitable system." *(Arun & Steiner paper)*

Box 17: Asset transfers:advantages and risks

(…) "Asset accumulation through targeted asset transfer programmes can enhance the productive capacity of farmers who are otherwise constrained from engaging in market-based initiatives. Indeed, the popularity of asset transfers seems to be rising, perhaps because they are seen as providing more 'productive' support than 'welfarist' transfers. But some concerns have also been raised. One question is whether giving assets to poor people is more effective than transferring the cash equivalent and allowing recipients to make their own spending choices. A second concern is that transferring large numbers of (the same) assets risks 'flooding' local economies, which could undermine local markets for these assets and/or their products. (…) The PSNP in Ethiopia is innovative in that it combines cash or food transfers over an extended period of time with 'livelihood packages' that include assets needed to generate sustainable and resilient livelihoods for vulnerable households. Other programmes such as LEAP in Ghana are grounded on similar principles". *(Sabates-Wheeler et al)*

9.2. The need for a mix of Social Protection instruments

This need for coherence was repeatedly stressed, given the frequently multidimensional nature of deprivation and the diversity of pathways out of poverty. This is illustrated in cases where specialised social welfare services are needed for vulnerable children (Box 18). Interventions thus need to reach different categories of needy households, with varying needs. This was also illustrated in the case of the Zambia and Malawi pilots where 2 main types of needy households were identified: first, very poor households that are not labour-constrained and that need temporary transfers in order to meet their immediate basic needs (food first). In addition they require employment opportunities or self-employment promotion that result in generating sustainable incomes. Secondly, ultra-poor households that are labour constrained and that require regular and reliable social transfers which will enable them to meet their basic needs and to invest in human capital (the health and education of their children). In addition, it was concluded that a social cash transfer scheme that targets the latter should not be implemented in isolation, but be complemented by schemes that target the ultra poor households which are not labour constrained *(Schubert paper).*

Box 18: Reaching the most vulnerable children: the need for complementary approaches

An exclusive focus on cash transfers can 'crowd out' social welfare services, and may not reach the poorest. In the case of children, it may even in itself have adverse effects (taking children into care for financial gain), where affordable, universal approaches may be cheaper and less prone to corruption. A complementary approach (transfers and social welfare) makes sense in the case of especially vulnerable children and their diversity (e.g. children who are abused, those without parental care). (Hodges paper) A UNICEF submission for West and Central Africa thus proposes a mix of 5 interventions:

1. Reform of the legal system to provide protection to women and vulnerable children
2. Targeted cash transfers to combat child poverty (to ultra poor families with children)
3. Early childhood care and development (pre-school programmes targeted at the most vulnerable, e.g. community-based child care centres).
4. Social welfare and protective services to the most vulnerable children e.g. support to community-based orphan care
5. Second chance education and life skills for adolescents (UNICEF paper)

Such an approach is being developed in Rwanda, reflecting the Government's recognition of the multiple dimensions of children's vulnerability in Rwanda. The emerging integrated child-focused social protection model thus includes three elements:

1. Community-based child care: Community-based childcare centres serve both social protection and child protection objectives. They can serve the developmental needs of children while enabling caregivers (particularly women) to allocate more time to income-generating activities. They also free up older children from childcare responsibilities, allowing more time for schooling. They address serious problems of public works programmes —their difficulty in reaching households with high dependency ratios and in creating assets that are productive and pro-poor.
2. Increasing access to child-oriented services: health, education and social support. Only 30% of households in the poorest quintile have health coverage, because of the fees charged. The child-centred social protection framework aims to eliminate individual fees for households with children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women, through coverage of fees directly to the mutuelle system at the community level. Consultations with children and community members identify several important barriers to children accessing education, including uniforms, school supplies and transport Often poor children also lack proper nutrition. The strategy to tackle this problem is the provision of transfers to the households, in addition to delivery of legal and psycho-social services to orphans and other vulnerable children. The proposed model will involve partnerships with civil society organisations, using a community-centred referral approach.
3. Community and household cash transfers: these aim at benefiting child-headed households, orphans and other vulnerable children and people with disabilities. Households are identified through the Ubudehe process, a community-centred approach which identifies and prioritises vulnerable households. The initial pilot design conceptualised very short-term cash transfers—limited to six months per beneficiary —in order to economise on the resource requirements and avoid fostering dependency. *(Yablonski paper)*

Other examples included situations where cash transfers, combined with microfinance or with policies to raise agricultural production, can provide pathways for poor people out of poverty and into productive lives. Similarly, transfers combined with basic health and education services can improve nutritional, health and education outcomes. In all cases, combining social protection with other programmes leads to better outcomes. In some cases, one instrument is needed to make access to others possible: it is a case of building sequential 'ladders'. Thus, BRAC programmes for the extremely poor start with a cash stipend for 18 months and access to health and legal services, then move on to saving services, then asset transfers. The cash transfer is intended to cover part of the household's subsistence food needs until the asset transfer starts to generate regular streams of income. *(BRAC presentations)*

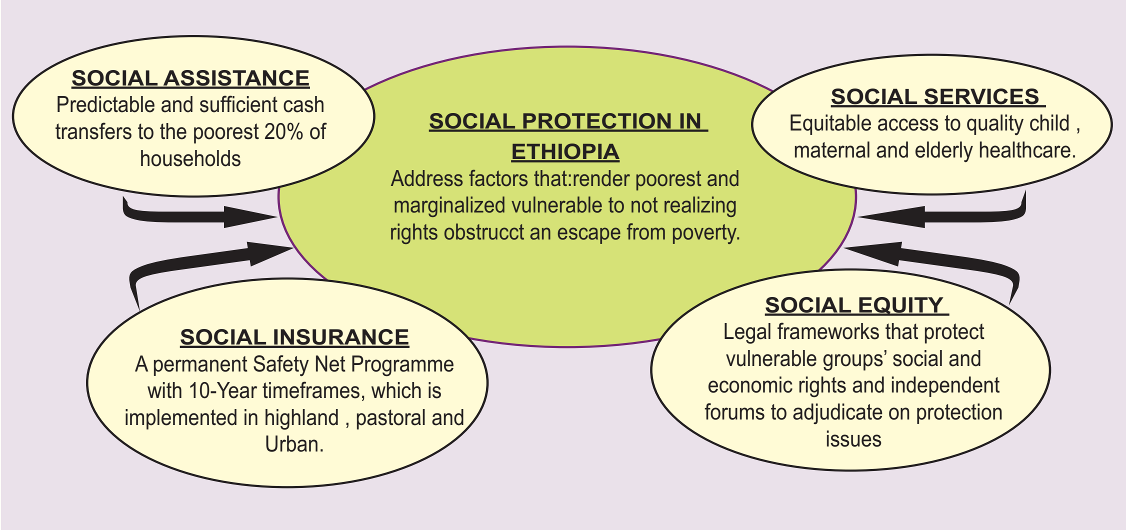
The foregoing raises questions about how to convey this simply to policy-makers and how to help governments prioritise? In Uganda, the Social Protection Task Force's 'Cash Transfer Pilot Programme'

"has developed a matrix to test the feasibility of different instruments, such as: unconditional cash transfers; conditional cash transfers linked to human capital conditions (e.g. attending school or receiving healthcare); conditional cash transfers linked to work requirements; transfers of agricultural or other inputs; integrated asset transfers; and food transfers. The analysis takes into account a number of criteria: cost; the selection of recipients; coverage; the level, duration and frequency (e.g. one-off vs. regular transfers) of benefits; cash delivery mechanisms; political acceptability; and capacity requirements"
(CPRC 2008).

9.3. The different instruments must be linked

Several submissions stressed the need for an overall policy framework. Thus, while an array of instruments is often found desirable, coherence is needed. In Ghana, for instance, "there is an impressive plethora of social protection policies and programmes – capitation grants, school feeding, Youth Employment, LEAP (etc…) the impact of these social protection programmes on the poorest has been limited because they have not been well targeted towards this group and because the various programmes were not linked to form a comprehensive package". (Sultan paper) In Ethiopia, a unifying framework is proposed (Box 19).

Box 19: A proposed Social Protection framework in Ethiopia (Hobson paper)



9.4. A mix of instruments should not be confused with a mix of objectives

This was demonstrated in the case of Ethiopia's PSNP. The PSNP aims to be a safety net that helps those with no other means of support, whilst at the same time it aims to be a productive instrument that promotes development: this, it was observed,

"leads to conflicting demands on planning and expenditure approaches. A safety net should be inclusive to ensure that all households that need a safety net receive resources from one. (…) Promoting development, on the other hand, (…) needs to take an approach that will be flexible, depending on local variations, and produce an impact that will be seminal and sustainable (…) typical beneficiaries of a safety net do not have the capacity to be productive…" (Hobson paper) However, "Looking at it another way, the fungibility of cash may actually help to overcome the divide between welfare and livelihood promotion approaches by putting cash into the hands of those who need it as well as stimulating local trade and the local economy. In this way cash-based approaches may be a useful tool in linking livelihood promotion, production and humanitarian goals". *(Holmes & Jackson paper)*

This alerts us to the fact that opportunities for synergy evolve with time. It was pointed out

"sets of policies must be selected that complement each other in achieving short and long-term objectives, and they should be adjusted over time as circumstances change. (…) Furthermore, policy instruments need to complement each other at different stages of market development. Sometimes instruments will need to be largely non-market based, but at other times the appropriate instruments should be predominantly market based." *(Sabates-Wheeler et al)*

There is thus no blueprint. The appropriate response depends on the social and policy context of the country, including different levels of economic activity, infrastructure and market development.

"This means that lessons from areas with different characteristics should be applied with great caution to other areas (…) (…) For example, conditional cash transfers that link social assistance with social services have been very effective in parts of Latin America, but cannot be applied in many African countries where education and health services are often inaccessible to many of the poorest, who need social assistance most." *(Sabates-Wheeler et al paper)*

9.5. Building synergies between social protection and smallholder policies

As pointed out above, synergy between social protection and agriculture development is especially relevant to the Ugandan context (Box 20). In principle, "social protection measures help poor rural people expand their assets, use them more efficiently and adopt higher return activities, (…) and, conversely, agricultural policies help farmers improve their livelihoods and reduce their vulnerability.

Box 20: Social protection and the agricultural sector

In Uganda's case, the following remarks were made by participants:

- Innovative agricultural policies should be promoted under Uganda's social protection agenda because they have the potential to deliver 'livelihood protection' and 'livelihood promotion' in a single instrument.
- Food based social transfers such as school feeding programmes should be encouraged, as they can promote rather than inhibit agricultural growth, provided that food is sourced locally and impacts on production and markets are closely monitored.
- Maximising synergies requires that social transfers are guaranteed, predictable and regular so as to perform an effective insurance function and encourage moderate risk-taking by uninsured smallholders in high risk agro ecologies.
- Ministry of Agriculture staff need to learn about social protection, while social protection experts need to learn about the particular complexity of agriculture and the seasonality of rural livelihoods.
- Asset transfers and ensuring access to agricultural inputs are essential components of any comprehensive plan to assist smallholders cross 'asset thresholds' and escape from 'low input, low output' poverty traps.

"Nowhere are the synergies between social protection and agricultural policies more powerful than in the area of risk reduction. Social protection – specifically social insurance – plays a major role in reducing livelihood risk (…) Social protection interventions in the agriculture sector must recognise that uninsured exposure to risk traps smallholders in low-risk, low productivity farming. (…) It follows that predictable and regular social protection mechanisms (e.g. cash transfers, seasonal public works, insurance schemes) can influence productivity by stimulating risk-taking behaviour." The Employment Guarantee Scheme for instance "provides low-waged unskilled manual labour for anyone in rural Maharashtra state (India) who requests it. The guarantee of paid work serves an insurance function, releasing scarce resources that were previously used as precautionary savings to more productive purposes. Farmers in Maharashtra plant higher-yielding (rather than drought-tolerant) crop varieties than farmers in neighbouring states."
(Sabates-Wheeler et al paper)

10.Delivery mechanisms

The foregoing discussion in turn raises issues about what is feasible in terms of administration, human capacity and finances.

10.1. A central role for Government

Overall, there was a consensus among conference participants that social assistance (at least) should be seen as a core Government function, to ensure uniform, reliable and sustainable delivery:
"Social assistance has to be seen as a permanent service like education or health - not as a project with an exit strategy or a patchwork of many projects implemented by NGOs or CBOs (…) Social cash transfer schemes (…) should from the beginning – even in the pilot phase – be implemented by Government." *(Schubert paper)*

A fundamental observation arose from Golooba-Mutebi's and Hickey's evaluative remarks on the NUSAF initiative in Northern Uganda. While the presenters noted that politics is a critical driver of the success or failure of social protection interventions (as when their introduction coincides with elections or is linked to the agenda of a political party), NUSAF, they contended, did little to position the state at the centre of implementation processes (with the place taken up by a parallel delivery structures and NGOs). As a result, NUSAF did not contribute to changing state-citizen relations, with a large number of respondents expressing the view that the government had done nothing for them. In this way, the 'politics of chronic poverty' were not addressed: the programme was 'residualist' in nature, failing to tackle the structural and historical factors that led to Northern Uganda's marginality. A central role for the state is thus desirable, not only from a design and implementation perspective, but also to persuade elites that persistent poverty is the result of wide-ranging and often externally imposed constraints that require public action to overcome them. *(Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey presentation)*

This would also avoid a situation where strong partnerships are built between the donors, the NGO and the private sector, but not with Government. Thus, in Sierra Leone, "there is certainly a concern that the extent of donor and international activity is such that parallel structures may be created by donor-funded agencies at the expense of aligning to existing government structures." *(Holmes paper)*

As Devereux and White also note, this can leave "unanswered a number of critical questions about whether the lessons derived from small-scale pilot projects can be replicated on a wider scale, how these innovative approaches might fit within a nationally owned social protection policy process, and how to build political support for initiatives that are essentially externally-driven pilot projects."

Even where Government agencies are weak, it was agreed, this should not be taken as an excuse for sidelining them. Even in Sierra Leone, where the war has left the country with extremely limited institutional capacity (in terms of staff numbers, skills and other resources) and also limited infrastructure (roads, financial systems), "this is a key challenge to the implementation of cash-based approaches, but is not insurmountable". *(Holmes paper)*

Apart from political ownership, there are also efficiency reasons for ensuring that Government plays this central role: where international development partners have funded transfers to the poor in Africa, but only as long as it comes in the form of something other than cash, often delivered through contracted civil society organisations, then "typically this programme model has high overhead costs that are easily bettered in terms of efficiency by scaled-up cash transfer programmes". Free food, for example, as has been well documented for thirty years, is an inefficient way of transferring resources to the poor. (…) "Typically large scale cash transfer programmes can be run with less than 20% overheads. In Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, administrative costs are less than 10%. In contrast, most civil society organisations operate in small sub-national pockets and, despite all efforts to keep their costs down, cannot compete. Civil society administrative costs vary hugely but most fall within the range of 30-60% administrative costs". *(Pearson paper)*

10.2. Which Government agency?

Which Government agency has the capacity or at least the potential to eventually reach each every village and to provide a reliable service to a large number of the very poor? Several experiences alerted us to the advantage of having a Government institution that is both politically well established and has potential that can be strengthened by systematic and long term capacity-building. Lwanga-Ntale thus notes that buy-in for a comprehensive social protection strategy is still challenged, among others, by "slow progress in enlisting the full support of the central Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, as well as the key sector ministries of health, education, agriculture and local government." Thus, the donor statement also noted that "we were advised to work better with Ministries of Finance, to present stronger economic cases for social protection interventions". Elsewhere,

- In Lesotho, the new social pension scheme is implemented by the powerful Ministry of Finance, rather than by the much weaker Department of Social Welfare (Devereux and White paper).
- In Zambia, the pilot social cash transfer schemes are implemented by the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS) of the Department of Social Welfare which has Social Welfare Officers at district level. They fall under the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS): "Interestingly, the MCDSS is a strong ally of the donors but the MCDSS has only a weak influence on the Ministry of Finance, which remains deeply sceptical about 'welfare handouts', arguing that these create dependency, are unaffordable in poor countries like Zambia, and divert scarce public resources from more pressing priorities, notably investment in productive sectors such as agriculture". *(Devereux and White).*
- Malawi has decentralised most Government services to the district level. For the pilot social cash transfer schemes, the District Assemblies have been chosen as the implementing agencies, with Assembly Officers from different departments (Social Welfare, Community Development, Planning, Finance, and Police) participating. A multi-sectoral Social Protection Committee will verify and validate the process of identifying beneficiaries and making payments to eligible household heads.

10.3. The role of other actors

In several cases, relevant government ministries/departments, NGOs, donors and the private sector collaborate on issues of policy and in programme implementation.

With regard to donors, 'short-termism' was highlighted as a challenge. As the donor statement noted, "The conference showed that social protection is a long term agenda, requiring stamina on the part of advocates, and for donors and other actors to look beyond short time horizons and expectations of quick fixes. Social protection has not been a "fad" in the developed world, where on average countries spend between 10-20% of their budgets on social protection, and where social protection is critical to the "social contract" between governments and citizens. Governments who require external backing for social protection will also need long term financial commitments from development partners to secure the resources necessary."
The donor representatives present went on to identify ways in which they could support the development of social protection in Uganda, in addition to supporting piloting initiatives (see below): "There are a number of challenges and areas where development partners are willing to offer support. Firstly, Uganda's social protection policies and programmes are scattered across different sectors with diffused responsibilities. They need to be brought together to increase coherence and exploit synergies between the sectors, and more needs to be done to help government to identify the best and most appropriate interventions for the challenges Uganda faces over the coming years. Development partners are ready to help in this task. Secondly, social protection is still not widely appreciated or understood among policy makers or by the public. We can do more to increase understanding and build support for social protection among the policy community and the public".
With regard to other actors, two cases presented appear relevant to the Ugandan context: the role of NGOs in promoting a rights-based agenda and the role of the private sector in delivering cash transfers.

In Kenya, a specific role has been given to HelpAge International within the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme, to manage a Social Protection Rights (SPR) component, in order to introduce the notion of rights and responsibilities to the design and delivery of the programme. It is described as "a unique and defining feature of the programme (…a) component to improve programme effectiveness and minimise fiduciary risk through: acting as an independent check on the other components; implementing mechanisms of appropriate downward accountability; maximising transparency; and acting as a beneficiary advocate charged with the empowerment of communities as a whole and the empowerment of vulnerable groups within communities. Given the hope that Government of Kenya will adopt the HSNP in the longer-term, the SPR component also seeks to set a rights-based precedent to social protection policy and programme development in Kenya. This is through:

1. Delivery of an on-going programme of civic education based on a Programme Charter of Rights and Responsibilities that sets out the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders.
2. Implementation of an accessible complaints and feedback mechanism for monitoring observance of the HSNP Service Charter.
3. Provision of an independent appeals and dispute resolution service in cases where complaints cannot be resolved by the other agencies .
4. Engagement with and, where possible, implementation through local organisations with experience in rights promotion. *(Barrett paper)*

Several papers also highlighted the role of the private sector (see Box 21), reflecting current governments' and donors' interests in investigating the use of "push" mechanisms as a cost-efficient alternative to deliver cash transfers. Typically cash transfers in Africa have been delivered using "pull" mechanisms, which "pull" recipients to a set location at a set time to receive their transfer. "Push" mechanisms push the transfer to the recipient typically via a bank account, smartcard or cell-phone

Box 21: What role for the private sector?

A number of initiatives described at the conference have involved the private sector. Thus:

- In Kenya, the pilot cash transfer programme for vulnerable children has involved negotiations with commercial banks and the state-owned Kenya Post Office, so that they are contracted to make transfers to poor households. (Pearson paper)
- In Tanzania and Nigeria, GTZ have supported Mutual Health Organisations (MHO) and Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI) to become financially and organisationally viable through the development of computer software programmes (these model the financial development of MHO and CBHI schemes over a 10 year period and they monitor health insurance schemes through the collection and analysis of health insurance data); and through the development of 'Centres for Health Insurance Competence', which provide management and technical support, by developing insurance products and quality standards, and by carrying out training events, on a paid-for consultancy basis. (Hörmansdörfer & Rompel paper).
- Swaziland is in the process of finalising an alternative delivery mechanism for its Old Age Grant, involving quarterly transfers to the over 60's, which will likely involve a public-private partnership between Standard Bank and Swazi Post and Telecommunications, involving opening bank accounts for all recipients, thus concurrently "banking the unbanked" and providing improved access to the financial infrastructure through ATMs and 8,000 point of sale devices (Vincent & Freeland paper).
- In Uganda, RALNUC (Restoration of Agricultural Livelihoods in Northern Uganda Component project) aims to restore basic infrastructure; to empower returning internally displaced persons to purchase agricultural inputs of their own choice; to train returnees in good agricultural practice; and to re-establish private agro-input input dealers while replacing years of dependence on handouts. Working with local governments, communities, farmers' organisations and NGOs, the project mobilises communities to identify pressing public works which can be undertaken by the communities, and for which they are paid in vouchers. These are then redeemable for agricultural inputs at local agri-input dealers. While the large component of procurement requires careful (and relatively expensive) management and monitoring, this is a short term recovery initiative. There may be opportunities to use simple electronic methods for paying for inputs: these are currently being explored. (Norslund paper)
- In Ghana, there is currently only one commercial insurer providing micro-insurance, the Gemini Life Insurance Company (GLICO). Between 2001 and 2004, CARE International in cooperation with GLICO designed the Anidaso Policy (Anidaso = "hope after grieving"), which is specifically targeted at low-income people both in urban and rural areas. After the design phase, GLICO took full responsibility for the product. The policy offers term life assurance up to age 60, accident benefits and in-hospitalisation benefits for the policyholder, the spouse, and up to four children. Contributions towards purchase of an annuity upon maturity of the policy (which serves as a savings scheme) can be added on a voluntary basis. Average premiums range from two to four dollars (Arun & Steiner paper).

(or a combination of the three). They necessitate public-private partnerships, such that the delivery is outsourced:
"With cell-phones, recipients are provided with a handset and could receive their cash transfer through an SMS, which they can transfer for cash through the financial infrastructure. Although this has not yet been tried for social transfers, the technology for cash transfers via SMS exists and is already being used in Kenya. As yet, push mechanisms for delivery of social transfers have only been tested in small-scale pilot schemes (…)preliminary costing information supports that, as the theory would suggest, they will be most cost efficient when used at scale, and have the potential to offer significant delivery cost savings over the current pull mechanisms…" The emerging evidence is that such mechanisms are also much more convenient to the recipients and increase access to financial services for the very poor.
(Vincent & Freeland paper)

10.4 Coordination is key…

Many of the experiences shared at the Conference underscored both the importance and the challenges of coordinating across ministries – at national level and locally. In Malawi, for instance, there was an attempt to avoid a
"trap where it finds itself implementing exclusive programmes in the name of an OVC (Child Support Grant) cash transfer programme, an old age pension scheme, Persons with disabilities social cash transfer scheme, and a Chronically Ill/HIV & Aids Impact Mitigation Cash Transfer scheme. (This would) encourage Ministries and Departments to compete and create fiefdoms; and (…) would not only be costly, but would also put a heavier strain on the capacity of district assemblies (…) effective communication and cooperation between different district departments (the departments of social welfare, of finance, of planning and of the M+E officer) are essential for the performance of the schemes (and) depends on the leadership provided by the District Commissioner". *(Malawi paper)*

In Uganda, fragmentation was highlighted as an important challenge: Enamu notes that "there is an array of policies and programmes in all sectors including education, health and social areas that have component(s) on social protection. For maximum impact, these need to be harmonized and well coordinated to ensure vertical and horizontal linkages" and the civil society statement observed that "functional institutional, legal and policy instruments for the better coordination of social protection are vital to ensure complementarity between various interventions. In this regard, we will need to do a lot more to overcome the constraints and impediments the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development faces in its leadership and coordination role" and ensure pooling of funds rather than diversion of resources to favoured projects or special programmes. Similarly, the donor group statement remarks that "integrating social protection with other programmes will require improved multi-sectoral co-ordination (…)" In this respect, Lwanga-Ntale proposes the establishment of a Social Protection Authority.

[8] *'Rights Committees' are being established, and any resident of a targeted district (beneficiaries or excluded individuals) can take their queries and complaints to their District Social Protection Rights Coordinator.*

10.5 …And so is capacity building

Capacity problems were frequently mentioned as an important bottleneck for scaling up (Box 22). Several presentations thus stressed the importance of building a 'capacity-building agenda' from the outset into initiatives, and this being an important reason for piloting schemes (see Box 23). Thus, in Kenya's cash transfer programme, it proved necessary to focus on the capacity to implement a programme design that can be taken to scale:

"this requires high levels of investments at the front end in terms of human, infrastructure and organisational resources required to maintain and expand the programme even when outcomes, in terms of numbers of beneficiaries reached are low at the beginning. This is a required risk." In a phase 2 pilot, therefore, "the Ministry of Home Affairs built a secretariat that could handle the programme management for scaling-up as capacity grew. The secretariat has taken on the work of managing the capacity building strategy, the management information system, the communication strategy, the monitoring systems including spot checks and development of corruption control mechanisms including fielding community level complaints, oversight and management of the evaluation and working on programme documentation and financing agreements to allow multiple international partners to contribute to the pool of resources required to reach programme targets before the full burden of the programme can be borne by the treasury" *(Pearson paper)*

Box 22: The need for substantial capacity building at all levels

- "A particular challenge here is that in the early stages of agricultural development non-market mechanisms must be deployed in ways that 'crowd in' rather than 'crowd out' market development – conflicts must be avoided between social protection and agricultural objectives. But policy-makers must also be alert to changing circumstances, and should respond flexibly by adapting policy mixes that are well adapted to these changing circumstances. For instance, food aid might be an essential social protection instrument at one point in time, but can become a drag on the attainment of other longer-term objectives if it becomes institutionalised.
- Everyone who engages in agriculture-based livelihoods, including not just small farmers but traders, transporters and rural service providers, desperately need continuity and stability in the policies that affect their efforts to make a living.
- The complexity of agricultural transitions, the ever-increasing range of available policy instruments and the imperative to provide an enabling environment for producers, traders and consumers all imply a need for substantial and sustained capacity building at national and local levels (Sabates-Wheeler et al)

Capacity needs are also linked to fiduciary and other risks. Thus, in Sierra Leone, it proved

"vital for the state-citizen relationship to be [restored] and therefore crucial that government be responsible and be held responsible for delivery, something that the decentralisation process has been specifically designed to help achieve. For this purpose, developing institutional linkages and co-ordination across ministries and agencies is as vital as building capacity within them". *(Holmes & Jackson)*

This may necessitate a long-term, gradual approach: "Ghana's experience shows that Institutional strengthening of Ministries responsible for social protection has to be spread out over a number of years, and certain difficult choices have to be made. These Ministries will never have all the staff, equipment and IT they need – therefore the absolute minimum has to be put in place and systems need to be built and perfected over time. The key issue in Ghana now is not to expand programmes faster than there is capacity to do so." This approach also proved essential for ensuring political legitimacy and credibility: "in the past, the limited capacity of the Ministry of Manpower has made it difficult to negotiate effectively for budget allocations from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, since the latter in turn has been unwilling to invest heavily in a Ministry where they are unsure about the capacity to deliver."

Pilots proved an important strategy for capacity-building and 'learning by doing' (see Box 23), provided certain conditions were met. In Malawi, "the pilots will operate to build district-level capacity and also cut across the constituent administrative units. This includes building human resources, delivery systems, infrastructure, management information processes, training initiatives, technical and material assistance and linkages to the national co-ordinating mechanisms. In particular, pilots provide a critical element of capacity building through practical experience".

Thus, in Zambia and Malawi, the process of designing, piloting and scaling up has had to adhere to the following principles:

- Involve stakeholders from household, community, district and national level and organize the process as participative as possible
- Address households, not individuals
- Design and test the scheme in a systematic, transparent and well documented process
- Provide appropriate and long term capacity building assistance".(Schubert paper)

Box 23: Do pilots make sense?

Many papers described the experience of pilot projects and, although there was caution that cash transfer pilot projects often tend to be 'flag planting' by donors and NGOs, creating temporary islands of access to internationally financed social welfare, unlikely ever to scale up into national programmes, because they are not 'government owned' from inception (…) and discretionary rather than rights-based" (Devereux and White), several arguments were advanced for having pilots, or even a succession of piloting phases.

Thus, in Kenya, for the cash transfer programme for vulnerable children, by 2004 a first phase pilot programme was in place targeting 500 households. It was a partnership between UNICEF and the Government of Kenya with funding from taxpayers: "That there was now a programme on the ground became a major boost to encouraging political discussion and policy debate on the merits and worth of such a programme. The importance of targeting became clear as it was plain in the pilot that several very poor households had somehow not been enrolled while several less deserving households were in the programme. The issue of capacity to implement became clearer as a key issue that would have to be addressed well if the programme would have a hope of expanding to national scale. It was clear that the amount being disbursed was too small and this led to discussions with the Ministry of Finance around what level of disbursement would be the most appropriate. (…). By 2007 the second expanded pilot phase was under way, scaling up to over 40 districts by 2008 with 80,000 households likely to be enrolled by the end of the 2008/09 financial year and with a well budgeted evaluation at the half way stage". (Pearson paper)

Similarly, in Rwanda, "the phased roll-out of the pilot will maximise learning-by-doing (…) the study was also concerned with proposals which would be feasible at national scale, not only in the pilot phase and which would allow possible future expansion of coverage" (Yablonski paper).

In Ghana,"(… The) approach was to start the new LEAP programme on a small scale. In the first year, their target was only to reach 2,000 households. This was something that could be achieved with current capacity. It also allowed MOFEP to test the waters." (Sultan paper)

11. Recommendations for Uganda

1. Objectives and linkages

With regard to the overall design of social protection initiatives, we can usefully:

- Embed social protection into the broader growth and poverty reduction strategies and prioritise the development of a national framework to integrate social protection within broader social policy outcomes
- Adopt an institutionalised, gazetted approach
- Adopt an empowering, people and rights-based approach, beyond a 'welfarist' stance, and reflect the wider problems within the political economy
- Clarify objectives to match them effectively with selected (often existing) programmes and instruments.

2. Political buy-in

If 'political buy-in' is necessary to ensure that social protection is given priority and is sustained, we need to:

- Explicitly link the social protection agenda to Government's aspirations, for instance its potential contribution to growth and employment, as per the National Development Plan themes
- Build the necessary public demands and social will, by increasing awareness of the political, social and economic rights to, and benefits of, social protection among political leaders, civil society groups and the private sector;
- Highlight the opportunity costs of not moving forward and the necessary political/technical trade offs.
- Target the Ministry of Finance and compute relative rates of return to social protection compared to other investments, such as infrastructure and use rigorous evidence (from pilots, other countries), on how people can move out of poverty through social protection.
- Target other sector ministries (Agriculture, health and education among others) and demonstrate the contribution of social protection in realising broader social policy outcomes such as in health, education, employment and labour productivity.

3. Prioritising and resourcing

In view of tough competing demands for scarce resources, we need to prioritise by:

- Seeking convergence between different actors' needs, costs, links to growth, and to social cohesion (what is politically attractive is key, not necessarily what is technically sound or fiscal-efficient or cheap).
- Developing policy guidelines (reflecting, for instance, the need for simplicity; to build on existing cultural practices; the need for coordination and transparency: for a government driven and owned process; for equity in terms of equal opportunities and treatment; progressive benefits for the poorest compared to the less poor)
- Seeking a phased introduction, that is affordable; politically and fiscally sustainable in the long run
- Reviewing policies and programmes to assess the extent to which they respond to the social protection agenda; switching public expenditure from less effective poverty reduction programmes, and consolidating fragmented initiatives (including donor-supported programmes).
- Increasing budget ceilings for the social development sector to accommodate new funds for social protection and enlisting long-term donor support for social protection

4. Targeting

Targeting benefits is potentially highly contentious. We therefore need to:

- Develop agreed clear, transparent eligibility, outreach, selection and exit criteria, ensuring low inclusion and exclusion errors and reflecting the social contract nature of social protection.
- Acknowledge the diversity of pathways out of poverty, as well as the changing nature of vulnerability, in both formal and informal sectors
- Mainstream child protection and other needs in the broader social protection framework, thus helping to break the inter-generational transmission of extreme poverty.

5. Social protection instruments

- There is a need to seek synergy and complementarity of instruments within an overall coherent policy framework. Income transfers can be combined with other forms of support (basic education, asset transfers, etc.). 'Ladders' can be built, from consumption to productive tools.
- While there is a need to broaden the menu beyond cash transfers, it is important to recognise that money empowers and that conditionality risks excluding the most marginalised
- There is a need to build on, and complement existing cultural, traditional and community-owned solidarity mechanisms to ground national social protection initiatives.

6. Delivery mechanisms

Delivering social benefits is challenging and we therefore need to:

- Favour mainstreaming, rather than sporadic, short-term, often externally driven social protection initiatives.
- Combine social protection with other programmes (as with the agricultural sector and employment policies) leads to better outcomes: policies and programmes need to be harmonised and coordinated across sectors to ensure vertical and horizontal linkages.
- Establish alliances with civil society organisations and the private sector in seeking solutions and learning – inter alia - from their experiences.
- Carry out pilot programmes to identify issues and learn lessons on such challenges as targeting; the efficacy of alternative instruments; and reviewing existing policy and institutional frameworks. Pilots need to; be owned and implemented by Government and supported by partner organisations; have the potential to be scaled up; be cost-effective and incorporate permanent evaluation and discussion mechanisms
- Develop delivery mechanisms that elicit trust, limit administrative costs, are reliable (as in timely transfers); and be free of suspicion of financial 'leakage'.
- Involve communities in the design, targeting mechanisms and management of social protection initiatives, but this should not be at the expense of strengthening the social contract between the state and the citizen.

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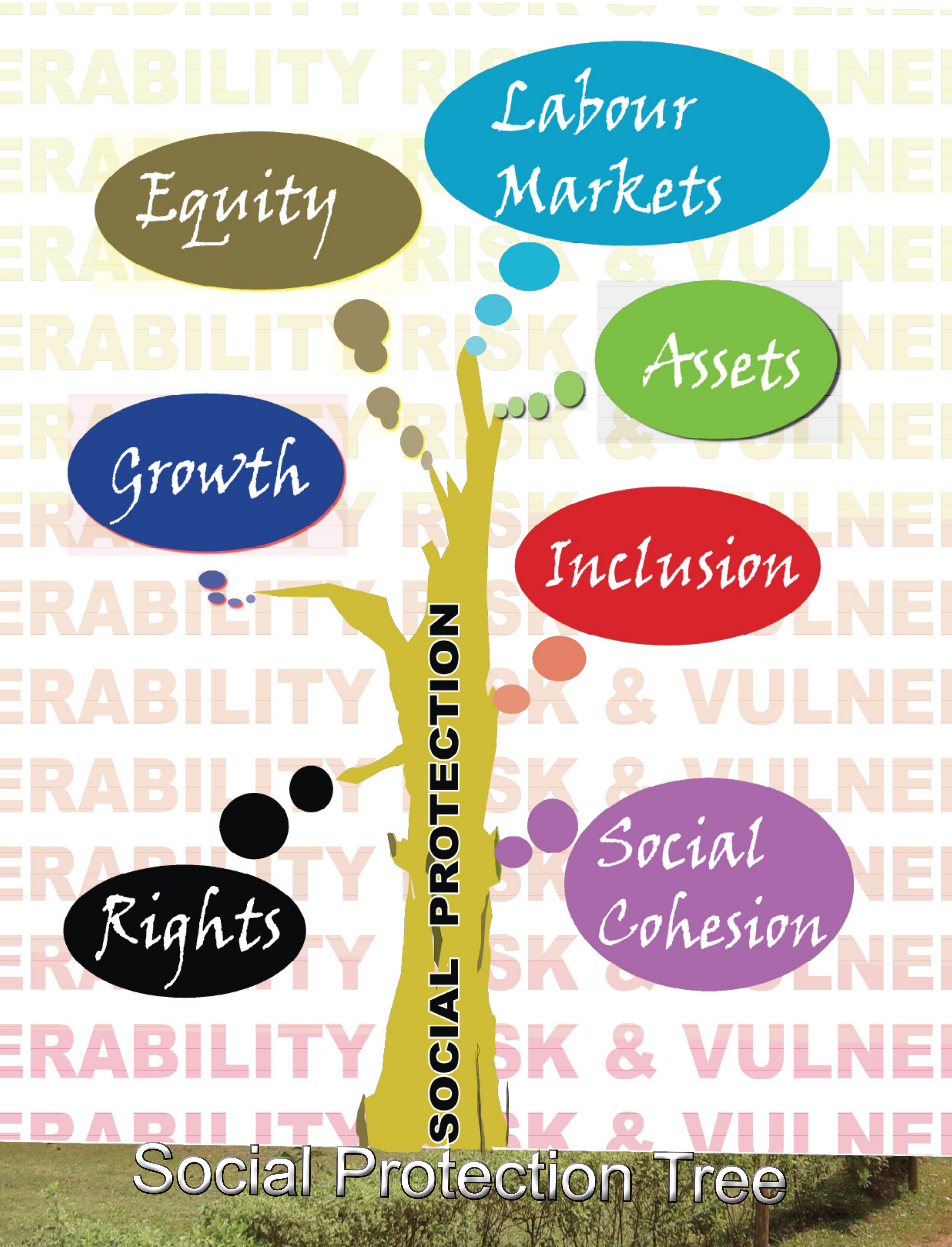
Labour Markets
Equity
Assets
Growth
Inclusion
Social Cohesion
Rights
SOCIAL PROTECTION
Social Protection Tree

KEY ADVOCACY MESSEGES

Social Protection is key to reducing poverty, increasing growth, redistribution and equity

Social Protection programs /initiatives should not be mere isolated pilot projects but nationalised programs reaching hundreds of thousands of very poor people

Social protection is not equated to cash transfers but rather integrates all interventions from public, private, voluntary organizations and informal networks to support communities, households and individuals in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome a defined set of risks and vulnerabilities

Social protection programs/initiatives should harness and build on the organic and still existent informal solidarity mechanisms, cultures and values of protecting those in need

Social protection is affordable

Social protection measures do not create dependency if appropriate targeting, delivery mechanisms and exit strategies are clearly articulated

Provision of social assistance is a core government function

Children, elderly and persons with disabilities are at a more risk of falling into chronic poverty

Social protection makes health care and education more affordable and accessible to all

Living a decent life is an inalienable human right

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