



Social Protection for Food Security: HLPE consultation on the V0 draft of the Report

Collection of contributions received

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the topic.....	4
Contributions received	6
1. Logan Cochrane, Canada.....	6
2. Pamela Pozarny from FAO, Italy.....	6
3. Claudio Schuftan People’s Health Movement, Viet Nam	8
4. Thaís Bassinello, Makerere University School of Public Health, Uganda	8
5. Pablo Faret, FAO, Chile	9
6. Stuart Clark, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Canada	19
7. Keetie Roelen, Institute of Development Studies, UK.....	19
8. Andrew MacMillan, Italy.....	20
9. Moushymi Chaudhury, CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, Kenya.....	21
10. Oxfam International.....	22
11. Lizzy Igbine, Nigerian Women Farmer Association, Nigeria	25
12. Alexandre Meybeck, FAO, Italy.....	25
13. Florence Egal, FAO, Italy	26
14. Concern Worldwide, UK.....	27
15. Charles Knox-Vydmanov, HelpAge International, UK.....	31
16. Lidija Christmann, German Development Institute, Germany and Margret Vidar and Dubravka Bojic, both FAO, Italy.....	33
17. Laura Pautassi, CONICET-UBA, Argentina.....	36
18. People’s Coalition on Food Sovereignty	36
19. Gabriel Lui, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.....	37
20. Germany.....	39
21. Rasmus Heltberg, World Bank, USA.....	44
22. Luis Hernán Vargas Faulbaum, Economic Commission for Latin America, Chile	44
23. Benjamin Davis, FAO, Italy	46
24. Elisenda Estruch-Puertas and Cristina Rapone, FAO, Italy.....	48
25. Angel Leyva Galan, Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Agrícolas (INCA), Cuba.....	52
26. United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights.....	53
27. Save the Children, UK.....	59
28. Syntyche Nakar Djindil, Wageningen University, The Netherlands.....	70
29. Victor Abramovich, IPPDH – MERCOSUR, Argentina.....	71
30. Switzerland, through the Permanent Representation of Switzerland to FAO, IFAD and WFP	72
31. International Labour Organization, Social Security Department, Switzerland.....	74
32. Claudia Robles, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Chile	77

33. World Food Programme, Italy	79
34. Trans-Atlantic Food Assistance Dialogue (TAFAD), Belgium.....	82
35. Stuart Kean, Kevin Savage and Douglas R. Brown, World Vision International	83
36. CARE International.....	88
37. Technical Cooperation Department, FAO, Italy.....	91
38. Centre for World Food Studies, the Netherlands.....	96
39. Savina Tessitore, Institute of Development Studies, UK.....	98

Introduction to the topic

In October 2010 the newly reformed UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) requested its High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) to conduct a study on social protection, and in particular, to assess: *“ways to lessen vulnerability through social and productive safety nets programs and policies with respect to food and nutritional security, taking into consideration differing conditions across countries and regions. This should include a review of the impact of existing policies for the improvement of living conditions and resilience of vulnerable populations, especially small scale rural producers, urban and rural poor as well as women and children. It should also take into account benefits for improving local production and livelihoods and promoting better nutrition.”*

Final findings are to be presented at the CFS Plenary session in October 2012.

The High Level Panel of Experts for Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) now seeks input on the following V0 draft of its report to address this mandate. This e-consultation will be used by the HLPE Project Team to further elaborate the report, which will then be submitted to external expert review, before finalization by the Project Team under Steering Committee guidance and oversight.

Social protection has risen rapidly up the development policy agenda in the last decade. Although increasingly dominated by conditional and unconditional cash transfer programmes, social protection in fact describes a wide range of instruments that aim to alleviate poverty and manage livelihood risks. Many of these interventions have direct, intended implications for food security. Some of them, such as food price subsidies and strategic grain reserves, were explicitly designed to enhance or protect household and national food security.

So there are powerful synergies between social protection and food security, but these have not yet been fully conceptualised and analysed. This report therefore aims to bring together available evidence on the main social protection instruments that impact directly on food security. The report also reviews current thinking on relevant debates such as targeting, cash versus food transfers, ‘dependency syndrome’, intervening in food markets and affordability.

At the same time advocacy for food security has increasingly been influenced by evolving international and national developments with respect to the right to adequate food and related human rights as established in international human rights law. There is also a human right to social protection or security, and together with the right to food it is now possible to explore the strengthening of social protection measures for food security through a rights based approach.

Because of these knowledge gaps and unresolved issues in social protection thinking and practice, we propose opening a dialogue over the coming weeks on the topic of **social protection for food security**, addressing the following specific questions.

Firstly, there are many social protection instruments that affect food security, including: public works, school feeding schemes, conditional and unconditional cash transfers, grain reserves, price subsidies, etc.

- *Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted? Which instruments should be avoided, and why? Should interventions in food markets designed to stabilise prices be used?*

Secondly, no clear consensus has yet emerged concerning many basic design choices and implementation modalities of social protection programmes, and we welcome feedback and debate on these unresolved issues as well.

- *Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid? Do social transfers cause 'dependency syndrome'? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?*

Thirdly, there are increasing trends towards making social protection 'rights-based' rather than 'discretionary' – a justiciable claim rather than a charitable handout – but this has various implications that have not yet been fully thought through.

- *Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported? Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? grievance mechanisms? legislation? What are the challenges to strengthening the rights foundations of social protection, and how can they be overcome?*

Finally, food security for all cannot be achieved with a single social protection scheme. Rather, it requires a more systemic approach to meet diverse food security needs, as well as building linkages to other sectors.

- *What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security? Should impact on nutritional status be seen primarily through dietary diversity and food consumption, or extend into broader nutrition security and encompass also security for water, sanitation, disease control and arrangements for special care of vulnerable groups like women and young children? Which agricultural, trade and other policies should complement social protection for more sustainable food security outcomes? What are the appropriate roles for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security?*

We thank in advance all the contributors for being kind enough to read and comment on this early version of our report. We look forward for a rich and fruitful consultation.

The HLPE Project Team: Stephen Devereux, Wenche Barth Eide, John Hoddinott, Noral Lustig, Kalanidhi Subbarao.

Contributions received

1. Logan Cochrane, Canada

At the outset let me say that the report offers a detailed analysis and excellent examples and policies. I will refrain from going over those positive points for the sake of your time, and highlight two points for your consideration:

(1) In the outlining of food security and *resources* (national and household) I believe you ought to also consider the concept of food sovereignty, in particular as the last decade has witnessed mass land acquisitions (by nations and companies). Often times those land acquisitions displaced rural people, uncompensated, who had previously been small-holder farmers. In light of this, whether it be a consideration of land rights or the right to food, I believe it would be incomplete to consider the right that people have to food, here referring to those living with food insecurity, without speaking to their ability to own land and have some say with regards to how crops are used. Current arrangements are such that foreign ownership of land, and therefore crops, is that food is exported to higher-profit markets while increasing food insecurity (and eliminating livelihoods) in rural agricultural areas. (example [here](#) discussing Ethiopia, one of the five countries home to the largest populations of people living with food insecurity). If one wishes to stay away from the concept of sovereignty, I would suggest approaching the topic as a means to securing the right to food (via the right to title of land and that of legal recourse if that land is unjustly taken), in other words individuals will be prevented from their right to food if the land upon which they rely for food is sold and those who own the land are exporting the mass majority of crops that previously entered the local market. This affects both the supply and price of food stuffs in already food insecure environments.

(2) I would also suggest that a paper discussing the rights of people with regards to food must also address some of the international policies that affect how and why food insecurity continues, on a structural level. Without, for example, addressing trade barriers and inequalities in subsidies (affecting competitiveness) of certain nations that stifle the development of agricultural markets (often times in places where food insecurity remains high) the picture seems incomplete. I would suggest that such a position would lend towards more long-term solutions. Even national programs (such as HSNP in Kenya) are examples of state welfare programs - which are important and needed in all states - but there is little focus on supporting market-based solutions that don't rely on state-welfare or external aid programs. Subsidies, reserves, CCTs/UCTs and vouchers are great short-term solutions to food insecurity and price volatility but we ought to also focus on solutions that will allow for the development of food security of households and nations over the long-term. This may be included under the umbrella of empowerment, but would require more detailed examples and case studies.

All the best,
Logan Cochrane

2. Pamela Pozarny from FAO, Italy

The report is robust, quite comprehensive, analytical and deeply thoughtful, inclusive of examples that the authors have personally been involved in. High compliments to the authors, who are indeed global experts on the subject matter. A few somewhat brainstorm thoughts and reactions that I could share:

1. EC's recent publication on Social Transfers Against Hunger (2012) addresses the link between social protection and hunger, it is at the heart of examining how transfers can contribute to hunger alleviation. To mention above therefore that these issues have not yet been properly addressed may not be fully accurate. Further, the EC report has an excellent diagram Box 1 showing different forms of protection/transfers, linked with policies and together, contributing to food security. This diagram is quite interesting to think about. It shows how food access, availability, adequacy and crises prevention all can/do result from transfers.

2. One point of a more concrete reaction : in section 1.2 although the different capitals are discussed, political capital seems absent, but is so critical to these processes.

3. Instruments are context-dependent. What works in some countries may not (and often do not) work for others quite the same way; what has worked and shown traction in the past may be best scaled up; history of social protection type of programs in the past are worth looking at. Assessment of policies, infrastructure, political will, local capacities are just a few of the key elements that require consideration. There are a number of considerations to assess before instruments are identified, or scaled up. Importantly, quite obvious, instruments w/should not be considered as "stand alones" but as integral to and supportive of national policies, ongoing investment strategies, programmes and projects if possible. This leads us to the ownership issue.

4. It seems critical that governments in specific, and in general key decision-makers and activists in the country, leaders including notably from civil society, assume leadership and ownership (progressively) of the social protection agenda and instruments in specific. There are problems in some countries with this. Does a social protection policy exist? A school feeding program as example, may not be really taken on by the governments, they are viewed as a helping hand from donors, and never quite mainstreamed in the government programs. Where is the ownership, commitment and government lead? This should be assessed and discussed between development partners and governments when social protection programs are being considered. Especially in Africa where resources are limited and allocations are prioritized, commitments and planning requires careful and transparent work. The ideal might be where a social protection instrument is a national owned, financed and implemented program - there are few of these in Africa I think?!! Without this, might a dependency culture persist, on a national scale, let alone among recipients?

5. Targeting seems to me relevant and practical, and particularly in the African countries (where I work), likely to be feasible and accepted. This is a difficult choice - but governments are stretched and priorities are always required - and often lead to better results. Key to good targeting is understanding, buy in, harnessing of political will on the type of measure and reasoning behind the targeting. Communication, understanding and acceptance is a KEY success factor. This includes at national and very importantly at local/community levels: e.g. what is the transfer, who should be targeted and how do we get there? Geographic and community-based seems a practical option for many programs. Of course this depends on the type of instrument: school feeding may be necessarily be geographic, while other instruments could favor more community based (e.g. public works, thematic cash transfers such as OVCs).

6. The above naturally address issues of perceived fairness (related to rights-based) and there is a strong argument for ensuring community involvement and accountability on targeting and implementation. The local targeting process builds local empowerment and ownership in the process. It is essential however that the targeting, and implementation is well managed: clarity of purpose, communication and sensitization, clarity of procedures, support to implement targeting and implementation, accountability measures, grievance mechanisms, and so on. Grievance is of critical importance, a system that promotes rights, trust, overrules elite capture (a real problem in Africa context). But one needs caution and great cultural sensitivity in design,

as there are incidents when grievance can have push-back, repercussions on those who come forward.

7. Last point on graduation: my sense is, at this point in time in Africa, this seems to be an objective worth aiming towards. The concept of protection towards promotion, and to production and growth is sound and the foundation of this principle. The "design" of the graduation process and procedures are the challenge. This would be worked out in the different program formulation processes. Impact evaluations of current transfer programs are currently ongoing (such as in Africa). These are analyzing programs' economic and development impacts, including household production, labour, investments, local economy impacts and multiplier effects, decision-making, risk sharing etc. Results of these assessments should provide greater evidence on productive and economic growth pathways and impacts to better fine tune programs that promote positive outcomes. Graduation, moving up and out, seems integral to this idea.

3. Claudio Schuftan People's Health Movement, Viet Nam

I agree with Logan Cochrane:

If we want to address the social determinants of nutrition we have to use the concept of food sovereignty instead of food security; the social determinants of nutrition and food sovereignty are closely related. Food sovereignty focuses on the people's right to define their own food and agriculture rather than having food largely subject to international market forces. It aims to protect local agricultural production and trade with a view to achieving sustainable rural development. It has the potential to address gender inequalities by underpinning the struggle for women's rights.

[Food sovereignty is a term coined by members of Via Campesina in 1996 to refer to a policy framework advocated by a number of farmers, peasants, pastoralists, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, women, rural youth and environmental organizations to define their own food, agriculture, livestock and fisheries systems, in contrast to having food largely subject to international market forces. It comprises looking at food as a HR, protecting natural resources, reorganizing food trade, ending the globalization of food, promoting social peace and democratic control].

Claudio Schuftan, PHM, Ho Chi Minh City

4. Thaís Bassinello, Makerere University School of Public Health, Uganda

Dear members,

I'd like to punctually comment on an oversight. The report doesn't mention the Home-Grown School Feeding model, or other forms of institutional purchases of food from smallholder farmers aimed at feeding vulnerable populations (as well as increasing production/income at farm level). Brazil has interesting examples of such purchases, through which food purchased by local authorities are directly delivered at school, care homes, and so on. As stated in the document "HOME-GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING A FRAMEWORK TO LINK SCHOOL FEEDING WITH LOCAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION", "the United Nations 2005 World Summit recommended"the expansion of local school meal programmes, using home-grown foods where possible" as one of the 'quick impact initiatives' to

achieve the Millennium Development Goals, especially for rural areas facing the dual challenge of high chronic malnutrition and low agricultural productivity".

Kind regards,

Thaís L. Bassinello (Ms.)
PUREFOOD Fellow
Makerere University School of Public Health

5. Pablo Faret, FAO, Chile

[Spanish original]

Estimados,

Durante los últimos años, y atendiendo a la masividad en la adopción de los programas de transferencias condicionadas (PTC) entre los países de América Latina y el Caribe y la importante cobertura que han alcanzado sobre la población más vulnerable, el Proyecto de Apoyo a la Iniciativa América Latina y Caribe Sin Hambre ha llevado a cabo seis seminarios internacionales (sitio en español <http://www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa/transcond.htm>) para el debate y análisis sobre los PTC y su relación con la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional, convocando a expertos de la academia y las agencias de Naciones Unidas, directivos de los programas nacionales y Ministros de Estado de toda la región. Estos encuentros han centrado su trabajo en revelar las potencialidades y desafíos de este tipo de programas en el marco de la protección social y la SAN. A continuación, algunos comentarios a las preguntas planteadas en la presentación de la discusión sobre la base de nuestra experiencia:

1) Sobre los instrumentos más eficacias para abordar los problemas de la seguridad alimentaria: La inseguridad alimentaria tiene su origen en las desigualdades sociales de todo tipo, los esquemas de gobernanza alimentaria y las características de las instituciones de la producción, economía y el mercado del trabajo. Asimismo, la inseguridad alimentaria es un reflejo de la severidad y profundidad de la pobreza, elevando la importancia de: 1) fortalecer el desarrollo local para detener su reproducción territorial; 2) potenciar la construcción de capital humano y social para detener su transmisión intergeneracional; y 3) fortalecer el enfoque de derechos humanos de forma transversal para lograr una ciudadanía activa y detener los procesos de exclusión.

En países de ingresos medios-bajos y altos niveles de vulnerabilidad, volatilidad e informalidad, la implementación de sistemas de protección social pueden ser parte fundamental de la estrategia de lucha contra el hambre, garantizando niveles de bienestar socioeconómico para que los más vulnerables accedan a los alimentos.

Considerando esto, más que acentuar la importancia de un solo tipo de instrumentos, el norte estratégico debe ser la construcción de un "menú de políticas" suficiente y pertinente para toda la población en situación de extrema pobreza, pobreza y vulnerabilidad. En otras palabras, se debe buscar la implementación de sistemas de protección social integrales e inclusivos para satisfacer las necesidades de los distintos grupos de la población vulnerable y su ciclo de vida, en donde las transferencias, las pensiones sociales y la ayuda directa pueden tener un rol fundamental, pero no agotan el espectro de acciones pertinentes para la seguridad alimentaria.

Además, se deben considerar y promover las interacciones de los instrumentos no contributivos con los instrumentos contributivos y la regulación de las instituciones del mercado del trabajo

para evitar establecer subsistemas de garantías diferenciados para la población según su posición en el mercado del trabajo, el que genera sistemas residuales de protección y el surgimiento de ciudadanos de primera y segunda categoría.

2) Sobre la población objetivo de la protección social para la seguridad alimentaria y las transferencias en efectivo:

De acuerdo con la definición compartida por el ex Relator Especial para el derecho a la alimentación, Jean Ziegler, y el actual Relator, Olivier De Schutter, el derecho a la alimentación es “el derecho de todas las personas a tener acceso, de manera regular, permanente y libre, sea directamente, sea mediante compra por dinero, a una alimentación cuantitativa y cualitativamente adecuada y suficiente, que corresponda a las tradiciones culturales de la población a que pertenece el consumidor y garantice una vida síquica y física, individual y colectiva, libre de angustias, satisfactoria y digna”. En este sentido, la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional constituye un medio para realizar el derecho a la alimentación y no debe interpretarse en el campo de la protección social de forma restrictiva a la mera contención y alivio de la población en situación de extrema pobreza, sino que también a la población pobre y la población no pobre-vulnerable, asegurando para cada una de estas categorías el acceso a una alimentación cuantitativa y cualitativamente suficiente y libre de angustias, lo que se traduce en la práctica en la contención de los riesgos específicos de cada grupo mediante los instrumentos de la protección social que sean pertinentes.

Las transferencias de efectivo han resultado ser efectivas para garantizar niveles de ingresos a la población más pobre para contener ciertos riesgos y proteger el consumo de bienes básicos, entre ellos los alimentos. Gracias a seis años de trabajo, es posible compartir con ustedes cinco desafíos generales en la agenda de la protección social regional y la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional:

(i) Sobre el rol de los PTC en la realización de derechos sociales. Los PTC, considerados como un elemento adicional de un conjunto amplio de políticas sociales, pueden contribuir eficazmente al alivio del hambre y la pobreza, así como también al combate de las causas que las generan. En consecuencia, son mecanismos que pueden favorecer el avance de los Estados en el cumplimiento de sus compromisos y obligaciones internacionales en materia de derechos humanos, constituyendo un primer paso para la realización de los derechos sociales de los más pobres, pero no reemplaza la necesidad de contar con un marco integral de políticas.

(ii) Maximizar los impactos sobre la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional desde la fase de diseño. La experiencia derivada de los PTC muestra que se pueden alcanzar y maximizar impactos sobre la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional cuando ésta es considerada una prioridad política y se desarrollan componentes de intervención específicos sobre los ámbitos de salud y nutrición, alimentación, educación e inclusión económica. De igual forma, la sostenibilidad de los resultados obtenidos y la pertinencia de las decisiones de mejora y desarrollo dependen de la existencia de un sistema adecuado de monitoreo y evaluación de cada programa en particular y la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional del país en general.

(iii) La importancia de contar con respuestas adecuadas ante situaciones de emergencia: Ya sea ante desastres naturales o crisis económicas, los programas de transferencias de ingresos tienen el potencial de flexibilizar su cobertura, beneficios y ritmo de implementación con el fin de atender las necesidades de la población más vulnerable que ve deteriorada su seguridad alimentaria y nutricional. Asimismo, las capacidades de información y gestión desarrolladas en el marco de los PTC tienen el potencial de presentar interacciones útiles con el conjunto de medidas destinadas a la superación de una crisis. Sin embargo, se debe señalar que le corresponde al conjunto de la institucionalidad pública elaborar planes de respuesta adecuados para cada tipo de contingencia e implementar de forma coordinada estrategias de asistencia

basadas en transferencias de ingresos y especies, política monetaria, política fiscal o marcos regulatorios según corresponda.

(iv) Egreso de los destinatarios e inclusión económica y social. La graduación de las familias no puede ser definida solo por la perspectiva fiscal, sino que debe buscar la inclusión económica de las familias de forma definitiva y sostenible sin deteriorar sus condiciones de existencia en el corto plazo. Los PTC pueden ser considerados como una puerta de entrada a la protección social por parte de las familias pobres e indigentes (principalmente las que tienen hijos en primera infancia y edad escolar), pero no como un mecanismo que reemplaza la implementación de un sistema de protección social integral en sus componentes no contributivo, contributivo y la regulación del mercado del trabajo.

(v) Enfoque de derechos. Entre los PTC y el enfoque de derechos humanos existe un vínculo práctico, en la medida de que se establezca un marco de respeto a los principios de igualdad y no discriminación, rendición de cuentas, participación y transparencia se hace posible concebir a la protección social como un derecho humano, al tiempo que se alcanzan mayores niveles de eficiencia y eficacia desde una perspectiva integral y se protegen los derechos y la dignidad de la población más vulnerable e históricamente discriminada, como los pobres, las mujeres y los indígenas. Un enfoque basado en derechos requiere también de un análisis del marco general de políticas en que los PTC se insertan y el cómo éste permite al Estado cumplir con sus obligaciones en materia de derechos humanos.

3) Sobre el vínculo de la protección social y los derechos humanos.

Con respecto a los vínculos específicos entre la protección social y los derechos humanos, durante el año 2011 el Proyecto de Apoyo a la Iniciativa América Latina y Caribe Sin Hambre realizó un fuerte desarrollo técnico y metodológico sobre la relación de los PTC y el enfoque de derechos humanos. Tomando como base el trabajo realizado por la Experta Independiente de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos y la Extrema Pobreza, Magdalena Sepúlveda y su informe presentado en marzo del año 2009 en el 11º periodo de sesiones del Consejo de Derechos Humanos (A/HRC/11/9), se organizó un taller de expertos de alto nivel con la participación de especialistas de FAO, CEPAL, la Oficina Regional para América del Sur del Alto Comisionado de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos (ACNUDH), PNUD, Banco Mundial y académicos. Los resultados de este taller constituyeron la base técnica para la elaboración de una Guía de Análisis práctica, utilizada para la preparación de las ponencias nacionales durante el VI Seminario “Los programas de transferencias condicionadas desde un enfoque de derechos humanos” (organizado de forma conjunta con CEPAL y ACNUDH en septiembre de 2011).

De lo anterior, se concluye que en cada programa se deben garantizar los derechos de sus destinatarios en un marco de respeto a los principios de igualdad y no discriminación, transparencia, rendición de cuentas y participación para el logro de una distribución progresiva de ingresos, marcos de operación no discriminatorios y el empoderamiento de los destinatarios. Algunas de las principales lecciones y desafíos son:

(i) Marcos jurídicos e institucionales: Aún queda pendiente el desafío de asegurar la transparencia y sostenibilidad de los programas y políticas sociales mediante el desarrollo de marcos jurídicos e institucionales adecuados, especialmente mediante la implementación y/o perfeccionamiento de sistemas nacionales de blindaje electoral, información pública, quejas y reclamos, rendición de cuentas y participación.

Solo se logrará un enfoque de derechos en el ámbito de los PTC en la medida de que se consolide la institucionalización de cada programa y se logren complementaciones dinámicas en el ámbito de su gestión con los marcos nacionales y locales de transparencia y contraloría social.

(ii) Condicionalidades y sanciones: Desde un enfoque de derechos, las condicionalidades no deben implicar un deterioro en el bienestar de los destinatarios. Sobre todo al considerar las brechas de cobertura y calidad de servicios sociales existentes en gran parte de los países de la región, las condicionalidades y sanciones deben implementarse en consideración del espacio socio-económico de cada comunidad, concibiendo estos mecanismos como una oportunidad para identificar brechas en la oferta de servicios sociales e incentivar el acceso de los destinatarios, evitando acciones que priven a los individuos de su derecho a la protección social.

Desde esta perspectiva, las condicionalidades no deben ser estáticas y se deben modificar en la medida que varían las condiciones sociales de los destinatarios. Cuando los programas progresan en su institucionalización, las condicionalidades van siendo asumidas por los destinatarios y se logra la universalización efectiva de los servicios de salud y educación a nivel nacional, cabe evaluar la pertinencia de implementar nuevos esquemas de condicionalidades para el fortalecimiento del capital humano.

Por otro lado, también se han planteado posturas que avalan la eliminación de las condicionalidades: en el caso del Bono de Desarrollo Humano del Ecuador se ha comenzado a discutir un nuevo esquema político conceptual de las transferencias de ingresos, cuyo énfasis no será solo la construcción de capital humano –el cual se seguiría fortaleciendo a través de políticas sectoriales-, sino el aseguramiento de un piso mínimo de protección social para la totalidad de la población en situación de pobreza y extrema pobreza.

(iii) Tres desafíos para la implementación del principio de igualdad y no discriminación en el marco de los PTC y el conjunto de la protección social: 1) la promoción de la igualdad formal, entendida como el conjunto de acciones y garantías para evitar exclusiones arbitrarias, errores en la selección de destinatarios y discrecionalidades por parte de los actores públicos involucrados; 2) la neutralización de impactos discriminatorios, entendiendo que aun cuando los programas pueden ser neutros desde su diseño éstos pueden tener impactos discriminatorios no previstos sobre grupos y colectivos especialmente vulnerables, lo que demanda grandes esfuerzos de evaluación y seguimiento; 3) avanzar en el entendimiento de la igualdad y la discriminación ya no como una garantía de trato idéntico, sino que como una garantía de trato diferenciado coherente con el logro de la igualdad de resultados para los distintos contextos socioeconómicos locales, las brechas de acceso a servicios públicos y, especialmente, las brechas de etnia y género persistentes en gran parte de América Latina y el Caribe y el mundo.

(iv) Temporalidad, graduación y la entrada permanente al sistema de protección social: El foco de los PTC sobre las familias con niñas y niños en primera infancia y edad escolar en situación de pobreza y extrema pobreza les permite definir una población objetivo amplia, dadas las características socioeconómicas y demográficas de los países de la región. No obstante, aún persiste un importante debate no resuelto sobre la temporalidad y permanencia de los destinatarios en los programas, las estrategias de graduación de las familias y la trayectoria de las mismas en el sistema de protección social.

Nuevamente, un enfoque de derechos exige el establecimiento de estrategias de graduación que garanticen la sostenibilidad de los resultados obtenidos por cada programa y la protección social de cada ciudadano en situación de pobreza mediante instrumentos pertinentes. La graduación de las familias no puede ser definida solo por la perspectiva fiscal, sino que debe buscar la inclusión social y económica de las familias de forma definitiva y sostenible sin deteriorar sus condiciones de existencia en el corto plazo.

(v) El desarrollo de una cultura de derechos: Si no se aplican los principios y recomendaciones desde un enfoque de derechos en el ámbito de toda la política social, es muy difícil que los destinatarios de programas específicos vean a la asistencia social como un derecho, y es más

probable que lo vean como una oferta asistencialista o clientelista. A nivel mundial, existe un déficit de la cultura de derechos y la región requiere de una mayor capacitación de políticos, administradores y destinatarios de forma complementaria a un conjunto de planes de largo plazo para la construcción de empoderamiento ciudadano.

(vi) Pactos sociales, derechos humanos y protección social: La pobreza y la inseguridad alimentaria trascienden el ámbito meramente técnico. La conformación de pactos fiscales, el vínculo de las intervenciones programáticas en el nivel doméstico con las estrategias macroeconómicas nacionales y las capacidades institucionales para la gestión social poseen un fuerte componente político. Por ello, la política social debe ser económicamente sostenible, socialmente inclusiva y democráticamente anclada, permitiendo el fortalecimiento del crecimiento económico, mayor cohesión social y legitimación política.

En el ámbito de la protección social, las características de las estructuras productivas con un alto grado de informalidad y precariedad implican que la seguridad social contributiva tiende a ser bastante baja y el pilar solidario (o no contributivo) debe por lo tanto hacerse cargo de amplios sectores poblacionales. Un enfoque de derechos implica no perder de vista la perspectiva y las interrelaciones entre los sistemas contributivos y no contributivos de protección social, resguardando que la cantidad cada vez mayor de ámbitos que han ido abarcando los programas de transferencia de ingresos no transformen a la política social en residual.

4) Sobre los principios de diseño de un sistema de protección social integral y políticas complementarias para el fortalecimiento de la seguridad alimentaria y nutricional: La inseguridad alimentaria es un problema multidimensional que exige respuestas de múltiples sectores. Si se logra articular un sistema de protección social integral (vale decir, un sistema capaz de responder a las necesidades de los distintos grupos pobres y vulnerables a lo largo de todo su ciclo de vida a través de la coordinación intersectorial en los distintos niveles de gobierno), su evaluación no debiese realizarse de forma restrictiva sobre el aumento de la cantidad y variedad del consumo de alimentos, sino que se deben ampliar los análisis hacia la forma en que cada Estado evita deteriorar (y promueve activamente) la seguridad alimentaria de sus ciudadanos a partir de políticas sectoriales articuladas con la protección social.

En familias de bajos ingresos familiares que se desenvuelven en un contexto marcado por el déficit de infraestructura y brechas de acceso y calidad de servicios básicos, la inseguridad alimentaria tiene más probabilidades de profundizarse, especialmente ante contingencias de orden natural y económico. En el corto plazo, el acceso al agua potable y el estado de salud de las personas es decisiva para la incidencia de la desnutrición, mientras que en el largo plazo el capital humano y la inclusión económica son claves para la sostenibilidad de los resultados. En este sentido, el desarrollo e institucionalización de sistemas integrales de protección social puede prestar servicios esenciales a las políticas sectoriales. Los sistemas de registro e información de beneficiarios de programas de protección social pueden ser de utilidad para la selección de destinatarios de políticas de fomento de la agricultura familiar, el cierre de brechas entre la oferta y demanda de servicios de salud y educación, y el acceso preferencial a capacitaciones y otros servicios sociales. Asimismo, no es sostenible que las estrategias de graduación de los programas de protección no se encuentren articulados con otras políticas agrícolas y comerciales, además de una adecuada regulación del mercado laboral, especialmente en el ámbito rural.

Tal como se ha comentado más abajo, un buen ejemplo de políticas complementarias a la protección social que han resultado ser de gran efectividad, es el vínculo entre los programas de alimentación escolar (en cuanto mecanismos de asistencia directa) y la adquisición de alimentos e insumos a la agricultura familiar mediante mecanismos públicos de compras inclusivas.

Saludos cordiales,

Pablo Faret
Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative Support Project
FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

[English translation]

Dear all,

In recent years, and following the massive adoption of the conditional cash transfer programs (CCT) between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and the significant coverage achieved for the most vulnerable, the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative Support Project has conducted six international seminars (site in Spanish <http://www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa/transcond.htm>) for the discussion and analysis of CCT and their relationship with food and nutrition security, convening experts from the academia and UN agencies, national program managers and State Ministers from all over the region. These meetings have focused their work on revealing the strengths and challenges of these programs within the framework of social protection and FSN. Based on our experience, find below several comments to the questions raised in the presentation of the discussion:

1) About the most effective instruments for addressing the food security issues:

Food insecurity has its origin in all types of social inequalities, food governance schemes and the characteristics of production institutions, the economy and labour market. Moreover, food insecurity reflects the severity and depth of poverty, raising the importance of: 1) strengthening local development to stop its territorial reproduction, 2) enhancing the construction of human and social capital to stop its inter-generational transmission; and 3) transversely strengthening the human rights approach to achieve an active citizenship and stop the exclusion processes.

In countries with low-middle income and high levels of vulnerability, volatility and informality, the implementation of social protection systems can be an essential part of the strategy against hunger, ensuring socio-economic welfare levels that allow the access to food for the most vulnerable.

Hence, rather than highlighting the importance of a single type of instrument, the strategy should be building a "policy menu", sufficient and appropriate for all the extremely poor, poor and vulnerable population. In other words, the implementation of comprehensive and inclusive social protection systems to meet the needs of the different vulnerable population and their life cycle, where transfers, social pensions and direct aid may have a fundamental role but do not deplete the range of actions relevant for food security, should be targeted.

In addition, the interaction between the non-contributory instruments and the contributory instruments, and the regulation of labour market institutions¹ to avoid the establishment of guarantees subsystems for the population according to their position in the labour market, generating as a result residual protection systems and the creation of two different citizens categories, should be considered and promoted.

2) About social protection's target population for food security and cash transfers:

¹ Cecchini and Martínez (2011). *Inclusive social protection in Latin America: A Comprehensive, Rights-Based Approach*. Santiago: ECLAC.

According to the definition shared by the former Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food, Jean Ziegler², and the current Rapporteur, Olivier De Schutter³, the right to food is the “right to have regular, permanent and free access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear”. In this sense, food and nutrition security is a mean to realize the right to food and its social protection interpretation should not be limited to the mere containment and relief of the extremely poor population, but should also include the poor and vulnerable non-poor population, ensuring access to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate food, free of fear, for each of these categories. In practice this implies restraining the specific risks of each group through appropriate social protection instruments.

Cash transfers have proved to be effective in ensuring income levels for the poor, restraining certain risks and protecting the consumption of basic goods, including food. Thanks to six years of work, five general challenges in the agenda of regional social protection and food and nutrition security can be shared:

(i) About the role of CCT in the realization of social rights. The CCT, considered as an additional element of a comprehensive set of social policies, can effectively contribute to hunger and poverty alleviation, as well as combating the causes that generate them. Therefore, they are mechanisms that can benefit the States progress in meeting their international commitments and obligations on human rights, constituting a first step towards the realization of the social rights of the poor, but not replacing the need for a comprehensive policy framework.

(ii) Maximize the impact on food and nutrition security from the design phase. The CCT experience shows that the impacts on food and nutrition security can be achieved and maximized when it is considered as a political priority and specific intervention components on health and nutrition, food, education and economic inclusion are developed. Similarly, the sustainability of the results obtained and the relevance of the improvement and development decisions depend on the existence of an adequate monitoring and evaluation system of each program in particular, and of the food and nutrition security of the country in general.

(iii) The importance of adequate responses to emergency situations: Either for natural disasters or economic crisis, income transfer programs yield flexible coverage, benefits and implementation schedule to meet the needs of the most vulnerable population that suffers the deterioration of its food and nutrition security. Also, information and management skills developed in the framework of the CCT provide useful interactions with the set of actions aimed at overcoming a crisis. However, it should be noted that all public institutions should develop appropriate response plans for each type of emergency and implement coordinated assistance strategies based on income and species transfers, monetary policy, fiscal policy and regulatory frameworks accordingly.

(iv) Graduation of recipients and economic and social inclusion. The graduation of the families can not be defined exclusively from a fiscal perspective; it must target the permanent and sustainable economic inclusion of families without deteriorating its living conditions in the short term. The CCT can be considered as a gateway to social protection for poor and indigent families (primarily those with children in early childhood and school age), but not as a mechanism that replaces the implementation of a

² [http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/f45ea4df67ecca98c1256a0300340453/\\$FILE/G0111035.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/f45ea4df67ecca98c1256a0300340453/$FILE/G0111035.pdf)

³ <http://www.srfood.org/index.php/en/right-to-food>

comprehensive social protection system in its non-contributory and contributory components and in the labour market regulation.

(V) Rights approach. There is a practical link between CCT and the human rights approach, if a respect framework for the principles of equality and non discrimination, accountability, participation and transparency is established. Social protection can be conceived as a human right, while reaching higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness from a comprehensive perspective, and the rights and dignity of the most vulnerable and historically discriminated population, like the poor, women and indigenous people, are protected. A rights-based approach also requires an analysis of the general policy framework in which the CCT are introduced and how it allows the State to meet its human rights obligations.

3) About the link between social protection and human rights.

Regarding the specific links between social protection and human rights, in 2011 the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative Support Project technically and methodologically developed the relationship between the CCT and the human rights approach. Based on the work of the United Nations Independent Expert for Human Rights and Extreme Poverty, Magdalena Sepúlveda⁴ and her report launched in march 2009 at the 11th session of the Human Rights Council (A / HRC / 11/9) ⁵, a high-level senior experts workshop⁶ was organized with the participation of FAO, ECLAC, Regional Office for South America of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNDP and World Bank experts and academics. The results of this workshop constituted the technical basis for the development of a **Practical Analysis Guide**⁷, used for the preparation of national presentations during the Sixth Seminar on "*Conditional transfer programs from a human rights approach*" (organized jointly with ECLAC and OHCHR in September 2011⁸).

From the above, it can be concluded that each program must guarantee the rights of its recipients in a respect framework for the principles of equality and nondiscrimination, transparency, accountability and participation, for the achievement of a progressive income distribution, non-discriminatory operating frameworks and empowering recipients. Some of the main lessons and challenges are:

(i) Legal and institutional frameworks: The challenge of ensuring the transparency and sustainability of social programs and policies by developing appropriate legal and institutional frameworks, particularly through the implementation and/or improvement of national systems of electoral protection, public information, complaints and claims, accountability and participation, is still pending.

A human rights approach will only be achieved in CCT when the institutionalization of each program is consolidated and the dynamic complementarities in the management field with national and local frameworks of transparency and social control are accomplished.

(ii) Conditionality and penalties: From a rights approach, conditionality should not imply deteriorating the recipients' welfare. Especially taking into account the coverage and quality gaps of the existing social services in most of the countries of the region,

4 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Poverty/Pages/SRExtremePovertyIndex.aspx>

5 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Poverty/Pages/SRExtremePovertyIndex.aspx>

6 http://www.rlc.fao.org/proyecto/iniciativa/expertos/index_en.htm

7 http://www.rlc.fao.org/proyecto/iniciativa/expertos/documentos/guia_1en-v1.pdf

8 The executive summary and the Seminar conclusions are available at http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/prioridades/seguridad/ingreso6_en/memoria_present.htm

conditionality and penalties should be implemented considering the socio-economic conditions of each community, conceiving these mechanisms as an opportunity to identify social services gaps and foster access for recipients, avoiding actions that deprive individuals of their right to social protection.

From this point of view, conditionality should not be static and must be modified according to the recipients' social conditions changes. When programs progress in their institutionalization, conditionality is assumed by the recipients and the effective globalization of health care and education at the national level is achieved. The adequacy of implementing new conditionality schemes for strengthening human capital should be assessed.

On the other hand, other approaches support the removal of conditionality: in the case of the Human Development Bond of Ecuador, a new conceptual political framework of income transfers has started to be discussed. The emphasis of this framework will not be placed only in the human capital construction - which would be further strengthened through sectoral policies - but in ensuring a minimum social protection threshold for the entire poor and extremely poor population.

(iii) Three challenges for the implementation of the equality and non discrimination principle in the context of CCT and social protection: 1) the promotion of formal equality, understood as the set of actions and guarantees to prevent arbitrary exclusion, targeting errors and discretionality of the public actors involved; 2) the neutralization of discriminatory impacts, since programs may be neutral when designed, they may have unexpected discriminatory impacts on vulnerable groups and collectives, requiring signification evaluation and monitoring efforts; 3) progressing in the understanding of equality and discrimination, not as a guarantee for equal treatment, but as a guarantee of differentiated treatment consistent with the achievement of equal outcomes for the different local socio-economic contexts, gaps in access to public services and, especially, remaining ethnic and gender gaps in most of Latin America and the Caribbean and around the world.

(iv) Temporariness, graduation and permanent entry to the social protection system: CCT are focused on poor and extremely poor families with children in early childhood and school age, allowing them to set a broad target population, given the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the countries of the region. However, a major unresolved debate about temporariness and permanence of the recipients in the programs, graduation strategies for family graduation and their path in the social protection system is still ongoing.

Again, a human rights approach requires the establishment of graduation strategies that ensure the sustainability of the results obtained by each program and the social protection of every poor citizen through adequate instruments. The graduation of the families can not be defined exclusively from a fiscal perspective; it must target the permanent and sustainable economic inclusion of families without deteriorating its living conditions in the short term

(v) Development of a rights culture: If the principles and recommendations are not applied from a rights approach for the entire social policy, recipients of specific programs will hardly see social assistance as a right, and will more likely perceive it as a patronage offer. Globally, there is a deficit in the rights culture and training of politicians, administrators and recipients needs to be enhanced in the region as a complement to long-term plans for citizen empowerment.

(vi) Social agreements, human rights and social protection: Poverty and food insecurity go beyond the merely technical field. The establishment of fiscal agreements, the link between program interventions at the household level and the national macroeconomic strategies and institutional capacities for social management have a strong political component. Therefore, social policy must be economically sustainable, socially inclusive and democratically consolidated, allowing the reinforcement of economic growth, social cohesion enhancement and political legitimacy.

Regarding social protection, the characteristics of production structures with a high informality and precariousness levels imply that social security contributions tend to be quite low and the solidarity pillar (or non-contributory) should therefore be responsible of large population sectors. A rights approach does not imply losing the perspective and interrelationships between contributory and non-contributory social protection systems, ensuring that the growing number of areas being covered by the income transfer programs do not convert social policy in a residual field.

4) About the design principles of a comprehensive social protection system and complementary policies for strengthening food and nutrition security:

Food insecurity is a multidimensional problem that requires multi-sectoral responses. If a comprehensive social protection system can be articulated (i.e a system capable of attending the needs of poor and vulnerable groups during their entire life through inter-sectoral coordination at different government levels), its evaluation should not be restricted to the rise of quantity and variety of food consumed, but analysis should be expanded to the way in which each State avoids deteriorating (and actively promotes) the food security of its citizens through sectoral policies based on the social protection.

In low-income families with infrastructure deficits and limitations regarding the access and quality of basic services, the intensification of food insecurity is more likely, especially when contingencies of natural and economic origin arise. In the short term, access to clean water and health status are crucial for malnutrition incidence, while in the long term human capital and economic inclusion are essential for the results sustainability. In this sense, the development and institutionalization of integrated social protection systems can provide essential services to sectoral policies. Registration and information systems gathering beneficiaries of social protection programs can be useful for selecting beneficiaries of family farming promotion policies, closing gaps between supply and demand for health and education services, and having preferential access to training and other social services. Additionally, graduation strategies for protection programs need to be coordinated with other agricultural and trade policies, along with an adequate regulation of the labour market, especially in rural areas.

As discussed below, a good example of complementary policies to social protection that have proved to be highly effective, is the link between the school feeding programs (as direct assistance mechanisms) and the acquisition of food and inputs for family farming through public inclusive procurement mechanisms.

Best regards,

Pablo Faret

Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative Support Project
FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

6. Stuart Clark, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Canada

This report is exceptionally well organized with a clear logic to each section. This greatly increases the value of the document. It should be noted, however, that it needs a careful copy edit – there are many typos, some of which seriously obscure the meaning of the sentence involved. Similarly there are places where exceptionally long sentences make for difficult reading (e.g. Section 2.4.4). These weaknesses are easily remedied.

The tension between the greater ‘cost efficiency’ of targeted interventions and their social and political costs are well identified. Universal coverage is quickly rejected, despite the fact that it has some strong and political benefits. It should be noted that income tax systems are a way out of this dilemma – by allowing for targeting ex post through the implicit claw-back of the transfer in the income tax structure. While requiring a functioning system of tax collection, this is becoming increasingly possible in many countries.

The discussion of use of national food reserves to counter the impacts of international food price shocks fails to recognize the successful use of such reserves by India and Indonesia during the 2007/8 and 2010 food price crises. The report notes the difficulty of using targeted safety nets to respond to rapid onset domestic price shocks which create new vulnerable populations. Perhaps more should be included about how these two countries were able to avoid domestic price shocks thus making their existing safety net programs more effective.

7. Keetie Roelen, Institute of Development Studies, UK

I would like to applaud the members of the HLPE with the zero draft of this report. It provides a strong overview and analysis of linkages between food security and social protection and compiles evidence on a range of social protection interventions and its impact on food security and nutrition outcomes in a very clear and systematic manner. This zero draft serves as a strong foundation for addressing the various questions underlying this study. I have two comments about the theoretical framing of this report, referring to both food security and social protection.

The report starts with setting out a very clear conceptual framework for the determinants of food security, focusing on settings, resources, activities and outcomes. The examples of social protection interventions such as school feeding programmes and public works programmes are very useful in illustrating how social protection can impact such determinants. (I find Figure 1 less useful – the various boxes and links between health, care and behaviour and food intake are not discussed in the text nor explained. The explanation in the text is clear enough and doesn’t need the figure for extra clarification; if the figure is kept in, I would suggest adding an explanation in the text on the various boxes and linkages, or removing them altogether) Despite the usefulness of this conceptual framework, other frameworks are introduced in further sections in the report to discuss linkages between social protection and food security. In section 1.3.3, on page 19, Amartya Sen’s entitlement approach is introduced instead, and consequently used as a starting point for discussion of social protection instruments for food security in chapter 3. The entitlement approach and its four sources of food work equally well in terms of a conceptual framework underpinning the notion of food security in this report, but consistency throughout the report is important to avoid confusion and strengthen the arguments.

My second comment with respect to the report’s theoretical framing refers to the discussion of social protection definitions and conceptual framework. The distinction between definitions and conceptual frameworks, and their separate discussions in sections 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 feels artificial, and is confusing at places. For example, there is a tension between the discussions of safety nets as an instrumental function (bottom page 14) and social safety nets as a conceptual framework

(page 15). In section 1.3.1, safety nets are denoted to help the poor cope with shocks, whilst the reference to Lipton's work in section 1.3.2.1 explicitly states that social safety nets should extend their focus beyond short-term support. Another example where the distinction between definitions and conceptual frameworks does not quite hold is the discussion of the social protection floor in section 1.3.2.4; the components of essential services and essential social transfers and 'essential guarantees' elude to instrumental and normative functions of a comprehensive social protection package rather than suggest a distinct conceptual framing of social protection.

Best of luck with the completion of this report.

Keetie Roelen
Research Fellow
Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
UK

8. Andrew MacMillan, Italy

Friends,

This paper has been written by a very distinguished team of authors. It is not surprising, therefore, that it provides an admirable overview of social protection concepts and experience.

What it fails to do – and presumably this is the main remaining task for the authors – is to come up with a set of practical conclusions and recommendations. The fact that the last chapter focuses on “unresolved issues” could have the unfortunate effect of make the reader feel that there are so many potential hazards associated with social protection that it is better to sit and wait to learn more before taking any action.

Presumably what the HLPE needs to be able to do, on the basis of this document, is to arrive at a set of recommendations to the CFS on the actions that governments that are committed to ending hunger could be advised to consider in relation to social protection.

While acknowledging that every country is faced with different issues and opportunities, I wonder whether one could not draw at least the following broadly applicable conclusions from the evidence that the authors have presented.

To the extent that hunger is mainly a problem of the inability of poor people to gain access to food, little progress towards reducing chronic and seasonal hunger will be achieved in the absence of social protection programmes. Thus social protection is an essential ingredient of any national programme for ending hunger.

1. Social protection programmes also have a vital role to play in protecting the assets and food security of populations exposed to frequent shocks, preventing them from the risk of falling into acute hunger and famine situations.
2. To be fully effective social protection programmes must be able to reach all food insecure families, both rural and urban.
3. Social protection support must be predictable both in timing and value, with the value adjusted for food price inflation.
4. Social protection programmes based on cash transfers or vouchers are logistically simpler than those based on food transfers, less costly to run, and stimulate rather than upset local markets.

5. Cash transfers leave the choice on spending priorities to the beneficiaries (and evidence shows that they make good choices, especially if transfers are made through adult women in the families).
6. The costs of such social protection programmes will be cut – and their perceived fairness increased – if they are targeted with reasonable accuracy on those families that are most exposed to chronic hunger and vulnerability to shocks.
7. Given that most countries in which there is a high incidence of hunger and vulnerability to shocks face tight fiscal constraints and have limited institutional capacities, social protection programmes should be designed to be as low in cost and simple as possible.
8. Non-conditional cash transfers are simpler to manage than conditional transfers and present fewer barriers to entry for the poorest families: they also avoid the problem that many countries have of lack of institutional capacity to provide adequate education or health care, when school attendance and health check-ups are part of conditionality.
9. Linking participation in social protection programmes to participation in labour-intensive public works programmes is best avoided (at least initially) because it greatly increases management costs and complexity and is likely to exclude those people who, because of their hunger, are unable to perform heavy manual work.
10. Once a minimalist social protection programme is in place, it can serve as a foundation on which to progressively build other activities aimed at improving nutrition, health and food security (e.g. nutrition education, food supplements for mothers and children, support for subsistence farming, school meals, skills training etc).
11. Social protection programmes, targeted on poor families do not create but reduce dependencies, enabling beneficiaries to escape from the hunger trap, live in better health and for longer, learn better at school, participate in labour markets etc.
12. Social protection programmes stimulate to economic growth mainly by translating food needs into demand and enabling people large numbers of people, formerly excluded from employment, to work effectively.
13. National efforts to reduce food insecurity through social protection will be all the more effective if steps are taken internationally to reduce food price volatility.

No doubts other participants will be able to add to this list.

Andrew MacMillan

9. Moushymi Chaudhury, CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, Kenya

This report provides an excellent overview of what different people mean by social protection and how programs are being implemented. However, the definition of social protection needs to be expanded.

I very much agree with Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) definition of social protection when they state that it can comprise of both formal and informal initiatives to assist the poor to reduce the impact of shocks. However, this report does not provide much evidence of informal social protection beyond networks.

For instance, evidence shows that people can rely on informal institutions or customary law to create social protection measures that allow farmers to carry out practices that minimizes their impact on climate hazards such as droughts. Farmers in Malawi for instance, are able to rely on their traditional chiefs for conflict resolution to restore practices that allow farmers to plant “fertilizer trees” that retain soil moisture and minimize the impact of shocks, such as droughts. Hence, people have their own social protection systems without external influence.

Furthermore, the report should expand the definition of social protection to look at issues of ecological resilience, especially when designing social protection initiatives that address climate

shocks and agriculture. One of the shortcomings of social protection is that it offers temporary and short term relief. However, encouraging farmers to plant “fertilizer trees” that retain social moisture not only minimize the impacts of droughts, but also protects farmers’ income. Therefore, building ecological resilience to shocks also needs to be incorporated in social protection measures if these measures are to address long term solution to climate shocks. For additional reading on informal social protection and ecological resilience, please see a working paper by CGIAR scientists entitled “Linking Social Protection and Adaptive Capacity to Minimize Risk of Drought through Agroforestry in Zambia and Honduras” (<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/downloads/publications/PDFs/WP11269.PDF>)

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10. Oxfam International

Oxfam International comments the HLPE report – Social Protection for Food Security – A zero draft consultation paper, 19th March’12

1. Oxfam applauds the effort put in by the HLPE to collate evidence on such a complex and layered subject as food security and social protection. We appreciate that most sections have a conclusion which pulls key points from the discussion on that particular issue. We also appreciate the clear and simple structure of the report which makes reading easy.
2. While the report clearly states in the beginning (pag7) that *‘It provides an evidence-based review of social protection interventions that have food security interventions or outcomes. Second, it supports efforts to frame social protection for food security in the context of two related human rights: the right to social security and the right to food’*, it does not articulate the overall purpose behind doing this work i.e what was the need for this report, or how will this help policy makers or what is the recommendation to policy makers in countries on food security focused social protection. We will suggest that either this is clarified in the beginning of the report or a section on key recommendations be added in the end for policy makers. We also suggest that the report is reduced in length to encourage reading by policy makers.
3. Section 2 sets a strong human rights foundation for social protection, however, we are disappointed to note that the following sections i.e 3 &4 do not link very well with section 2. Oxfam’s experience of working on social protection and food security, indicates that there is a tension between a human rights approach and a needs based approach to social protection. We notice this tension in the document as well, and would appreciate if the authors spell it out more clearly in the document. Fully supporting the rights based approach, we acknowledge that there are no clear and easy answers to this but presenting them clearly can help in decision making. The analysis of the different instruments and remaining issues could more consistently refer to the rights based approach.

4. It is well known that women face multiple forms of discrimination owing to their gender and this has been mentioned in the report in some places as well. While addressing gender-based discrimination requires a multi-dimensional approach, Oxfam believes that social protection can play a very crucial role in addressing gender equality and empowering women. Therefore, we are disappointed with the lack of consistency in weaving gender considerations in the entire text. Women's empowerment should be at the heart of social protection in general but more so for addressing food security. Women are not only producers but are also consumers of food and shoulder the responsibility of feeding the family. The multiple roles played by women in achieving household level food security and their own needs at different stages of their lifecycle requires a gendered lens while analysing the social protection instruments discussed in section 3. We expect the next draft to give more serious consideration to gender analysis.
5. Oxfam appreciates the use of the framework based on Amartya Sen's work on entitlement approach. It does provide a good starting point, however, we expect the authors to distinguish between chronic food insecurity and acute & temporary food insecurity. These situations require different social protection responses. The report refers to price volatility and a changing context of increasing risks. The report could elaborate more about the impacts of increased climatic and price shocks and resources scarcity on vulnerability/poverty traps and the consequences of it in the design of social protection. More attention could be given on recent evidence of innovative approaches to increase resilience towards risks. In its current form, the report appears more focused on chronic food insecurity and responses to it. This excludes the range of evidence that exists within the humanitarian sector on the use of specific social protection instruments in humanitarian crisis and the links between humanitarian response & longer term social protection. Some of these can be accessed from 'The Cash Learning Partnership' (a joint initiative of Oxfam GB, Save the Children, British Red Cross, Action against Hunger and Norwegian Refugee Council). This consortium maintains a range of evidence on the use of cash transfers in emergencies.
6. Oxfam believes that the 'Right to Food' is applicable to everybody regardless of where he/she lives. This then brings into question the issue of social protection measures to address food insecurity of people living in politically fragile contexts. These are also the contexts where state structures and systems are extremely weak and fractured. Indeed in such contexts, people need social protection to not only meet their survival needs but also to adapt their livelihoods. Oxfam's experience of working on social protection in fragile states such as Yemen, Palestine, Haiti, and Iraq highlights the importance of a good analysis of fragility along with the need to coordinate with agencies with an explicit humanitarian mandate. In West-Africa our programmes highlight the importance on how social protection measures relate to social support networks. We will appreciate some consideration to social protection for addressing food insecurity in fragile contexts, in the next version of the report.
7. Oxfam commends the range of information and analysis provided on Social Protection instruments for addressing food insecurity. We also appreciate and understand the principle behind the choice of largely state implemented social protection measures, however, Oxfam does believe that there are other innovative efforts albeit small scale

that are implemented by CSOs. Some of these are mentioned in brief eg. BRAC's CFPR/TUP, Concern Worldwide's DECT programme. Oxfam too has some innovative models in the field such as the PSNP/safety net linked weather indexed insurance programme in Ethiopia and the protection, prevention and promotion linked safety net programme in Mali. The Ethiopian pilot is now being expanded to Senegal through R4 Rural Resilience Initiative and shows high take-up rates, most likely because it has been designed closely with farmers and because PSNP participants may pay for insurance with labor on community risk reduction projects.

8. As agreed by the CFS, Oxfam supports a reassessment of the efficiency and constraints of local and national food reserves. On the basis of different cases of food reserves it recommends innovative and complementary instruments to improve the efficacy of food reserves, while at the same time addressing market failures and providing benefits and incentives to small-scale farmers. Experiences in Asia show that government food reserves can be relatively successful. Specific suggestions to link grain reserves and social protection should include public procurement schemes that focus on smallholders. The Purchase 4 Power (P4P) programme of WFP illustrates the potential benefits of it. Grain reserves can also be linked to school feeding, and experience in Ethiopia, studied by IFPRI, shows both have the potential to be mutually reinforcing.
9. Section 4 is useful and lays out unresolved issues in social protection thinking and practice. Oxfam's experience indicates that there are some more unresolved issues that have a direct bearing on social protection. One such issue is the **'value of transfer'** for addressing food security. In case of food transfers, there are debates about the adequacy of food transfers from the perspective of a nutritionally adequate diet, as such transfers tend to fulfil calorific thresholds. In the case of cash transfers, this becomes especially important while talking about the adequacy of transfer to buy adequate quantity and quality of food from the markets, to support graduation, and in the context of self targeted public works programme where wages are set below the market value etc. While this issue is mentioned passing within sub-sections, we believe that the issue deserves to be discussed separately.
10. Oxfam fully subscribes the need to stabilise food prices as social protection, though would recommend to focus more on livelihoods and income rather than food prices alone. The relation between prices and income is often complex and have differentiated impacts. While we agree that governments should be prepared to address high and volatile prices, we question, from the proposed right to food framework, the assertion that it is unlikely that rich countries will address some of the root causes of volatility, like biofuels demand. The CFS provides the forum to address these issues at global level and ensure coordinated and coherent policy responses to food insecurity. The chapter could explore more differentiated social protection policies according to different typologies of policy environment. To be efficient social protection do need to be complemented by additional policy measures, as highlighted. Because none can be seen as optimal on their own, propositions of mutually reinforcing policy instruments could be explored according to context specific typology, and specific recommendations could be made to develop transition processes to promote and protect the right to food and the right to social protection.

11. Lizzy Igbine, Nigerian Women Farmer Association, Nigeria

To us in Africa Social Protection is an acronym because it comes as a result of Sustainability so I leave it until the appropriate time when we can meet our food target and achieve food security.

12. Alexandre Meybeck, FAO, Italy

This report is very welcome, including for non specialists, as social protection is now being considered in various arenas, including for instance about adaptation to climate change, most often as “safety nets”. The VO is quite interesting once you get into it and provides very valuable conceptual material for thought, including the human rights perspective. As such it could probably become a valuable reference for specialists. At this stage it is difficult to see how it will finally answer the request from CFS as this would first need a better understanding of vulnerability itself which is now lacking. This, including an analysis of its components and drivers, would then enable to better link social protection instruments to specific issues and/or specific situations.

Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted? Which instruments should be avoided, and why? Should interventions in food markets designed to stabilise prices be used?

Considering this question would first require a better analysis of vulnerability to food insecurity, of its components and drivers, including to various types of risks. It would require a typology of “problems of food insecurity” to which could be confronted the various instruments in order to consider their effectiveness, in various situations. An essential distinction here would probably be between temporary food problems, resulting from a particular shock, and permanent food security problems, requiring probably different tools.

Here it is also the ultimate aim which has to be considered : is it to reduce the impact of a shock, that is to compensate for vulnerability (short term) or to reduce vulnerability (on the long term)?

Another important consideration is the type of food problems, and populations, that each type of tools address. Such a classification, (a good example is table 13 of the HLPE report on price volatility) could facilitate comparison of potential effects, backed when possible with concrete evidence, in different situations. It would also facilitate a “social risk management” perspective.

The draft briefly considers risk management (1.3.2.2), without totally elucidating the relations between insurance, social security and social protection. It could be an opportunity to consider such frameworks of risk management (see in particular work by OECD) where frequent risks of reduced impact are deemed to be undertaken by individuals, risks which are both less frequent and which impact is of a higher magnitude by insurance mechanisms (spreading risks) and very scarce and catastrophic events by the State. It would also make easier the discussion about insurance in the third part.

Strictly speaking, insurance mechanisms do not seem to me to be, as such, social protection tools. They can be used as such, if public authorities either make them compulsory or promote them, for instance by subsidies. And it is true that most insurance protection schemes against crop failure are heavily subsidized, particularly in developed countries. As such they can probably be considered as an element of social protection. A proper analysis should distinguish

between insurances covering assets (livestock, perennial crops), covering a specific investment (seeds, fertilizers), especially when bought by credit and those covering the loss of the crop itself.

Community mechanisms, such as cattle lending in pastoral societies for instance, should also be considered.

The discussion on the effectiveness of tools should take into consideration interactions between them and coherent strategies involving various tools (for instance the Fame Zero program in Brazil). It should also consider local specificities, particularly conditions to make them effective, potential undesired effects and remedial options to them.

Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid? Do social transfers cause 'dependency syndrome'? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?

The choice of tools, modalities, targets, very much depends on the aim of the program; whether it is to address temporary impacts of a shock or to reduce vulnerability. This could also feed in the discussion on conditional or unconditional (which would be easier to follow if it were all in the same place instead of being dispersed in various parts of the draft.

Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported? Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? grievance mechanisms? legislation? What are the challenges to strengthening the rights foundations of social protection, and how can they be overcome?

What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security? Should impact on nutritional status be seen primarily through dietary diversity and food consumption, or extend into broader nutrition security and encompass also security for water, sanitation, disease control and arrangements for special care of vulnerable groups like women and young children? Which agricultural, trade and other policies should complement social protection for more sustainable food security outcomes? What are the appropriate roles for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security?

A broader discussion about vulnerability and risk management would also enable to better understand the relationships between social protection and other policies. To a great extent, and the use of the notion of "safety nets" would confirm that interpretation, I would see more social protection tools as complementing (or compensating) other policies than the reverse.

13. Florence Egal, FAO, Italy

First congratulations to the authors on the draft document. A couple of comments for consideration

1/ The introduction section, and the paper as a whole should give more attention to nutrition, since the nutrition world (in particular NGOs and academic institutions) is actively engaged in social protection issues.

At its High-level meeting of the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) hosted by the European Commission in Brussels in November 2009[1], participants reconfirmed their

common understanding that nutrition was the outcome of a combination of determinants related to food, health and care, and that good nutrition would therefore require the integration of food security, public health and social protection.

In its March 2008 statement Actions to be taken in Relation to Global Obligations for the Right to Food, the SCN Working Group on Nutrition, Ethics and Human Rights acknowledged “that states, acting through their national governments, have primary responsibility for ensuring the realization of the right to food, and agrees that the global community should do what it can to strengthen the capacity of national governments and others to carry out their commitments to address the major problems of malnutrition. (...) that malnutrition persists largely because some governments remain unable or unwilling to take the actions needed to solve the problems. Many are simply too poor. The global community as a whole needs to acknowledge that it has specific obligations in those cases, both to strengthen the national governments, and also to provide support services to people in need so long as their governments are unable or unwilling to provide such services.”

At the 19th International Congress of Nutrition (ICN) in Bangkok in October 2009 on the theme “Nutrition Security for all”, social protection programmes (and in particular conditional cash transfer programmes in Latin America) were given specific attention. It is likely this theme will be brought up again at the 20th ICN (15-20 September, Granada, Spain).

The issue will probably also be raised at World Nutrition Rio 2012 – Knowledge, Policy, Action (27-30/4) http://www.wphna.org/rio2012_oct2010.asp

Linkages between these different processes should be established for better synergy

2/ The challenge for a nutritionist is to ensure that families and communities are able to provide food, health and care to their members, and in particular to small children. People’s livelihoods need to be protected, strengthened and/or reoriented – with a view to maximize positive impact and minimize negative consequences - and local services made available.

Priority attention should be given to traditional solidarity networks which need to be revived and strengthened. Those have often been eroded or have broken down due to major changes in lifestyles, economic systems and oblivion. They are an essential dimension of social capital and can contribute to local employment.

Florence Egal

14. Concern Worldwide, UK

Concern Worldwide welcome the opportunity to input into the HLPE consultation on the ‘Social Protection for Food Security’ report. We have provided overall feedback on the V0 draft, which also answers some of the specific questions in the consultation. The Report is comprehensive, clear and easy to follow. We suggest that the final report will benefit from consideration of the following:

1. The importance of social protection systems: The report lists a variety of social protection instruments. However aside from a couple of passing mention to ‘social protection system’ there is no mention of the importance of a cohesive systems approach to social protection rather than ad hoc or standalone social protection programmes. There has been a great deal of realisation over the years as to the importance of this and such an approach is now the basis of the SPF and the new World Bank strategy on social protection and labour. Different instruments will be appropriate in different contexts and to address the vulnerabilities of particular groups. A comprehensive systems approach, governed by a policy and a strategy, will encompass a variety of instruments which collectively meet the needs of all people. It would be good for the report to have a section on the merits of a systems approach vis a vis food security.

2. Linking to complementary policies: Social protection instruments can only achieve so much. Ultimately social protection must be supported by complementary policies which address the underlying causes of food insecurity – such as improving the marginal productivity of smallholder farmers, or chronic unemployment through a comprehensive labour strategy. The ‘graduation model’ is useful for highlighting the multi-sectoral and complementary policies and programmes required if social protection recipients are not to be provided with assistance as a permanent state but move towards greater self-reliance.

3. Comparison of emergency versus permanent social assistance: The report does make reference to social protection as temporary social assistance in emergencies, in the section conceptualising social protection under 1.3.2.2 social risk management.

‘Three types of strategies are identified to manage risks.

Risk reduction: ex ante actions to increase the level of expected income or reduce fluctuations in income;

Risk mitigation: ex ante actions to reduce income variance if a shock occurs (e.g. crop diversification, holding assets with different risk characteristics, insurance);

Risk coping: ex post actions to alleviate the impact of a shock (e.g. borrowing, selling assets, charity, means-tested transfers, public works programmes);

Public actions to help people ‘cope’ with risks – emergency food aid, social grants, public works projects – are usually introduced in the absence of effective risk reduction and mitigation measures, or after these have failed or have been exhausted. So there is an implicit hierarchy: risk reduction measures (e.g. raising incomes or assets) are preferred to risk mitigation (e.g. insurance) which is preferable to risk coping (which is a last resort). Social risk management is a useful framework for considering linkages between social protection and food security, because, for instance, farmers face risks and shocks such as droughts and seasonal hunger, while market-dependent consumers face risks of food price inflation’, p16-17).

The report would benefit from a discussion on the relative merits of the shorter term protection measures in response to such shocks, versus longer term social assistance systems in reducing the exposure of households to such risks. Short term emergency approaches should at least be included more explicitly under section 3.7 Unconditional Cash Transfers and also under the use of vouchers (presently under 3.4.2).

4. Community traditions of social protection and mutual assistance: The report would benefit from a discussion on the merits of community, or traditional, social protection systems; for example evidence on the extent to which mechanisms (a) reach the most vulnerable; (b) are being eroded through the increasing frequency and severity of shocks and stresses; (c) are being eroded/impacted by externally provided assistance programmes; (d) should be supported. Part (c) is of interest in light of the quote on p24 of the Human Right to Social Security: ‘the obligation includes --- refraining from engaging in any practice or activity that --- interferes with self-help or customary or traditional arrangements for social security’.

5. Clarification on the Determinants of Food Security (section 1.2): This is a small comment – but we find the conceptualisation of ‘time’ difficult. The report appears to equate ‘time’ with available labour for productive work – in which case it would seem the standard Sustainable Livelihoods concept of capital assets would suffice? Several of these capitals are referred to in the paragraph; it would be useful if all 6 capitals were mentioned. The document states that ‘governments can increase physical and human capital’. Governments have a role to play in how households can access other capitals besides these two; it’s not clear why these two have been highlighted specifically. Finally it is not clear where agricultural inputs/asset transfers fit on the conceptual framework schematic (Fig 1). It would make sense for all the different instruments mentioned in the report to be factored into this diagram.

6. **Revision of Section 3.4 Food Subsidies:** We found the section limited and potentially confusing. Food commodity vouchers have not only been used in response to the food price crisis; they have also not been the only social protection instrument employed in response to the price volatility (cash transfers and unconditional vouchers were also used). The example provided for Malawi (p49) is not a voucher programme, it provides a food distribution and/or a cash transfer. It is also not clear where direct food assistance from WFP/NGOs fits – does this come under targeted food subsidies in section 3.4.2? We suggest this section needs to be revisited. It would make more sense to have vouchers either as a section in its own right (i.e. not under food subsidies) or to have a discussion on vouchers as an alternative to cash transfers later in section 3. There is much more evidence relating to vouchers that could be included.

7. **Revisiting Empowerment:** Empowerment currently has a standalone section under social protection instruments (3.9). Empowerment isn't a social protection instrument and this isn't a logical place for the discussion. This would be better placed in the discussion on rights, or as a cross cutting issue.

8. **More Detail on the Appropriateness of 'Public Works' for Food Security:** whilst there is certainly value to be had in public works schemes as an instrument providing short term employment guarantees during periods of reduced labour demand and also, when properly designed and implemented, from the output of the 'work' itself, too often such public works schemes have been implemented in other contexts where they are not the most appropriate instrument. We welcome the conclusions of the report in relation to public works (p45). The report could go further however:

Cash for Work activity is often chosen because it sits well with the politics of certain donors and governments (and also NGOs) that hold with the rationale that the poor should 'work' for their money. This is summarised very well in a paper by ODI which reviewed close to 300 public works schemes in Africa. The paper concludes that (a) most of these schemes are conceived as standalone, short-term schemes designed for short surges in supply in the labour market and as such are inappropriate responses for many contexts where the problem is actually chronic under-employment; (b) the value of the output of the work completed is often questionable; (c) from the perspective of food security compliance with public works can in fact make households worse off if the work condition takes them away from essential farming activities or if the work undertaken increases energy expenditure by more than the wage enables them to consume⁹. We stress that the findings of this review should be highlighted in the report.

The report mentions (p42) that the PSNP 'has demonstrated that this instrument can be effective in dealing with recurrent drought-induced food security and improve the country's resilience to shocks'. However no evidence is cited in the report. It is not clear whether it is the cash transfer, or the output from the works component, or both, which is useful – this should be made clear in the case study 3.3.2.

However there are public work actions which could support households and communities to directly improve their future productivity - particularly in the face of increasing shocks from climate change. In the Sahel Concern has invested similarly in cash for work activities for conservation agriculture on recipient's own and community land. Households are supported with an income during periods of low labour demand whilst still being able to invest time in their own production, and the work that is undertaken improves agricultural productivity on degraded land, improving production in areas prone to drought. The potential of these more innovative 'public works' for food security should be mentioned.

9. **Evidence of the Merits of Graduation:** This is an area which is of great interest to Concern. We welcome the recognition in the report of the limitations of narrowly conceived notions of graduation which base graduation/programme exit upon arbitrarily set income thresholds or enrolment periods can present. Early evidence indicates that the BRAC approach

⁹ McCord and Slater (2009) 'An Overview of Public Works Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa', Report prepared by ODI on behalf of the World Bank

to graduation, now also being piloted in various countries funded by CGAP/Ford Foundation is to date having considerable positive impacts on the lives of the poorest. Perhaps more evidence from the experiences with this approach could be included in the final version. For example, it is clear from the emerging evidence that the poorest households require considerable investment if they are to graduate from dependence on social assistance to an independent livelihood without external support. This includes the importance of a psycho-social component in order to build confidence and reduce exclusion; the importance of business and management skills; and the need for market linkages.

10. Targeting: Section 3.4.5 Lessons from Experience of Food Subsidies concludes that there is a need to explore alternative and cost effective approaches to targeting to reduce the current inclusion and exclusion error rate. We agree that targeting needs to be improved; however this is needed for the targeting of social protection systems more generally and is a more general conclusion than specific to food subsidies. Also it is not clear how the solutions proposed (geographical and self targeting) alone are going to solve the problem. There is a need for improved verification and an accountability mechanism with complaints/redress facility to deal with errors that occur.

11. Conditionality: Whilst Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) have indeed been successful at achieving certain results that can be said to contribute to improved human development and thus food security outcomes, unconditional transfers are also known to have been successful and the evidence for whether the conditionality itself adds value is inconclusive. An in depth study commissioned by the World Bank¹⁰ acknowledges that the question of whether the cash or the condition matter more to outcomes, and whether similar outcomes could be obtained through unconditional cash transfers (UCTs) remains unanswered. The report should reference this document. Whilst p55 does acknowledge that it isn't clear what is the added value of the condition itself this is not apparent on p53 in the discussion of the outcomes of various CCTs in South America.

We recommend that any conditions need to be carefully considered and that in low income contexts, initiatives that promote improved access to services may need to come before conditions. Consideration could also be given in the report to soft conditions (i.e. conditions which are not monitored and enforced). Finally there is an interesting perspective of the political benefit of conditionality¹¹ which it would be useful to mention.

12. More Evidence on the Rights Based Approach: We appreciate that the report cannot include everything, also that the India MGNREGS programme is highlighted in the report under the section on public works. However this is arguably the global flagship programme with respect to adopting an entitlements approach to social protection and we suggest that the report is amended to include experiences of adopting a rights based approach to social protection in section 2.4. We suggest this section could highlight the work of civil society in improving accountability of this scheme and support for the poorest to demand their rights from government 12.

10 Fiszbein and Schady (2009) 'Conditional Cash Transfers – Reducing Present and Future Poverty', World Bank

11 Pritchett (2012) 'Impact Evaluation and Political Economy: What Does the "Conditional" in "Conditional Cash Transfers" Accomplish?', Centre for Global Development opinion piece

12 Datta and Pradhan (2010) Addressing Challenges of Social Assistance Schemes: Community Centred Rights Based Approach in Orissa, India', Concern Worldwide Learning Documentation Series No 1

15. Charles Knox-Vydmanov, HelpAge International, UK

In general, the paper succeeds in providing a broad overview of conceptual frameworks and design decisions for social protection. However, it does not adequately explore the role of government-owned entitlements-based social security systems on food security.¹³

In answer to the question “*Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted?*” there is a clear evidence that government-owned systems of social security based on claimable entitlements are the most effective at increasing food security in the long term. There is no one model of what these systems look like, but countries including Brazil and Chile in Latin America, various countries in Southern Africa (particularly South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Mauritius), China, Thailand and Nepal among others have taken or are taking meaningful steps to do this. Most Central Asian countries also maintain the remnants of relatively comprehensive social security systems that continue to provide income security to a large part of the population. This is in addition to most OECD countries that continue to sustain substantial social security systems that systematically reduce poverty and inequality.

The reasons that such systems can be expected to be most effective are relatively obvious, and include:

- **Coverage:** Where social protection is financed externally there are significant limitations on the scale of programmes. This relates to a range of issues including limits on donor funding as well as questions as to whether it would be desirable for donors to fund large programmes they could not necessarily sustain. Many of the programmes mentioned in the paper (Mchinji, Kalomo etc) pale in insignificance to even modest national-scale social protection entitlements. The PSNP in Ethiopia is perhaps an exception in terms of scale, but is still relatively modest in terms of cost and coverage. Systems that are owned by governments and financed from internal resources are far better positioned in the long term to cover more people and ensure greater food security.
- **Sustainability:** Entitlements-based social protection systems are also far more sustainable than those provided within a short-term programmatic framework. Such entitlements are usually negotiated through democratic processes and embedded in legal frameworks meaning they are much harder to withdraw. The sustainability of these systems also means that they have greater capacity to improve resilience in the long term. By providing regular, predictable income they increase the ability of individuals, households and families to deal with shocks and stresses, while boosting these systems during macro-level crises can provide a countercyclical measure.

The paper, however, fails to adequately investigate a number of issues that are central to the development of such systems. In particular:

- Who owns the social protection scheme/system?

Throughout the paper, schemes are compared principally on the basis of design variables, with very little attention paid to who they were designed by, and who funds them. For example, there is discussion of the rights component of the Hunger Safety Net Programme with little consideration that it is externally-funded and implemented by a number of non-government organisations. These factors are essential to understanding the rights component. With conditional cash transfers there is little acknowledgement that most were designed with

¹³ The term “social security” is used in line with the various definitions on pages 14 and 15. This could include both contributory and non-contributory elements although – in line with the argument on page 15 – contributory elements are less relevant in poorer countries. The dichotomy of social assistance/social insurance isn’t take on here as it suggests a too simple dichotomy between different social security instruments. For example, heavily government-subsidised social insurance systems arguably have a large “non-contributory” function, while some “non-contributory” systems can be articulated around solidarity and non-financial contributions, so not necessarily making them “social assistance”.

significant support from development banks, and many continue to be significantly funded by loans from the same. It is acknowledged that unconditional cash transfers include those funded by governments and donors/aid agencies, but no consideration of how these differ, in particular in terms of the issues of coverage and sustainability mentioned above.

- What are the politics of design?

The paper almost suggests that introducing social protection is simply a question of weighing up objectives and existing evidence to identify appropriate design options. This may be the case in relatively small programmes – especially where managed and funded by external agencies – but it becomes much more complicated with longer-term systems. In fact, the introduction, expansion and development of long term social protection systems (including the countries above) has almost always been one of political negotiation through democratic processes (particularly elections).

While the politics of this design is alluded to, discussion is often brief and fleeting. As an example, in the section on targeting the paper rightly notes the “political costs” of targeting, but in the conclusion reverts to an analysis based purely on targeting efficiency. Strong evidence exists to say that programmes based on entitlements secure much higher budgets and coverage than those targeted to the poor. If this is the case, then the question of targeting efficiency becomes much less relevant than one of redistribution across the sum of government tax and spend.

Another issue where politics is not adequately addressed is in the example of the legal foundations of the South African social grants system. The judicially enforceable constitutional right to social assistance is described as a feature of the programmes whereas, in reality, it could easily be argued that this right was the foundation and rationale to the development of the child grant in the first place. The paper would ideally tackle the question of what processes led to this legal framework, rather than suggest it is somehow a variable that can be added or subtracted in technical design processes.

Evidently, an understanding of the importance of long-term social protection systems does not exclude other shorter-term interventions, including those supported by external agencies. These are of particular relevance in states where governance and democracy are weak. Nevertheless, implementation of shorter term approaches should be cognisant of this longer term perspective, first, in order to create opportunities to support the development of longer term systems and, second, to ensure that these initiatives “do no harm” to the development of these systems.

In sum, the paper would be strengthened with a more comprehensive review of existing government-funded social security systems. Relevant questions would include: what are the benefits of such systems and component entitlements in assuring food security? What is the significance of government ownership/funding of social protection schemes in relation to effectiveness, coverage, sustainability, accountability and entitlements? What can we learn from the political process of how these schemes are developed? This last point would particularly help to answer the question, “*What are the appropriate roles for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security?*”

16. Lidija Christmann, German Development Institute, Germany and Margret Vidar and Dubravka Bojic, both FAO, Italy

First of all, we would also like to commend the authors on the comprehensive and detailed zero draft consultation paper on the context of social protection for food security and very relevant questions open for dialogue.

Our comments address mainly the question whether *the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food should be supported*. Our answer is an unequivocal “yes”, and our comments are grouped under five headings for more clarity.

1. Structure of the paper

We found the discussion on concepts very useful.

Generally, however, the zero draft is quite long and it lacks a Leitmotif, or an idea that holds the different sections together to create a paper that holds the reader’s attention. This may be attributable to the fact that there are three authors, but for sure, more coherence is needed in the final version.

The report makes reference to the human rights to food and social security and points out their relevance and importance for food security without illustrating systematically and fully the practical implications of linking food security to the rights to food and social security. For the reader it rather remains an open question what linking these rights to social and food security really implies. The many interesting cases and examples included in the report could be used for a systematic illustration of an explanation of these concepts.

2. Whether human rights are optional in the context of social protection

We would argue that it is not at the discretion of policy makers whether social protection and food security measures should be linked to the right to social security and the right to food or not. Having ratified the ICESCR, the State party is obliged to realize the rights to food and to social security of everyone under its jurisdiction and therefore to also implement them into the legislation of the country.

The great majority of CFS members are parties to the ICESCR; all of them recognize the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The report should therefore be strengthened with regard to the applicability of human rights in the context of social protection, and human rights should be discussed throughout the report where appropriate, and more than what is done in the zero draft.

3. Links between the right to food and the right to social security

Under the right to food, the state party has the obligation to respect, protect, facilitate and provide for the right to food. Social security measures thus address only one dimension of the right to food. Therefore, one has to be careful not to reduce the meaning of the right to food to the right to receive food. The obligation to provide entails that the State, as a last resort, must provide food “whenever an individual or group is unable, for reasons beyond their control, to enjoy the right to adequate food by the means at their disposal” (General Comment 12, para. 15). Furthermore, ensuring the fundamental right to be free from hunger is the minimum core obligation of the State party, but the right to food however, is not and should not be limited to the right to be free from hunger and the corresponding obligation of the state to provide food to

those suffering from hunger. In this sense, the example of India's new bill (p. 49) only illustrates how a state can ensure freedom from hunger.

Section 2 on human rights could be better integrated and coherent; too many subsections appear disjointed from the main body of the section and their importance for human rights based approaches is somewhat lost. Thus, we would recommend the following:

- The subsection on the Right to Food Guidelines should be inserted in the section on the right to food under 2.1.1. Under 2.4.1 it is in our view not well placed as it constitutes a intergovernmentally negotiated instrument and not an initiative comparable to the Social Protection Floor or an institution as provided under 2.4.3.
- In our view, the examples provided in section 2.2.4 should rather be integrated in Section 2 and provided in boxes for the illustration of what the implementation of the human rights principles implies. Of course, this will imply analysing them from the human rights perspective;
- Again, the very interesting sample observations under 2.3 provide a mix of cases. It may be useful to put them into context and use for illustration purposes;

4. Human rights principles with regard to social protection

Given that all human rights are interrelated and interdependent, the realization of rights such as the right to food and the right to social security should take place in ways that respect and promote all human rights.

The report could thus very usefully not limit its human rights discussion to the right to food and the right to social security (with some mention of human rights based approaches) but also analyze the process implications of taking a human rights based approach and define it properly, so as to explain what it actually means in the context of social security.

Seeing social protection through a human rights lens requires relevant decision-making and implementation processes to comply with some key principles, such as non-discrimination, participation, transparency, accountability and human dignity. Thus for example, the established eligibility requirements should be transparent and non-discriminatory; they should be made public and easily accessible to all; all registration or application procedures should be fair, simple and accessible, and all potential beneficiaries should be duly informed about their rights under the established form of assistance, in a language and form they understand.

In the paper, empowerment (section 3.9) is dealt together with the various technical issues. However, empowerment is a human rights principle and therefore should rather be discussed as such, along with other human rights principles.

As rightly pointed out by the report, empowerment is also a means to improve people's capacity not only to claim their rights but also and above all, to be able to realize them by their own means. However, empowerment requires action not only at the level of people, but also at the level of state institutions: it means that States should design laws that respond to peoples' needs, and strengthen the competent institutions and procedures for enforcing the established rights and entitlements. Furthermore, if a person receives social protection, as a matter of right, underpinned by law, then this in itself is empowering, when compared to an arbitrarily awarded charity based on clientelism and patronage. An empowered person knows her rights to receive benefits and is able to take steps to claim them. A person who is empowered to claim their social security benefit is as empowered as a person who is empowered to earn their own income. While the point made about being empowered to provide nutritious food for one's young

children rather than receiving supplements or RUTF is very valid, more needs to be said about empowerment.

5. The importance of legal underpinnings for social security

While it is of fundamental importance for making social protection rights-based and not discretionary, the question of the legal basis or the status of the social protection initiative within a country's policy and legal system is not discussed in the report (not even in the section on unresolved issues). We would argue that it is very rare that people are able to successfully claim entitlements without there being a legislative act that defines what they are, and would take creative lawyers and progressive judges, both of which are in short supply globally.

Based on our research undertaken in the FAO Legal Office on social protection issues, we submit that unless social protection initiatives are established by law, it is hard to see how they can be considered fully consistent with international human rights obligations of states.

The law should ensure clarity with regard to the roles and responsibilities of government institutions at central and local levels, as well as for civil society and international organizations. Furthermore, it should establish clear entitlements, eligibility criteria and accountability mechanisms.

Accountability/access to justice strengthens the critical awareness about human and other rights. The section on accountability should also address the aspect of access to justice at the national level. Access to justice is only ensured if the poor have the capacity to assert and use these rights, and if administrative, quasi-judicial and judicial mechanisms that provide adequate and effective remedies are in place and accessible to all.

Without a strong legal and institutional framework and a long-term strategy, beneficiaries are not in a position to claim their rights. States have to comply with the legal norms and standards enshrined in international human rights instruments. Where they fail to do so, aggrieved rights-holders are entitled to institute proceedings for appropriate redress before a competent court or other adjudicator in accordance with the rules and procedures provided by law.

Margret Vidar, Legal Office, FAO, Rome

Dubravka Bojic, Gender equality and rural employment division, FAO Rome

Lidija Christmann, German Development Institute, formerly FAO Legal Office

17. Laura Pautassi, CONICET-UBA, Argentina

Estimad/as

Adjunto el aporte realizado por el Grupo de Trabajo Interdisciplinario Derechos Sociales y Políticas Públicas en relación con la Consulta sobre Protección Social y Seguridad Alimentaria que está siendo llevada a cabo por el Grupo de Alto Nivel de Expertos en Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional (HLPE) del Comité Mundial de Seguridad Alimentaria (CFS)

(please follow the link, Ed.

http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/HLPEII/Consulta_Documento_Seguridad_Social_DSPP_Argentina.pdf)

Saludos cordiales

Laura Pautassi
CONICET-UBA
Grupo de Trabajo Interdisciplinario
Derechos Sociales y Políticas Públicas
www.dspp.com.ar

18. People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty

The People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS), a global network of grassroots organizations of small food producers, peasants, women, indigenous peoples, fisherfolk, dalits, consumer groups and their support NGOs, welcomes the paper on social protection for food security. The paper on food security and social protection is important in recognising that people do not live in a consistent state of poverty but move from stable economic conditions into poverty and back depending on external circumstances. Social protection schemes can play a crucial role in supporting people from external shocks or provide a stepping-stone to support people into a more stable economic situation.

PCFS has the following comments on the draft paper on social protection for food security:

1. The report fails to consider the role food sovereignty plays in achieving food security. Food sovereignty emphasises the people's ownership over food production and distribution through ecological and sustainable methods. It would thus address structural causes of poverty which are overlooked in a food security framework. This includes for example the impact of imports of subsidised food on local markets; foreign land acquisitions and increasing poverty in the areas concerned. These are external barriers to development which can only be addressed through securing food sovereignty. Without addressing these structural barriers, social protection schemes will not provide any long-term solutions to poverty.

2. The right to social protection as recognised in international law should also be incorporated in national laws. This is critical for governments to recognise their duties to the people as well as giving a legal basis for which people to hold the government to account. Social protection schemes should be conceived as one of the key responsibilities of governments. It is also important for social protection schemes to be situated in the achievement of other government duties including the right to education and health. These rights are interconnected with that of the right to social protection and as such the design of social protection schemes should take into account the right to health and education.

3. Social protection schemes must be integrally linked to poverty alleviation and eradication measures for vulnerable populations. Palliative poverty alleviation measures such as Conditional Cash Transfer Programs perpetuate debt dependency, mendicancy and fail to provide real solutions to issues confronting widespread poverty and hunger in southern countries.

4. Social protection schemes should be designed, implemented and funded on a national and local level to guarantee ownership and control. Social protection schemes will not be effective if they are developed externally and imposed on national contexts as they will lack national and local inputs and will not generate social investment in the schemes. Local control and ownership is critical for the success of the social protection schemes.

5. Social protection schemes should also be designed to complement and not replace existing community support networks. Community support networks are the precursor to social protection schemes and are still the most effective systems in place for support to the communities as they have evolved over time to suit the local context. Shared ownership and investment in these networks also ensures their success and if replaced are difficult to rebuild.

6. Social protection hinges on the recognition of the three requirements of the right to food, availability, accessibility, and adequacy, which all members of a society have an equal right to. These three points require equal attention and should inform the development of social protection schemes.

a. Availability - as recognised by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, "people do not become hungry and suffer from malnutrition simply because there is not enough food for them to eat. They are placed in this situation through a lack of access to productive resources such as land and water, of unscrupulous employers and traders, of an increasingly concentrated input providers sector, and of insufficient social safety nets that support the poor".

b. Accessibility - The right to food likewise state that economic accessibility implies that personal or household financial costs associated with the acquisition of food for an adequate diet should be at a level such that the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs are not threatened or compromised. In short, accessibility pertains to the purchasing power to acquire food.

c. Adequacy - The right to food must be discussed in dietary terms for the purpose of nutrition improvements and cultural appropriateness, and also requires "sustainability of food availability and access." Adequacy is to a large extent determined by prevailing social, economic, cultural, climatic, ecological and other conditions, while "sustainability" incorporates the notion of long-term availability and accessibility.

19. Gabriel Lui, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Dear all,

I am Gabriel Lui, from University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. I have been working with the effects of income increasing among small farmers in the Brazilian Amazon, specially to agricultural activities and land use. I would like to place some considerations about cash transfer programs to small farmers.

Several authors have characterized, in regional and local scales, a phenomenon of diversification and disconnection between small farmers' livelihoods and the performing of agricultural

activities, in different regions of the planet. For small farmer populations, this phenomenon represents a way to answer to a changing rural environment, in which the execution of agricultural activities have been discouraged by factors such as: (1) unequal competition with large-scale producers, (2) low profitability of smallholder agriculture, (3) availability of new job opportunities and non-agricultural services, (4) proximity to cities and urban culture, (5) lack of interest of younger generations to maintain agricultural activities, (6) environmental degradation and (7) land inaccessibility.

An important part of this diversification comes from non-agricultural income sources such as part-time jobs, off-farm employment, social benefits, and remittances. In a country like Brazil, where about 13 million families are receiving the Bolsa Familia stipends, this program is also playing a significant role in promoting new income sources to rural householders.

As a general scenario in our researches, the quantitative data and the interviewee discourses have pointed to a decreasing importance of agriculture within rural spaces to small farmers. Although some households have demonstrated agricultural engagement and investments, there seems to be a general deprofessionalization of the cultivation, where individuals keep agriculture as a hobby, and as a complementary source of food. There are less crop varieties for sale, as well as less dependency of local production for subsistence, as indicated by food expenses data.

There is an approximation of urban life style, specially the consumption patterns and perspectives. We have fewer evidence on that so far, but is likely that the increasing educational level and connection with school activities in urban areas may be contributing to disinterest in agricultural activities among young individuals, as highlighted by other studies.

Despite the scenario of detachment from agriculture, the improvement of infrastructure conditions, specially access to energy and water, have incentive families to keep living in the rural properties. There is also a feeling of belonging, appreciation for rural lifestyle, specially in elderly individuals. Most householders demonstrated no interest in move out to urban areas, as we observed in interviewee speeches.

We are not able so far to discriminate the exact effects of cash transfer programs and social benefits in the scenario earlier described. We are still working on quantitative data to make it clearer, but the Bolsa Familia program and the rural retirements emerged as important factors to be further examined.

Regardless the specific role of cash transfer programs in this changing rural environment, there seems to be paradoxical consequences to small farmers. While there is increasing in manufactured food consumption and perceived quality of life in one side, there is decreasing of food production and diversity in the other. It represents an important livelihood change to small farmers, with less control over production means, which could increase vulnerability to future socio-economic changes.

I would like also to make clear this is not a criticism to cash transfer programs as a whole, but an invitation to further discussions about the condicionalities in rural areas.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about data, references, etc.

Best regards,

Gabriel Lui
University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

20. Germany

Germany highly welcomes the consultation paper of the HLPE on Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition. Overall, the paper provides a good assessment of the concepts and instruments of social protection systems to enhance food security, including evidence and experiences gained from the field.

First set of questions:

- **Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted? Which instruments should be avoided, and why? Should interventions in food markets designed to stabilize prices be used?**

The advantages and disadvantages of the most common instruments are reasonably outlined in the paper and reflect in general the position of the German government. It would be helpful to include a section (discussion) in the paper on rural-urban differences (if they warrant different approaches) and a more in-depth analysis of gender (especially women) sensitive approaches. The inclusion of the proposed outcomes and actions (safety nets and the social protection systems) referred to by the *High Level Task Force on Global Food Security – Summary of the Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA) August 2011 document* (http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/SUMMARY_UCFA_EN.pdf) would be useful. The differences between short-term and longer term solutions instruments, including temporary productive safety nets could be more pronounced within the document. It would be helpful to include the concept of regional emergency humanitarian food reserves in combination with safety nets. Additionally, the instrument of community granaries in combination with savings and micro-credit schemes could be looked into.

The design of the social protection system and the choice of instruments will be influenced by the political, economic, social and cultural environment it will operate in. A pre-condition for the choice of the most appropriate and context specific social protection instrument(s) will be an in-depth analysis of the food and nutrition insecure groups with special regard being given to the identification and localization of the most vulnerable, as well as the causes of food insecurity.

Different social protection instruments have different advantages, but also have their limitations. Moreover, some measures can directly address food insecurity during crises and others aim to improve food security in the long-term by avoiding that shocks occur or by providing instruments which rapidly compensate their negative impacts in the case of shocks. From a German perspective the following social protection **instruments are the most appropriate to address food insecurity**:

Instruments	Impacts	Limitations
Cash and voucher transfers (short-term and long-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Can be easily scaled up in times of crises (by increasing the amount of the transfer or by including new population groups)- Address especially poor and vulnerable groups (children, older people, persons with disabilities, female-headed households)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If markets do not work and food is not available locally, cash transfers have no impact on food security
Food transfers (short-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Directly address food insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Don't leave choice to the beneficiary households on

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the right basket of food is provided they can address not only undernourishment but also malnutrition 	what they need according to their specific situation
Public works/Cash-/Food-for-Work (mostly short-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly address food insecurity - can improve local infrastructure, like roads and markets, and thereby further improve food security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not reach households without productive capacities, e. g. generation gap households
School feeding/take home rations (short- and long-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly address children's nutritional status - Additionally improve school attendance and thereby create human capital in poor households which can improve long-term food security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't reach households without children in schools (e.g. older people, households with young children)
Micro insurance in case of crop failure due to natural disasters (long-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addresses long-term resilience by protecting households in case of crises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only reaches households able to pay contributions and therefore excludes the most vulnerable and food-insecure households
Social health protection (long-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improves health and nutritional status of food insecure households in the long term by providing access to health services which provide f. e. dietary supplements for undernourished children, etc. 	

Often instruments have to be adapted to the needs of the population groups to be targeted and a mix of instruments to be applied to address possibly different variations of target groups. It should be mentioned that additional support measures (beside the social protection instruments), such as facilitation of access to credit and markets, as well as addressing price volatility, are required to achieve food and nutrition security, especially for smallholder production systems.

As outlined in the paper, **general food subsidies** are often very expensive and in most cases the non-poor benefit disproportionately from such state subsidies and therefore the position is being supported to avoid the application of such instruments.

Despite emphasizing that interventions in food markets to address price stabilization encompass market-distorting mechanisms, which the European Union abandoned years ago, there are no objections against the kinds of interventions within in the *High Level Task Force on Global Food Security – Summary of the Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA) August 2011 document* (http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/SUMMARY_UCFA_EN.pdf) (see page 18 and 19: 1.3 Trade and tax policies are adjusted to help vulnerable groups cope with shocks; 1.4 Macroeconomic implications of the food and economic crises are managed; 2.4 Performance of international food markets is improved and 3.1. Information monitoring and accountability systems are strengthened). It would be helpful to discuss the proposed CFA actions together with the agreed actions from the G20 Cannes declaration.

Second set of questions:

- **Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid? Do social transfers cause ‘dependency syndrome’? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?**

The question whether social protection interventions for food security should be **targeted or not** often arises when implementing direct or indirect social transfers. The right decision depends on several factors and should be made on a case-by-case basis. As stated in the document, in some situations the costs of executing targeting mechanisms is higher than paying the transfers to all households/individuals. This view is being supported and the decision process should be made on a cost-benefit analysis. Often the responses to an occurring crisis are designed to include the entire population, whereas social transfers are implemented on a long-term basis, targeting in most cases are more cost-efficient to reach those population groups that are mostly affected by food insecurity. If specific population groups are more affected by food insecurity than others, the implementation of targeting mechanisms is strongly recommended. Yet, targeting instruments always incorporate the risk of failing to include the most vulnerable. Hence, as mentioned before and as a stressed claim of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, special regard needs to be given to a pre-analysis of target groups in order to insure that targeting mechanism actually reach and do not exclude those most in need for assistance. In this regard, design and implementation of such mechanism must also be evaluated against this background.

A major disadvantage of targeting that could be further highlighted in the consultation paper is that it can produce perverse incentives among beneficiaries. In order to avoid losing the transfers they are likely to adopt strategies that could affect their livelihoods in the long term, such as not investing in productive assets. Therefore, a differentiated view is necessary when making decisions about targeting. In general, cost efficiency aspects, impacts of targeting and possible trade-offs have to be considered in the design.

Traditionally **in-kind assistance**, through the provision of commodities and services, has dominated food assistance interventions. More recently there has been a growing use of **cash or vouchers as an alternative or complementary means** of increasing access to necessary commodities and services. Two broad sets of information are needed in order to determine the appropriateness of cash (or vouchers) compared to in-kind alternatives. The first relates to the need to understand people’s livelihoods and how local economies and markets work. This includes the question of whether goods and services that people need are available locally, and if markets are able to respond to an increased demand for commodities. The second set relates to whether a cash response can be practically implemented. This includes questions about delivery mechanisms, security, agency capacity, beneficiary preferences, government policies and the gender specific risks associated with different transfer modalities.

Cost effectiveness is clearly a crucial question, and one that is often overlooked in deciding the appropriate type of response. If cash is a more cost efficient way of helping people then more people can potentially be supported with a greater value of resources than with an in-kind alternative. Comparing the costs of cash transfers with in-kind alternatives should not be the only criterion on which decisions about the appropriateness of cash are made. There will be times when in-kind assistance is needed even when it is more expensive, for example where transport networks are disrupted or local markets are destroyed. Additionally, food aid has the advantage that it can directly address malnutrition through the provision of a food basket containing the right proportion of nutrients and micro nutrients. In contrast, cash has the advantage that it can also be used for other purposes such as for shelter, non-food items and access to services.

On the aspect of '**dependency syndrome**', the view expressed in the document is being shared because evidence shows that social cash transfers do not produce dependency in the long term but – on the contrary - help their beneficiaries to start and increase productive activities by, for example, investing in productive assets, searching employment or simply by ensuring that people are healthier and better nourished and thus more productive. The right design of social transfer programs is a key to stimulate productivity and reduce dependency, including a monitoring and evaluation system to effectively monitor any unintended outcomes. The dependency rate can be decreased by implementing complementary measures that directly addresses productivity of beneficiaries, such as for example trainings or provision of productive assets.

The **decision whether implementing conditionalities or not** has to be made according to the specific country context and the objectives to be achieved with the transfer. If the objective is to improve the nutritional, health or educational status of children living in poor households, well-designed conditionalities that directly target the problems are recommended to improve the impact of the transfer.

Conditionalities and their control can be costly and requires functioning administrative structures. The question whether to implement conditionalities or not also depends on the financial and administrative resources available. The resources used to implement and control conditionalities could be used for reaching more people or increasing the amount of the cash transfer.

Evidence shows that unconditional cash transfers often have same or similar effects as conditional cash transfers. On the other hand, conditional transfers are often more politically accepted than unconditional transfers and therefore can enhance social cohesion in societies.

Third set of questions:

- **Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported? Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? Grievance mechanisms? Legislation? What are the challenges to strengthening the rights foundations of social protection, and how can they be overcome?**

Social protection is a **human right** and one of the central pillars to increase food security, especially among vulnerable groups in times of crises. The right to food as such is a human right as well, statutory under international law and legally binding for the Member States of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Entitling all people to adequate food and diet, the right to food is the legal framework for food security and nutrition. Hence, to achieve the common goal of halving hunger and poverty till 2015 as envisioned by the Millennium Development Goals, linking social protection to the **right to food** is absolutely highly relevant in development policies and should definitely be supported. Social protection systems are both, an expression and an integral part of humane development and contribute to the realization of the human right to social security and this is solidly supported by the German government.

Mechanisms of good governance strongly influence the functioning of social protection systems as well as any other kind of policy implementation. To upgrade social protection systems from discretionary projects to enforceable claims, state action should strengthen, on the one hand, the legislative framework within which systems of social protection are embedded. On the other hand, governments should implement and improve mechanisms of accountability through which beneficiaries can enforce their rights. Thereby, the foundations of social protection systems are

strengthened top-down and bottom-up and the social contract between state and society is improved.

Challenges in strengthening the rights foundations of social protection are, for example: inadequate legislation frameworks and often limited budgets, issues of political economy, fragmentation of programs and lack of a long-term vision, especially in context of food security. To overcome these challenges it is important to link social policies with other fields of policy, such as legislation and finance policies as well as to include different actors of government into the decision making process. It is further important to build comprehensive systems of social protection that include and address all population groups and give them different entitlements according to their situation.

Fourth set of questions:

- **What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security? Should impact on nutritional status be seen primarily through dietary diversity and food consumption, or extend into broader nutrition security and encompass also security for water, sanitation, disease control and arrangements for special care of vulnerable groups like women and young children? Which agricultural, trade and other policies should complement social protection for more sustainable food security outcomes? What are the appropriate roles for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security?**

As already mentioned elsewhere, the design of a social protection system should be country and context-specific. There is a need for a long-term vision, especially in the context of improving food security. Furthermore, it is necessary to create social protection systems that make households resilient to food crises in the long run instead of only implementing ad-hoc mechanisms when crises occur. Evidence shows that different instruments have to be combined and implemented to improve food security and to reach the population groups suffering from food insecurity. Programs should be designed in a way that they could be scaled up easily in times of crises to reach more beneficiaries or to increase the amount of the transfer given. Last but not least, improving food security demands a holistic and multisectoral approach of planning, implementation and monitoring.

It is our view that **food and nutrition security encompasses** safe and clean water, sanitation and disease control and arrangements for special care of vulnerable groups like women and young children. The immediate causes of the nutritional status are influenced by adequate household food security (availability and access), adequate care for mothers and children (specifically relevant in the case of child nutritional status), a proper health environment as well as access to health services. Environmental conditions play a crucial role in influencing the nutritional status via the health situation and mainly include the availability of safe water, sanitation, and environmental safety, and shelter. Water and sanitation improvements, in association with changes in hygiene behaviour, can have significant effects on a population and its health by reducing a variety of conditions for diseases. These improvements in health can, in turn, lead to reduced morbidity and mortality and improved nutritional status.

Social protection system should be **supported by agriculture, trade and other policies**, eg. education about nutritional knowledge. The reference document is the comprehensive framework for action (August 2011) (*High Level Task Force on Global Food Security – Summary of the Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA) August 2011 document* (http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/SUMMARY_UCFA_EN.pdf) which details actions and outcomes to better achieve food and nutrition security in combination with social protections systems.

From the German perspective there are several tools that can be used to support social protection systems for food security:

- support in designing long-term social protection systems which permanently address the problem of food insecurity and which can be extended in times of food crises
- advice to build up and improve administrative structures which work effectively and efficiently – also in remote areas which are often especially food insecure
- Provide development-oriented and sustainable emergency aid by supporting the implementation of adequate social protection mechanisms to address food insecurity in times of crises and by supporting the transformation from short-term ad hoc programmes to long-term social protection mechanisms.
- Initial funding of social transfers in LICs
- Rapid financial support in times of food crises (emergency aid) to build up emergency social transfers
- Support of knowledge sharing in the field between different countries through providing platforms for south-south-learning and triangular cooperation

On an international level, bi- and multilateral donors could strengthen the dialogue about social protection mechanisms appropriate to address food insecurity. Germany for example is engaged in the Development Working Group (DWG) of the G20 in the pillar ‘Growth with resilience’ together with other members to further develop the field. Furthermore, the international dialogue on food security and on social protection could be better coordinated and linked in future.

21. Rasmus Heltberg, World Bank, USA

Looking at your two discussions on SP and food security and CC and food security, I would like to contribute by sharing a report we just finished that links these two topics by detailing how SP can better take CC into account.

Climate-Responsive Social Protection, Background Paper for the World Bank 2012–2022 Social Protection and Labor Strategy, March 2012

Please find the link:

[http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/HLPEII/CRSP -
SP Discussion Paper 1210.pdf](http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/HLPEII/CRSP_-_SP_Discussion_Paper_1210.pdf)

Regards,
Rasmus

22. Luis Hernán Vargas Faulbaum, Economic Commission for Latin America, Chile

I really appreciate the good quality of this draft report. Generally speaking, it will be an excellent contribution for this meeting. In accordance with the topics discussed on this forum, I want to make some comments.

First, with respect to the numeral 1.3.2 “Conceptual frameworks of Social Protection”, please note that at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) we published a report called “Inclusive Social Protection in Latin America: A Comprehensive, Rights-based Approach” (available online: http://www.cepal.cl/publicaciones/xml/4/45924/2011-566_Libro_111_Ingles_-_PRESS.pdf), where we define the functions of social protection. These are to guarantee a sufficient income to

sustain a decent quality of life, to facilitate access to social and promotion services and to foster decent work. Also, we emphasize that social protection includes the following components: contributory (“social security”), non-contributory (“social assistance”), and labor market regulation.

These components have several instruments. The non-contributory component can include transfers in cash or in kind, with or without co-responsibility, consumer subsidies, promotion and access to social services, among others. The contributory pillar includes contributory pensions schemes, health/unemployment insurance, and leave (maternity, paternity and sick leave). Finally, labour market regulation includes oversight of labour standards for promoting and protecting decent work (i.e. contracts formalization, minimum wages, child labour elimination, and collective bargaining, among others). All these under the basis of covering at least a minimum of welfare to guarantee the rights for all.

Inclusive social protection must consider a longitudinal integration, which takes into account the requirements that arise throughout the life cycle of individuals and families. From a rights-based perspective, inclusive social protection, therefore, relies on an appropriate combination of universal social policy, which includes the provision of compensatory protection, and an economic policy that addresses social objectives explicitly. Also the interventions that incorporate different population groups and build capacity to overcome the risk situations to which they are vulnerable.

Second, the numeral 3.6 “Conditional cash transfers” says that the CCTs have three defining characteristics. At ECLAC we strongly recommend the consideration of our typology that considers (see the book cited above, as well as “Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes: The recent experience in Latin America and the Caribbean” available online: <http://www.cepal.cl/publicaciones/xml/6/45096/Cuaderno.95.pdf>) their general orientation (short term aim, i.e. income generation, or long term objective, such as, human capital creation and accumulation), the role played by the cash transfer on the programme’s operating rationale, and the different types of conditionalities.

Thus, the three types of CCTs proposed by ECLAC are: 1) Income-transfer programmes with soft conditionalities (main objective is to ensure a basic level of consumption for poor families); 2) Demand incentive programmes with strong conditionalities (the aim is to promote the human development of the poorest sectors of the population, which in practice means increasing their use of education and health services by removing barriers to entry); and 3) Programme coordination systems or networks with conditionalities (Rather than a CCT per se, it is more a coordination structure designed to guarantee access to the benefits offered by various specific programmes to create a minimum level of social inclusion)

And finally, I also want to suggest 2 topics: Food Sovereignty, and the importance of malnutrition (undernourishment and obesity).

The food sovereignty that is crucial in developing countries. This policy has two aims: 1) promoting and strengthening local agricultural production, especially for small (and poor) farmers that cannot have access to a large market, and 2) fostering social sustainability through food and nutritional programmes, i.e. school feeding, among others.

The social and economical consequences of the malnutrition must be considered on our reflections and proposals. In the long term, the undernourishment will damage the physical growth and development of people, reduction of intellectual and productive capability, and decline in life quality. In addition, the obesity provokes a reduction of life expectancy of a person up to ten years and represents a high economic burden for the family and society. Therefore, the food and nutritional security is an investment, not an expenditure for the governments (for more information, see “Inseguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe”

available online <http://www.cepal.cl/publicaciones/xml/6/37896/dp-inseguridad-alimentaria-ALC.PDF>)

Thanks in advance, best regards from Santiago.

Luis Hernán Vargas Faulbaum
Social Development Division
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
United Nations

23. Benjamin Davis, FAO, Italy

Many thanks for a quite an extensive review of the linkages between social protection and food security. On the whole, the discussion is balanced and well argued, and I like the approach.

Some specific comments:

1. One area which is missing is a discussion of the linkages between social protection and agriculture. While the document does address the key agricultural sector interventions for food security (input subsidies, grain reserves, etc), correctly considering them as social protection, the document treats these interventions in isolation, missing the connections between social protection instruments originating in the social sector (school feeding and conditional and unconditional cash transfers) and agriculture. There are a number of dimensions to this.

a. Social protection interventions originating in the agricultural and social sectors often operate in the same geographical area, often among the same households, and often at the same point in time. Clearly there would be some synergies to better articulation between these programs: on the one hand, the evidence from the PNSP in Ethiopia, which shows larger impact when cash transfer are combined with productivity packs, is illustrative; on the other hand, the coordination of programs targeted to households with productive capacity with those targeted to households without available labor or means of production. Discussion of how these types of programs do or could come together in an articulated rural development strategy could lead to greater overall impact with the same resources.

b. Many if not most cash transfer programs focus on the rural poor, who in most cases depend on small holder agriculture (as producers and/or laborers) for their livelihoods. The potential for food security impacts thus comes through both purchases and home production—and it has been shown (in Mexico and Malawi, for example) that this home production can play an important role in increased food consumption and dietary diversity (Todd, et al, 2010; Covarrubias, et al, 2012; Boone, et al, 2012). There is some mention of this “extra” impact in the text, but the fundamental fact that most beneficiaries of social protection produce their own food is underemphasized.

c. Similarly, the connections between school feeding and local production also go unmentioned—eg, the PAA in Brazil, which links supply of school feeding to local producers.

d. One additional dimension to explore is that the fact that beneficiaries are smallholder/subsistence producers can be a constraint for social protection interventions originating in the social sector. Cash transfers that relax credit constraints and lead to more on farm production activities can increase the demand for child labor (this is found in Malawi by Covarrubias, et al, described in more detail below), which could conflict with objectives of the cash transfer program. Further agricultural households face labor constraints that may come

into conflict with responsibilities required by CCTs; Handa et al (2010) find that compliance with conditionalities was lower among agricultural households participating the PROGRESA program.

e. Some of this discussion could take place in either section 3 (interventions) and/or section 4, unresolved issues. The unresolved issue would be how and when to decide whether supply or demand is the key issue in food security—should we be focusing on agricultural production or increasing demand via cash transfers. And when and how do the two go together. This is a topic that is not only unresolved, it is rarely dealt with directly, in a cross sectoral fashion.

2. Somewhat related to the first comment is that the discussion of the agricultural interventions versus the social interventions take place at different levels, particularly in the presence of evidence. The discussion of the impacts of the agricultural interventions takes place at a sectoral level, while the discussion of the social interventions takes place at the household or individual level. Partly this could have to do with available evidence—there is relatively little micro evidence from the input subsidy programs, particularly as compared with the cash transfer programs. This somewhat gives that impression that we are talking about different populations—when in fact they are the same.

3. In terms of order in Section III, I would put the public works programs next to the cash transfer programs and school feeding. Public works are closer in nature to cash transfer programmes than to either input subsidies or grain reserves.

4. In terms of the conclusions in 3.3.6, I found the comment on India as a symbol of the human rights approach odd. First, because this is not discussed in the section on India's program, and second given the rights-based concerns around self-targeting which are expressed later in the document.

5. In terms of the generation of investment effects, there is considerably more evidence than that cited, much of it based on rigorous methods. Besides the references and research found in Barrientos (2012) and Gertler (2012), there are the papers mentioned above.

6. In terms of the impacts on food security and nutrition, the Kenya CT-OVC has found similar impacts (Ward, et al, 2011; Palermo, et al, forthcoming).

7. In section 1, the document could benefit from a brief additional subsection on food security indicators—caloric consumption, dietary diversity, anthropometric, etc—which are used later in the presentation of evidence, but never quite described. Undernourishment is used in section 1.1, but dietary diversity and anthropometrics in the household level impacts.

8. The document comes down strongly on the topic as to whether social programs, and particularly cash transfers, lead to dependency. While I agree with the overall conclusion, I would be cautious about making emphatic statements about disincentive effects. The documents cites evidence primarily from Latin America, which shows for the most part few disincentive effects. Recent studies from Sub Saharan Africa, however, show a more complex story. In a recently published paper, Covarrubias et al (forthcoming), as well as Boone et al (2012), find that the Malawi SCT does indeed lead to a significant drop in agricultural wage and ganyu labor among beneficiaries—who are then reallocating their labor to on farm activities. A similar story has been told, using qualitative methods, in Northern Uganda (Creti, 2010). In an unfinished analysis, we are finding similar results for the Kenya CT-OVC program, with the reduction in casual wage labor particularly evident among older and/or chronically ill members of beneficiary families, who are also reallocating labor to on farm activities. All told, it is unclear what are the net implications for food security of this switch from casual wage labor to on farm activities, though it clearly reflects household preferences.

9. Children also figure in this story. Covarrubias et al find that child are pulled off the labor market, working less for wages outside of the house, but with increasing responsibilities with household chores and on farm labor—particularly during harvest season. The Kenya CT-OVC program finds a similar strong impact on reducing child labor, with no corresponding increase in on farm activities.

10. I recommend reading a recent paper by Filipiski and Taylor (2012) comparing the welfare, production and efficiency effects of input subsidies, market price subsidies and social cash transfers in Malawi and Ghana. The paper helps understand under which assumptions these different policy choices, all relevant for social protection, may be better suited.

11. On p. 63, sometimes categorical targeting is also difficult to observe. This is particularly true in the case of age or ethnicity.

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24. Elisenda Estruch-Puertas and Cristina Rapone, FAO, Italy

We thank the authors for sharing this interesting zero draft report for consultation. The report is comprehensive, while also providing sufficient level of detail. The content of the report is based on available evidence and it uses several country examples. We appreciate that employment aspects have been taken into consideration over the report. We acknowledge the recognition of decent work as an important aspect to enhance social equity and reduce present and future vulnerabilities, and thus build greater resilience. We also appreciate that our previous comments to make explicit reference to a right-based approach to social protection and to the Social protection Floor initiative have been included.

Overall, we think the report would benefit if a set of recommendations based on the evidence presented is added at the end. We think that they should call for greater policy coherence between food security, social protection and agricultural and rural development policies, including also employment and skills development. There is also a need for further evidence on the impacts of social protection interventions for food and nutrition security and also in improving the livelihoods of the rural poor.

Ensuring that social protection takes a forward looking approach is also important, which implies links to risk reduction and risk mitigation in relation to climate change hazards, in the context of developing disaster risk management strategies. With regards to growing human mobility at international level, as well as recognizing the high South-South / intra-regional mobility, it is also important to promote the transferability of social benefits, also for those workers in the informal sector, especially of migrant origin (including circular migration).

In the chapter presenting the different types of instruments, it would also be useful to present the information following the same structure, to the extent possible, including information on the advantages and disadvantages, challenges in design and implementation, as well as evidence of impacts achieved. At the end of the chapter, the report could then include a table summarizing the main results of the social protection instruments reviewed (main features, risks and assumptions, impacts on food security, sustainability etc..). It will enable potential readers to better link the conceptual framework in the first part with this second part, and then better grasp the different issues for which debate is on-going (third part).

Further, it may be relevant to add some explicit reference, and if available some evidence, on the potential synergies and trade-offs between different types of social protection interventions, as well as with other sectoral policies. Indeed, there is growing consensus that social protection programmes could function better if interactions between them were exploited, while accounting for potential costs that this might entail (Robalino, Rawlings and Walker 2012, “Building social protection and labor systems”, social protection and labor discussion paper n. 1202, World Bank, March 2012).

Concerning the specific questions raised by the HLPE Project Team, we would like to share the following comments:

1. Concerning the most effective social protection instruments to enhance food security, we agree with previous comments that social protection instruments should be context specific. In general, instruments should be closely linked to entitlement failures, supporting the working poor or the labour-constrained vulnerable groups according to the contextual needs.

When considering the effectiveness of the different instruments, a **life cycle approach** should be considered. The most adequate instruments, and the most suitable policy mix will need to account for different needs and demands over time of the different population groups. This life-long perspective is also acknowledged in the Social Protection Floor initiative. It also highlights the role that social protection can play in addressing the inter-generational transmission of food insecurity and poverty.

In particular to address food insecurity, we suggest to consider the specific challenges facing rural areas, where the majority of the poor and food insecure are concentrated. Small scale producers and rural workers, especially children, youth, women and migrant workers, suffer from limited access to social protection, such as benefits associated with unemployment or inability to work such as pregnancy, sickness, disability or age. Besides, the income from their labour does not ensure a sufficient level to eke out a living, and thus working poverty is significant in rural areas and among those employed in agriculture (ILO GET, 2012). Adequate attention should be given to the characteristics of labour markets in rural areas, considering the high prevalence of informality and non-regular employment arrangements, casual and seasonal

labour, widespread underemployment (usually higher than unemployment rates), weak enforcement of rights, mobility and internal migration, among others.

2. **About the design choices**, we think a universal access to social protection should be ensured, in line with the social protection floor initiative and the decent work agenda. This does not prevent from providing differentiated social protection, as this does not hamper the principle of universality of rights and rather enhance the exercise of rights and contribute to reducing inequality (Cecchini and Martinez 2012, pag. 127, “Inclusive social protection in Latin America. A comprehensive rights-based approach”, ECLAC, January, 2012).

In planning a correct design, we think food price volatility and the functionality of rural markets need to be considered. It is important to consider some degrees of flexibility in the design phase. According to the situation, a combination of cash and in-kind contributions (through locally/nationally purchased goods to support the growth of the local economy), or a combination of direct support together with public works might be appropriate to maintain household food purchasing power (See also ILO 2010, “Mitigating a Jobs Crisis: Innovations in public employment programmes (IPEP)”, ILO, Geneva).

When considering **public works**, the report should further underline that these programmes should include from the beginning some elements of guarantee, paying careful attention to wage setting. It is crucial to ensure a living / minimum wage rate as a way of empowering people, enhancing decent work conditions and giving rural workers greater bargaining and purchasing power. Sustainable graduation paths need to be supported in those programmes and possible spillover effects on local labour markets are to be considered. Public works should not compete with farming calendars and special attention is needed to prevent gender biases, avoiding heavy manual work from women and taking into account women's time constraints (i.e. ensuring the presence of work site facilities, such as crèches). It is crucial to ensure that public works do not have a negative impact on children's schooling or increase their involvement in work that would be hazardous to their health or development (either directly employed by the work programme or substituting their parents' usual activities while parents participate in the programme). By integrating more developmental objectives into the conception of these interventions, governments can also reach longer term impacts in terms of food security. For instance: by supporting capacity building and skills development (i.e. new skills required by green jobs), by actively promoting women and youth engagement or fostering group cooperation, and by facilitating access to credit and other productive resources.

3. We strongly support a **right-based approach** to social protection, linking social protection to the right to social security, the right to work, and the right to food. Too often, rural workers are not ensured basic protection. Along with generally low returns to labour, this makes rural households particularly vulnerable to shocks. Only employment which is decent can represent a powerful driver of long-term food security, building household resilience and ensuring the right to safe and healthy working conditions (FAO 2012, “Decent rural employment for food security: A case for action”, Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division, FAO - forthcoming). We believe also that political commitment and coordination among the relevant stakeholders, while ensuring voice and representation for all, are crucial.

In approaching social protection and food security, the twin track approach is to be considered, combining emergency with more developmental elements. It is important to move from ex-post, crises-driven interventions to ex-ante mechanisms, addressing structural vulnerabilities and building households resilience. This is of particular relevance given the increasing number of shock-prone countries (i.e. the countries in the Horn of Africa region). National ownership and community participation are other crucial elements, especially if the aim is to scale up and institutionalize social protection mechanisms, building on existing programmes and avoiding short term, donor-driven and temporary solutions.

When defining graduation strategies, it will be relevant to consider the characteristics of the local economy, looking both at the labour demand (sectors presenting greater opportunities, skills needs, constraints) and at the labour supply (skills profiles, and other characteristics of individuals and their households and the challenges they encounter). Considering how social protection links to employment and labour markets, the report should better acknowledge how enhanced employability, through skills development and upgrading (especially for the low skilled in informal employment), and improved rural labour market institutions are crucial to ensure that processes of agricultural and rural development are inclusive and to enable the rural poor to access better employment opportunities as they arise in such process of transformation.

4. The needs of vulnerable groups, like women, youth and children should be taken into account throughout. **Social protection programmes need also to be complemented by agriculture and rural development policies, promoting decent rural employment**, in order to obtain more sustainable food security outcomes. Given the multidimensional nature of the challenges faced by rural households, there is a need for integrated approaches. More productive and satisfying employment for rural population lies in strategies that enhance agricultural productivity and in policies that attract people into farming and improve employment opportunities in the rural non-farm economy.

A comprehensive approach is to be taken for achieving food and nutrition security for all in a sustainable manner. This is also in line with the Social Protection Floor Initiative, which, among other things, calls for ensuring access to basic services including health, water and sanitation.

Greater coherence between social, employment, and macroeconomic policies is to be pursued. Agriculture and rural development policies should focus on: the promotion of decent rural employment and gender equality; skills development, improving educational and vocational training and promoting entrepreneurship development, in particular for youth; the prevention and reduction of child labour in agriculture; a better management of internal and seasonal migration, fostering a productive of remittances and private transfers in rural areas. Policies to improve social dialogue and enhance the participation, especially of women and youth, in producers' organizations are also needed. It required investing in greater coordination among sectoral and line ministries, as well as at the various levels of government (especially in more decentralized countries). International institutions have a key role to play in supporting the generation of greater evidence on what works and what does not, and also in providing technical support to the development of the necessary capacities and skills at country level, in so doing contributing to tackle existing implementation constraints.

We hope that these comments might be useful. If you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to the final draft and to the debate that will follow in the CFS!

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25. Angel Leyva Galan, Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Agrícolas (INCA), Cuba

[Spanish original]

Estimados Moderadores:

Aunque no logré encontrar las preguntas, que desean sean contestadas, por falta de tiempo INTERNET, quiero expresar dos ideas, que quizás puedan ayudar, o al menos estar tranquilo por haberla puesto a disposición del FORO

1. Sobre la protección social y Seguridad alimentaria

Si la sociedad tiene Seguridad alimentaria entonces tendrá protección, al menos , alimentaria. Para lograrlo no queda otra salida que evaluar las potencialidades productivas de cada localidad (en diversidad) y encontrar los déficit (por aportes a la alimentación en función de los requerimientos diarios de los humanos) y establecer los programas para garantizar localmente el desarrollo de los rubros posibles para cada localidad y evaluar los aportes para la comercialización.

2. Conocer cuales serán las localidades aledañas que aportaran los déficit y así se logra un levantamiento total de cada región productiva, de cuyo trabajo saldrán los déficit alimentarios locales reales del presente y el futuro y las potencialidades productivas de cada región.

3. Como cada localidad o región tiene hábitos alimentarios diferentes, se deben establecer programas de capacitación y nuevas propuestas alimentarias para los niños para que las nuevas generaciones conozcan las restantes opciones alimenticias existentes, de manera que los seres humanos aprendamos a comer por lo que necesitamos para nuestra calidad de vida y no por el paladar de nuestros ancestros o precedentes.

Gracias
Dr LEYVA

[English translation]

Dear moderators:

Although I could not find the questions you want to be answered, for lack of time and Internet, I want to express two ideas that may be helpful, and would like making them available to the FORUM

On social protection and food security

1-If society has food security, there will be social protection. To achieve this there is no choice but to evaluate the productive potential of each place (in diversity) and find the deficits (food supply according to the daily human requirements) and to develop programs to ensure locally the development of the best crops for each place and asses the contributions to marketing.

2-Knowing which surrounding places will bring the deficits and thus achieving a comprehensive assessment of each productive region. This work will show the present and future real local food deficits and the potential production of each region.

3-As each place or region has different food habits, training programs and new food proposals must be established for children, in order for the new generations to be aware of other food

options available. This way, we will learn to eat what we need to maintain our quality of life, and not just following the food preferences of our ancestors or predecessors.

Gracias
Dr LEYVA

26. United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights welcomes the consultation paper of the HLPE on Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition. She would like to congratulate the authors and to respond to the following questions:

What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security?

It is submitted that the connecting social protection systems, and in particular food security-related social protection, to human rights is not only a legal obligation, but also yields practical advantages with respect to the sustainability and effectiveness of social protection interventions. Under human rights law, States are legally obligated to establish social protection systems. This duty flows directly from the right to social security, which is articulated most prominently in art. 9 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) - which imposes legally binding obligation on 160 States-. In General Comment No. 19 on the right to social security, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the supervisory body of the ICESCR, spells out the key features of this right and the content of States' obligations. According to the Committee, the right to social security implies two predominant categories of measures: social insurance schemes, where beneficiaries are requested to contribute financially; and social assistance schemes, non-contributory measures which are designed to transfer resources to groups deemed eligible due to vulnerability or deprivation.

At the same time, social protection systems are one tool that can assist States in complying with their other human rights obligations towards people living in poverty. By transferring resources to those living in extreme poverty and allowing beneficiaries to generate income, protect their assets and accumulate human capital, social protection systems can assist States in fulfilling their obligations under national, regional and international human rights law to ensure the enjoyment of at least minimum essential levels of economic, social and cultural rights. In particular, social protection systems have the potential to assist in the realisation of the right to food as an essential component of the right to an adequate standard of living; the right to education; and the right to the highest attainable standard of health.

Thus, it is essential that the FAO reinforce the strong human rights implications and obligations that stem from international human rights standards. Moreover, social protection interventions must be guided by human rights principles, as a matter of law and in order to maximise their success in building human capital, fostering food security and alleviating poverty. Human rights obligations relate not only to the final outcome of social protection programmes, but also to the process through which such programmes are implemented. The binding legal obligations that States have voluntarily assumed must guide the conduct and performance of social policies.

The human rights approach to social protection also has numerous practical advantages – human rights standards assist in building social consensus and mobilising durable commitments at the national and international level, facilitate a more efficient use of resources by promoting access to information and fighting corruption, and empower those living in poverty. A focus on rights and obligations assists in improving accountability, as responsibilities are defined in

terms of the specific legal obligations of “duty-bearers” and those who are entitled to make claims are identified as ‘rights holders’. Social programmes that are designed from a human rights perspective are more likely to be sustainable and to effectively contribute to the eradication of extreme poverty. Furthermore, a human rights approach adds legitimacy as it refers to a universally accepted set of norms and values.

Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all?

Universal social protection schemes – those which provide benefits to all residents without conditions – are the best way for States to meet their human rights obligations to ensure that there is no discrimination in the selection of beneficiaries. Simple targeting mechanisms such as categorical targeting, which selects beneficiaries in the basis of their age on a universal basis (for example, benefits all children under 18 or all persons above 65), are relatively effective and do not pose many human rights challenges as their criteria could be easily determined. Mechanisms intended to select beneficiaries on the basis of their income or poverty level, on the other hand, are more complex and problematic from a human rights point of view. While targeting mechanisms may be seen as one way of reaching those most in need (particularly when resources are limited), from a human rights perspective, caution is required. In principle, human rights standards are not compromised by the use of targeted schemes as a form of prioritization of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. However, in accordance with human rights standards, the methods of targeting chosen to select the beneficiaries must comply with the principle of non-discrimination, which entails an obligation to give priority to the poorest of the poor, avoid stigmatizing beneficiaries, and must be implemented with the intention of progressively providing universal coverage.

The main perceived advantage of targeted programmes is their overall cost to the State when compared with universal programmes. In practice, however, the affordability of social systems is inevitably a question of political will and legitimacy. Numerous studies undertaken by the ILO and its partners show that social protection programmes are affordable even in the poorest countries. For example, it would be possible to extend social protection to all people living in extreme poverty in El Salvador for between 1.1 and 1.5 per cent of the country’s annual GDP. Moreover, experience shows that social protection ultimately pays for itself by enhancing the productiveness of the labour force, increasing the health and resilience of society, and increasing aggregate demand. Universal programmes reduce opportunities for corruption and manipulation, and can be supported by a simpler structure with lower administrative costs. In many cases, universal programmes provide better coverage for lower costs, especially in countries where administrative capacities are limited.

From a human rights perspective, it is also crucial to keep in mind there is a growing body of evidence that shows that methods that target income or poverty levels can impact negatively on community cohesion. Inevitable inclusion and exclusion errors, coupled with a community’s difficulty in understanding the complex methodology utilized, can create tensions and divisions in the community that could increase conflict and unrest and ultimately translate to violations of rights, including the personal security of community members. The likelihood of intra-community tensions and divisions is especially high when targeting methods are used in communities where everyone lives in a situation of poverty, and almost imperceptible differences separate the poorest from those who are little better off.

When States choose to implement targeted systems, they are obligated by human rights norms to carefully assess the impact and accuracy of targeting methods in order to ensure to the greatest extent possible the inclusion of all those in need, and to minimise any exclusion of those who must be reached and protected as a matter of priority (i.e. the poorest of the poor). Experience shows that often, technical problems in the design of targeted programmes may prevent them from actually reaching the most vulnerable; studies have shown that programmes

in Latin America, for example, carried levels of under-coverage varying between 26 to 84 per cent.

Some methods used to identify the poor, such as means testing, are often complex and extremely opaque, making the eligibility criteria very difficult to grasp. This severely impedes the ability of intended beneficiaries to scrutinize the targeting process, claim their entitlements, and hold administrators of the programs accountable for mistakes or errors. Especially concerning is the use of proxy means testing, which is not only administratively demanding, but also often fails to reach standards of appropriate objectivity or transparency, particularly in developing countries with large informal sectors, weak administrative capacity and low fiscal space.

Another means of targeting the poor often employed by social protection programs in developing countries is community selection, whereby beneficiaries are chosen by community leaders, on the assumption that the community is better able to identify its poorest members. From a human rights perspective, there are a number of concerns about community targeting. It has the potential to reinforce power structures, patron-client relations and local gender norms, creating tensions and further stigmatizing and alienating some groups in the community. Community targeting can have the perverse effect of completely excluding the poorest and most vulnerable if, for example, community leaders choose those who are most likely to benefit from social protection assistance, rather than those most in need of support. In some cases, community-targeted programmes have resulted in further excluding already socially marginalised women. The role of community leaders in the targeting process also creates opportunities for bribery and the abuse of power, thus marginalizing further those who cannot pay a bribe or who suffer from pre-existing discriminatory attitudes. This is particularly the case in communities where poverty is widespread and identifying those most in need is difficult.

Geographical targeting, another targeting mechanism often employed in low-income countries, should also be approached with caution, as it creates opportunities for strategic political manipulation by policy makers and politicians, who have greater incentives to channel social protection benefits to politically important electoral divisions, rather than to the communities most in need. This, of course, raises considerable issues with respect to compliance with the principle of non discrimination, which requires that the selection of beneficiaries must be made on the basis of objective and reasonable criteria.

From a human rights perspective, inclusion errors (providing the benefit to someone who is not in the target group) and exclusion errors (failure to provide the transfer to those targeted) do not have the same significance; exclusion errors are much more serious, constituting a violation of beneficiaries' right to social security. Moreover, those excluded are often those who have suffered from structural discrimination and will thus find it most difficult to claim for their inclusion.

If targeting methods are employed policy makers must carefully assess the impact of the methods in terms of minimising the exclusion of potential beneficiaries and ensuring that the methods chosen are objective, transparent and do not lead to further segregation or stigmatization. Methods that would be easier to implement should be preferred, as should those which would minimise intra-community tensions and divisions. From a human rights perspective it is crucial that policy makers actively ensure that vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, minorities or persons with HIV/AIDS are reached as a matter of priority. In this regard preference should be given to adopting categorical schemes (for example, by age or location) and within categories each provision should be universal (such as universal social pensions or child benefits). Targeted systems that, by design, result in the de facto exclusion of the poorest households and communities seriously undermine the principles of equality and non-discrimination, and must be avoided.

Targeted systems must be accompanied by broad outreach and information campaigns that inform beneficiaries their rights and entitlements, the eligibility criteria and participation requirements, and the available mechanisms for accountability and complaint. Research shows that the poorer, less educated, and more marginalised (by multiple forms of discrimination) the household, the less likely it is that its members will know about the availability of a social protection programme and be able to claim for their inclusion in it. Outreach must therefore use channels that are accessible by the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Adequate appeal and monitoring processes must be put in place to ensure that there has been no discrimination in the selection of beneficiaries. These mechanisms should be impartial and with the competence to provide effective and efficient redress.

The selection of beneficiaries of social protection programmes must also pay attention to intra-household dynamics and the inequalities and processes that generate them. For example, qualifying conditions for benefits should move beyond the household and address how resources are distributed within a household. Using household targeting methods can put women and older persons at a disadvantage by ignoring the fact that women, in particular girls and older women, often receive fewer resources than men and boys regardless of household income.

Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?

The imposition of conditionalities, particularly on the female head of household, has the potential to impede the enjoyment of human rights by the beneficiaries in a number of ways, and should therefore be the subject of careful consideration from a human rights perspective.

Three predominant arguments are advanced in support of conditionalities. First, that they are necessary to influence the behaviour and attitudes of the beneficiaries in order to improve health and education outcomes, strengthen human capital and in the long term contribute to breaking the inter-generational reproduction of poverty. This argument is based upon the assumption that in the absence of conditionalities beneficiaries would not make the same investment in human capital. Second, proponents of programmes with conditionalities argue that they are more likely to be perceived as benefiting the “deserving poor”, and thereby facilitate the political and social legitimacy of the programme. Finally, it is proposed that conditionalities contribute to the self-esteem and sense of autonomy of the beneficiaries, and strengthen the bargaining power and promote the status of women beneficiaries.

From a human rights perspective, however, there are strong arguments against conditionalities. The imposition of conditionalities may unnecessarily undermine the individual’s autonomy and assume that people living in poverty cannot make rational choices that improve their livelihoods. Conditionalities deprive the poorest of the freedom to make decisions about their welfare and that of their family, and to determine their own lives. Conditionalities involve additional monitoring and administration costs, as well as private costs to the beneficiaries in complying with them. Evidence shows that in the context of low-income countries resources may be better spent in extending existing social services rather than on the administrative costs associated with monitoring conditionalities.

Critics indicate that there is no sound social and economic evidence that conditionalities are necessary to achieve the desired investment in human capital, so that it is possible that the same improvements in health and education would be achieved without imposing conditionalities. Experiences from low-income countries show that unconditional cash transfers may even be more successful in reducing poverty and improving education outcomes than conditional cash transfers, which often provide a much lower level of cash benefit and tend to reach non-poor beneficiaries. Thus, more empirical evidence and disaggregated data is needed before conclusive statements about the effectiveness of conditionalities in improving health and education

outcomes can be made. Furthermore, there is already strong international evidence demonstrating that cash transfers alone, without conditionalities, can make a significant difference to human development, and in particular to improving the health and education of children.

Under international human rights law, States have an obligation to meet minimum essential levels of the rights of food, health, housing, education and social security immediately. The enjoyment of these rights by all individuals is not conditional on the performance of certain actions or the meeting of requirements. Rather, these are inherent rights which are essential to the realization of human dignity. In this context, non-compliance with conditionalities attached to social protection programmes must not result in the exclusion of beneficiaries from programmes and services which are essential to their enjoyment of minimum essential levels of basic human rights. The imposition of conditionalities, therefore, should be analyzed with respect to the overall set of obligations of the State and the need to meet minimum essential levels of human rights.

In some cases, imposing conditionalities may result in the deterioration of the circumstances in which the poorest and most vulnerable live. The imposition of conditionalities often increases community power imbalances and the opportunity for abuses of power by those involved in the monitoring of compliance with conditionalities (such as teachers, health care personnel, and programs administrators). For example, conditionalities requiring children to attend school or attain certain grades may have a negative influence on the school environment, providing teachers with additional means to exert authority over students and parents, and do not relate to the quality of the instruction that teachers provide. Empowering teachers with the authority to directly influence the welfare of poor families may undermine the potential to develop more democratic and participatory forms of school management.

Schools stipend programs that require women to demonstrate certain attendance rates and a minimum level of performance have been generally recognized as successful in raising enrolment rates of girls. However, such programmes harbor considerable potential for sexual abuse and harassment in such schemes. Girls may be prevented from complying with conditionalities if they fear being sexually assaulted at or on their way to schools, or may not want to attend school if there are no separate sanitation facilities, or if they are harassed by teachers or other students. This not only impedes their ability to receive the benefit and undermines their personal security, but could also contribute to the deterioration of their physical and mental health: a World Bank study of a conditional cash transfer programme in Malawi, for example, found teenage girls subject to conditionalities experienced psychological distress.

Conditionalities may also create incentives for children to cheat on attendance figures and exam performance so that households can continue receiving their benefit. In such cases, the conditionality may be exposing children to the wrong lesson: that it is possible, and acceptable, to cheat the local authorities to access public resources.

When failure to comply with a conditionality exposes the family to exclusion from a programme, there are serious human rights concerns. The exclusion of beneficiaries from a social protection programme for failure to comply with conditionalities is an extremely punitive measure that undermines beneficiaries' ability to enjoy their right to social security and may cause a serious deterioration in the standard of living that they are able to achieve.

If States impose conditionalities or co-responsibilities in their social protection programmes, they have the obligation to ensure that the final result will not violate the right of individuals to, at the least, minimum essential levels of economic, social and cultural rights. Where conditionalities are imposed, they should be designed as an incentive for beneficiaries to access

services, not as punitive measures. Conditionalities should be used as facilitative tools to identify the most vulnerable families. Brazil's Bolsa Familia, for example, responds to non-compliance with a condition that children must attend school by directing more resources to the family and giving the family access to social workers. Furthermore, whether or not they comply with the conditionalities, families are guaranteed a minimum benefit.

Where conditionalities are not complied with, this should assist programme officials in identifying and acting upon problems with the distribution of the benefit and difficulties faced by the household. Non-punitive mechanisms should be put into place to help families that are not complying with the conditionalities and to detect and remedy problems in the design of the program or the delivery of social services that are precluding compliance. From a human rights perspective, these beneficiaries must not be excluded from their entitlements because the State has failed to improve the provision of public services or take an appropriate gender approach in designing the programme.

The question of the impact of the imposition of conditionalities on the rights of women raises a number of other serious concerns. While there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that conditionalities increases women's decision-making role with respect to household expenditure, and improves their financial security and their self esteem, without an appropriate consideration of the gender dimensions of such programmes, this modality runs a high risk of perpetuating patriarchal structures and gender stereotypes, and reinforcing social and cultural attitudes towards women, instead of working to evolve them. Furthermore, by imposing additional responsibilities on women, programmes increase women's domestic care burden, limit their ability to work and may even detrimentally affect their welfare: additional demands on their time may restrict women's ability to seek health care (particularly if health centres are not easily accessible and childcare is unavailable) or further deprive them of leisure time. In some situations, it can put a woman at risk of violence or abuse, where a household is unable to comply with conditionalities and loses its entitlement to the benefit.

Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? grievance mechanisms? legislation?

The most successful experiences of social protection systems are those grounded in legal instruments that ensure the permanence of these initiatives and give rights-holders the legal ability to invoke their rights. The success of systems in countries such as Brazil, South Africa and Chile is due in part to the existence of specific legal provisions ensuring the individual's right to social protection and defining the standards which regulate the involvement of all stakeholders.

The lack of a strong legal and institutional framework and a complementary long-term strategy can seriously threaten the enjoyment of human rights by the programme's beneficiaries. In the absence of a well established legal framework, programmes are more vulnerable to political manipulation, and the long-term involvement of State authorities in all stages of the programme cannot be guaranteed. Programmes are not viewed as an inherent social entitlement or as the right of the beneficiaries.

In order to ensure a strong, effective, transparent and accountable social protection system, beneficiaries must be able to identify actors who bear responsibilities in allocating the benefits they receive. This ensures that political changes do not jeopardize the existence of the social protection system, which may not be as politically valuable to a new government as it was to the previous one. Legal and institutional frameworks play an integral role in ensuring that beneficiaries can demand their entitlements and protest violations of their rights, guaranteeing that the social protection programme will outlast the political cycle and will not be manipulated for political purposes.

The absence of a clear strategy and institutional arrangements undermines the necessary protection of the beneficiaries' human rights by prioritising short-term gains in poverty reduction over development, human rights realisation and the accumulation of human capital. Without a long-term strategy, small scale initiatives and pilot projects are often instituted in contexts where the adequate infrastructure does not yet exist, and programmes are rolled out in ways which pose risks to the beneficiaries.

A legal and institutional framework and national strategy is an essential prerequisite to ensuring long-term institutionalized commitment to providing adequate financial and human resources to social protection programmes. When small scale or pilot programmes are implemented in the absence of long-term funding commitments, particularly when such programmes are implemented by external donors, the objectives of the programmes invariably shift from the accumulation of human capital to the achievement of short-term gains in poverty reduction.

At a minimum, a legal and institutional framework should include the precise eligibility requirements for social protection programmes, provide for mechanisms to ensure transparency and access to information about available programmes, define the various roles and responsibilities of all those involved in implementing the programmes (e.g. governments at the national and local levels, international organisations and civil society organisations), articulate the long-term funding requirements and responsibilities, establish accessible complaints mechanisms, and set the foundations for participation channels for beneficiaries.

Finally, the UN Special Rapporteur would like to share the following reports on the links between social protection and human rights:

A/HRC/11/9 main focus: cash transfers and human rights

A/64/279 main focus: social protection system and the financial and economic crisis

A/HRC/14/31 main focus: social protection and old age poverty

The reports are available in 5 languages at:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Poverty/Pages/AnnualReports.aspx>

Magdalena Sepulveda Carmona

UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

27. Save the Children, UK

I. Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted? Which instruments should be avoided, and why? Should interventions in food markets designed to stabilise prices be used?

According to the 2009 Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security 'The four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization and stability. The **nutritional dimension** is integral to the concept of food security'.¹⁴

¹⁴ Declaration of the 2009 World Summit on Food Security, page 1 See http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/wsfs/Summit/Docs/Final_Declaration/WSFS09_Declaration.pdf

Despite this, decades of policy, planning and funding commitments to achieve *food security for all* have failed to address this ‘integral’ dimension. Malnutrition is one of the greatest public health threats of our time and progress on reducing malnutrition has been pitifully slow for 20 years. Further, a combination of global trends – climate change, volatile food prices, economic uncertainty and demographic shifts – is putting future progress on tackling malnutrition at risk.

Every hour of every day, 300 children die because of malnutrition. It’s an underlying cause of more than a third of children’s deaths – 2.6 million every year.¹⁵ Even for those children who survive, long-term malnutrition causes devastating and irreversible damage. Lack of nutritious food, coupled with infection and illness, means their bodies and brains don’t develop properly. At least 170 million children are affected worldwide and if current trends continue it could reach 450 million in the next 15 years.¹⁶

We know that poverty is a main underlying cause of malnutrition. Children are malnourished not because there is not nutritious food available, but because their families cannot afford to buy it. Save the Children’s research shows that a significant proportion of families in selected communities in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Kenya could not afford to feed their families a nutritious diet even if they spent all of their income on food.¹⁷ This combined with a lack of access to adequate health care, water and sanitation services leaves millions of children at risk of malnutrition.

A shock such as drought or a food price spike that slashes the availability of food can mean that children weakened by undernourishment and disease are dangerously vulnerable to sickness and the threat of acute malnutrition. Such a crisis will leave an enduring legacy of poverty and vulnerability, so social protection has a key role in breaking the cycle of chronic and acute malnutrition in food insecure areas and increasing resilience to shocks in the food system.

For this reason, Save the Children believes that ***social protection programmes with strong and effective nutrition components*** should be promoted. Social transfers can play a significant role in reducing undernutrition, particularly if targeted to households with young children and linked to other programmes that support the consumption of a nutritious diet. In order to impact on nutrition, social protection programmes should be designed taking into account households’ purchasing power and the cost of a nutritious diet. In areas with high levels of undernutrition, improved nutritional status should be one of the most important factors by which social protection programmes are assessed.

Using interventions designed to stabilise food prices

Preventing domestic volatility was an important first line of defence against soaring global food prices in 2007-2008 **where interventions including trade and fiscal measures, management and release of food stocks and price control and anti-speculation measures where employed.** The ability of governments to prevent domestic price increase was dependent on a number of factors, including pre-existing stabilization mechanisms. With the support of international organizations and donors, developing country governments should determine the best policy options for them, even if some result in market distortions. The clarity of governments’ policies and planning is also critical to make the best use of private sector’s capacity, and prevent panic and speculation behaviour.¹⁸

15 Based on calculation that 35% of child deaths are attributable to undernutrition (Black et al, Lancet, January 2008) and there were 7.6 million child deaths in 2010 (UNICEF, 2011, Levels and Trends in Child Mortality 2011)

16 M de Onis, M Blossner and E Borghi, (2011) ‘prevalence of stunting among pre-school children 1990-2020’, growth assessment and Surveillance unit, *Public Health Nutrition*, 2011, Jul 14:1-7

17 Save the Children (2009) *Hungry for Change: An eight-step, costed plan of action to tackle global child nutrition*

18 Mousseau, F. (2010). *The High Food Price Challenge: A Review of Responses to Combat Hunger*. Oakland, CA: The Oakland Institute.

II. Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid? Do social transfers cause 'dependency syndrome'? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?

Targeting

Coverage of social protection in countries with the highest burdens of malnutrition is insufficient and must be urgently scaled up, paying particular attention to those most vulnerable to the life-long consequences of malnutrition – pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under the age of 2. It is critical that social protection is able to reach children during this critical window.

Save the Children supports comprehensive and inclusive social protection, encompassing a broad set of interventions to address various risks. Recognising domestic resource constraints combined with widespread poverty and inadequate data systems, there are considerable challenges in targeting based on income. Therefore, it may be beneficial and cost-effective to target all children below a certain age. Programmes can initially be introduced for the most vulnerable age groups or geographical areas, scaling up to other ages and regions to allow time for building the systems and capacity necessary to deliver programmes at scale.

Cash v. Food

Transfers of **cash**, as opposed to food, are the preferred option, allowing **greater choice of use of the transfer and therefore for a greater diversity of food types**. For example, in a Save the Children programme in Niger it was found that, compared to the food purchases before the transfer, there was a slight increase in expenditure on staple food but the difference was considerable for non-staple foods¹⁹

In addition, beneficiaries may decide to use the transfer on non-food expenditure such as health and education, which will increase impact on food security and child development in both the short and long term.²⁰ Further, there is the possibility for cash transfers to be **combined with support for nutrition and hygiene or breastfeeding groups and accompanied with other nutrition policies** such as food fortification which could help to ensure that the transfer maximises opportunities to improve nutritional status.

In some contexts, particularly fragile states, the suitability of cash, as opposed to food, **may be undermined by poor availability of food** and particularly certain types of food on the market and therefore, where appropriate, should be informed by a market assessment. In addition, it depends on critical aspects of design, including the **transfer size**. In the case of Ethiopia's PSNP, the cash wage rate was undermined by rising food prices and therefore beneficiaries increasingly expressed a preference for food over cash transfers²¹.

Dependency

Save the Children believes that any debate on 'dependency' must consider the positive impacts that social protection programs can deliver on labour participation and investment in productive activities as well as in terms of protecting communities during crisis as well as contributing to economic growth.

19 Save the Children (2009) How cash transfers can improve the nutrition of the poorest children: evaluation of a pilot safety net in Southern Niger

20 Devereux, S., R. Sabates-Wheeler, M. Tefera and H. Taye (2006b) Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP): Trends in PSNP Transfers Within Targeted Households. Report commissioned by DFID Ethiopia. Brighton and Addis Ababa: Institute of Development Studies and Indak International.

21 Sabates Wheeler and Devereux (2010) Cash transfers and high food prices: Explaining outcomes on Ethiopia's PSNP Food Policy 35 (4): 274 – 285; Save the Children (2008)

Social protection programmes can benefit countries and communities in crisis in several ways. Programmes such as cash transfer programmes, public works programmes and social insurance programmes not only **reduce poverty and vulnerability to shocks**, but they can also contribute to economic growth. They stimulate the economy by boosting demand and promoting consumer spending in local markets, whilst ensuring the poor can continue to access services essential to human development – such as health and education – and prevent them from adopting coping responses which may be harmful in the longer term²². Malnutrition in under-two-year-olds can have lifelong effects on physical and cognitive development. Children who benefited from cash transfer programmes in South Africa and Mexico have been shown to have higher earnings in adulthood.²³

Furthermore, rather than creating dependency, social protection can play a critical role in protecting poor people from the increasing risks of shocks and reducing dependency by **helping to generate income and improve long-term productivity**. Evidence from South Africa and Brazil²⁴ indicated that cash transfers can actually increase labour force participation. Cash transfers increase families' investment in agriculture, and petty trading as well as spending on food, healthcare and education, and therefore, generate income and increase demand for goods in local markets. In Mexico, 12% of the transfer is invested in agriculture, generating a 17.5% return on income.²⁵ In Ethiopia, transfers enabled poor farmers to farm their own land and negotiate better terms on agricultural contracts.²⁶

With risks for developing country growth high and the global economic outlook gloomy, the threat of increasing poverty, hunger and child malnutrition and mortality are all too real. It is vital that the global community and developing countries heed the warning signs, learn lessons from the response to recent crises and put programmes in place to protect the poor from the effects of poverty, which may worsen should another crisis develop.

Finally, predictable access to food or cash means that families are better able to plan. In chronically food insecure environments this can be critical in strengthening families' ability to respond to the first signs of deteriorating food security. Using ongoing social protection programmes as a basis for early response to early warnings can be a cheaper and better way to protect resilience and livelihoods than relying on expensive humanitarian assistance.²⁷ This can therefore reduce the risk of dependency.

Conditionality

Save the Children supports the statement of this report that *'there is simply insufficient evidence to state confidently that conditionality is effective.'* We recognise that, as well as enhancing human development outcomes through behavioural changes, conditionality can make

22 Espey, J, Harper, C and Jones, N (2010) 'Crisis, care and childhood: the impact of economic crisis on care work in poor households in the developing world,' Gender and Development, 18: 2, 291-307

23 J Aguero, with M Carter and I Woolard, The Impact of Unconditional Cash Transfers on Nutrition: The South African Child Support Grant, Working Paper 39, Brasilia, International Poverty Centre, 2007; E Skoufias, PROGRESA and its Impacts on Human Capital and Welfare of Households in Rural Mexico: A synthesis of the results of an evaluation by IFPRI, Washington, IFPRI, 2001

24 Economic Policy Research Institute, Final Report: The social and economic impact of South Africa's social security system, EPRI Research Paper 37, Cape Town, EPRI, South Africa Department of Social Development, 2004; M Medeiros, T Britto and FV Soares, Targeted Cash Transfer Programmes in Brazil: BPC and the Bolsa Familia, Working Paper 46, Brasilia, International Poverty Centre, 2008

25 P Gertler, with S Martinez and M Rubio-Codina, *Investing Cash Transfers to Raise Long-Term Living Standards*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3994, World Bank, 2006

26 L Adams and E Kebede, *Breaking the Poverty Cycle: A case study of cash interventions in Ethiopia*, Humanitarian Policy Group Background Paper, London, ODI, 2005

27 Save the Children and Oxfam (2012) *A Dangerous Delay: The cost of late response to early warnings in the 2011 drought in the n of Africa*, Joint Agency

programmes more politically acceptable. However, evidence shows that unconditional cash benefits empower people to meet various needs – often food, but also things that will improve their livelihoods in the longer-term, such as education and investment in farming²⁸

For the purpose of this submission, we will focus on the cost and feasibility of conditionality. Information on costs is limited, but suggests they may be high. For the Mexican Oportunidades programme, it is estimated that monitoring adherence to conditionality amounts to 26% of the programme cost (i.e., excluding the cost of the transfers themselves).²⁹ This percentage may be higher in countries with more limited administrative infrastructure, as there is less existing capacity on which to build.

As already pointed out in the HLPE report, **supply-side issues are a key concern** when considering the feasibility of conditions. For example, if payment of the transfer is conditional upon attending a health centre or clinic, there must be an adequate number of clinics within a feasible and affordable travelling distance for families.³⁰ Making transfers conditional on attending clinics may risk further marginalising the poorest or most remote, who are likely to be less able to comply with the conditions. If the intention is to improve children's health, nutrition or education, there may be options other than conditions for reinforcing those outcomes, such as providing complementary services³¹ and working with communities to bring about broader changes in social attitudes or relations. Conditions can be an additional time burden to the beneficiaries, who are often female and whose time is often already significantly constrained by work and caring for children.³²

While both sides of the controversial debate warrant attention, **context-specific analysis is required** to ensure that there is an added benefit of conditionality that outweighs additional programme costs and costs and burden (in terms of time and constrained choice) imposed on beneficiaries.

III. Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported? Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? grievance mechanisms? legislation? What are the challenges to strengthening the rights foundations of social protection, and how can they be overcome?

Save the Children welcomes the emphasis on a rights based approach to social protection set out in this report. As a children's rights organisation, Save the Children views **social protection as a fundamental right and an essential service**. Children's rights to social protection are elaborated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and are supported in other human rights documents as cited in this HLPE report. We also support the concept of **progressive realisation** of the right to social protection for all as outlined on page 23 of this HLPE report.

28 S Devereux (2006) *Cash Transfers and Social Protection*, Paper prepared for the regional workshop on 'Cash transfer activities in southern Africa', co-hosted by the Southern African Regional Poverty Network, Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme and Oxfam GB

29 E Skoufias, *PROGRESA and its Impacts on Human Capital and Welfare of Households in Rural Mexico: A synthesis of the results of an evaluation by IFPRI*, Washington, IFPRI, 2001; S Handa and B Davis B, *The Experience of Conditional Cash Transfers in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ESA Working Paper No. 06-07, Rome, FAO, 2006

30 Save the Children UK, *Helping Children Survive: Supporting poor families to overcome barriers to maternal, newborn and child health services*, London, Save the Children, 2009, Cash, Food, Payments, Risk

31 S Handa and B Davis B, *The Experience of Conditional Cash Transfers in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ESA Working Paper No. 06-07, Rome, FAO, 2006

32 Save the Children (2009) *Lasting Benefits: the role of cash transfers in tackling child mortality*

Save the Children believes that ***promoting social accountability*** by implementing grievance procedures and employing participatory monitoring techniques are critical to ensuring that beneficiaries are able to realise their rights to social protection.

Grievance mechanisms or complaints procedures serve a critical role in developing effective social protection systems because they empower beneficiaries and “introduce principles of rights and responsibilities to the design and delivery of the programme”³³ For example, a ‘Citizen’s Service Charter’ in Kenya is monitored through the establishment of ‘Rights Committees’ set up in relations the Hunger Safety Net Programme.³⁴ A similar ‘Appeals and Complaints Process’ serves a watchdog function on the Rwandan Government’s Vision 2010 Umurenge Programme based on the rights set out in the ‘Beneficiary Charter of Rights and Responsibilities.’³⁵ Studies of these types of mechanisms show varying levels of success indicating that elements such as independence, beneficiary buy-in and effective monitoring and evaluation must be carefully reflected upon during the design and implementation of social protection programmes.^{36 37 38}

Complaints procedures and grievance mechanisms are, however, only one part of social accountability. In order to ensure that social protection is transformative and supportive of development, it should be complemented by broader efforts to strengthen local civil society and media.

Challenges

The global economic crisis and subsequent shortfall in developing countries' budgets appear to be emerging challenges to strengthening the delivery of social protection, as budgetary allocations change and duty-bearers cut back on already scarce social protection spending. A forthcoming report by Save the Children shows that of 15 IDA-lending countries with an historic commitment to social protection and available budget information, seven have reduced the amount they planned to spend on social protection (as a proportion of GDP) since the financial crisis³⁹. More worryingly, six out of seven countries failed to deliver on spending the amount that they had planned to⁴⁰ This budgetary narrowing and shortfalls in expenditure may provide a serious obstacle to the realization of the right to social security in many countries.

IV. What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security? Should impact on nutritional status be seen primarily through dietary diversity and food consumption, or extend into broader nutrition security and encompass also security for water, sanitation, disease control and arrangements for special care of vulnerable groups like women and young children? Which agricultural, trade and other policies should complement social protection for more

33 Devereux S. and White, P. (2010) Social Protection in Africa: Evidence, Politics and Rights, Poverty and Public Policy, 2(3): (page 72) 53 77.

34 Devereux S. and White, P. (2010) Social Protection in Africa: Evidence, Politics and Rights, Poverty and Public Policy, 2(3): 53 77.

35 Devereux, S. (2011) 2nd Annual Review of DFID Support to the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), Rwanda. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

36 Devereux S. and Mhlanga, M. (2008) Cash Transfers in Lesotho. An evaluation of World Vision’s Cash and Food Transfers Pilot Project. Maseru: World Vision.

37 Devereux S. and White, P. (2010) Social Protection in Africa: Evidence, Politics and Rights, Poverty and Public Policy, 2(3): 53 77.

38 Devereux, S. (2011) 2nd Annual Review of DFID Support to the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), Rwanda. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

39 Martin M, Watts R (2012). Social protection expenditure trends 2008-2013: An Analysis of 15 committed countries. Report by Development Finance Initiative for Save the Children UK, March 2012. The countries that have planned decreases as a proportion of GDP are: Bangladesh, Cape Verde, Ghana, Malawi, Nepal, Nicaragua, Senegal.

40 Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Zambia all fell short of spending the amount that they had committed to social protection in 2010. Only Bangladesh met its budgetary allocation for social protection.

sustainable food security outcomes? What are the appropriate roles for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security?

Design Principles

Analysis

Social protection programming must be based on sound and comprehensive analysis of the underlying factors which drive poverty and food and nutrition insecurity in a community. Save the Children has developed two unique tools, the Household Economy Approach (HEA) and the Cost of a Diet (CoD) assessment, which can guide effective design and implementation of social protection programming.

Design of social protection policies should be informed by vulnerability analysis that provides a solid understanding of the factors that render different children, women and households vulnerable. The **Household Economy Approach** is a framework that guides practitioners in capturing what food is consumed by a family – including the extent of reliance on food purchases rather than own production, how income is generated, and how the market is functioning.⁴¹ Save the Children's past and current experience in working with governments in Mali and Niger demonstrates that the HEA can be an incredibly useful element in establishing effective approaches to targeting social protection programmes. HEA not only helps to identify who has the greatest need and therefore should be prioritised in social protection programmes, but also when. By identifying when families cut back, when they consolidate, and when they trade, HEA can ensure that social protection programmes complement families' means of coping, making it more sustainable.

Transfer amount

In terms of impact on nutrition, it is crucial that transfer size takes into account the cost of a nutritious diet. Although there are trade-offs between transfer size and number of beneficiaries reached, the transfer size should be large enough to have a sufficient and sustained impact on nutrition and other critical indicators including health and nutrition. In addition, the transfer size should be flexible to adjust to changes in prices, particularly in the context of significant food price increases.

The **Cost of the Diet** tool developed by Save the Children calculates the cost of the cheapest diet that meets the nutritional requirements of families using just the foods available locally. This data is combined with information developed by interviewing members of households about what they eat and how they live (through Household Economy Approach assessments explained above). It can also be used to estimate the proportion of households in a region that are unable to afford a nutritious diet, as well as the size of the gap between current income and the amount of money needed to meet the needs of a household.⁴²

The Cost of the Diet analysis provides a unique perspective on seasonal changes in nutrition security and can be used to highlight which vitamins and minerals are lacking in the diets of poor families and is intended to be used to inform programme design, as part of baseline assessments and alongside nutrition/food security surveillance.

Cost of diet analysis undertaken in DRC, Bangladesh and Pakistan finds a huge gap between the cost of a nutritious diet and household income, particularly for the very poor.⁴³ In DRC, a diet

41 Save the Children UK (2000) The Household Economy Approach: A resource manual for practitioners, Save the Children Development Manual No 6

42 <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/the-cost-of-the-diet>

43 Save the Children (December 2011) Assessing the cost of a nutritious diet in Muzaffargarh, southern Punjab, Pakistan, Unpublished; Save the Children (2009) How the Global Food Crisis is Hurting Children: The impact of the food price hike on a rural community in northern Bangladesh; Save the Children (2010)

that provides sufficient energy for children is four times cheaper than a diet that provides the required nutrients for optimal growth and development of children. The poorest families (very poor and poor) can barely afford a diet that fulfils their energy requirements and most people, including better-off households can not afford the essential micronutrients.⁴⁴ In Pakistan, cost of diet analysis, in one livelihood zone, found that the availability of nutrient-rich food is not a main cause of malnutrition. The annual income of very poor households is able to meet only 31 per cent of the total estimated cost of the minimum nutritious diet.⁴⁵

As the HLPE report points out, volatile and high food prices are an ongoing threat in developing countries and represent a challenge in designing social protection programmes, threatening to undermine impacts of programmes, particularly on nutrition. Studies of the PSNP have shown that unless they are indexed to food price inflation, cash payments can be eroded by price rises, so that when food prices increase, cash payments are no longer sufficient. In some areas of Ethiopia, recipients of cash required an extra two months of income when food prices increased.⁴⁶ In addition, in the cost of diet analysis for Pakistan indicates that fluctuating food prices and wage rates risks widening the gap between income and the cost of a nutritious diet.⁴⁷

Targeting

Targeting in social protection programmes should be informed by vulnerability analysis and, the HLPE report has very clearly outlined the challenges and complexities of deciding on the best method for selecting which beneficiaries will receive the benefits of a social protection scheme.

To maximise improvements to nutrition, the use of age criteria may be particularly effective. A social protection package should ensure, as a minimum, **transfers to children under two, and to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers**. Transfers to mothers should continue for at least six months after birth in order to support breastfeeding. There is particular value in targeting **adolescent girls** who are vulnerable to anaemia and can benefit from improved nutrition before their first pregnancy.⁴⁸

The evidence that nutritional gains of interventions are usually greater for children under the age of 2 (occasionally 3) years, and that any nutritional deficits at this age cannot easily be recovered afterwards is virtually beyond dispute⁴⁹. Therefore, whilst social transfer programmes can be aimed at children of ages as high as 18 years, studies of Oportunidades, South Africa's Child Support Grant, Colombia's Familias en Acción, and Brazil's Bolsa Familia show that measurable nutrition-relevant impacts are often only significant for children of under

Malnutrition in a land of plenty: Key findings from research in East Kasai province, the Democratic Republic of Congo

44 Save the Children (2010) Malnutrition in a land of plenty: Key findings from research in East Kasai province, the Democratic Republic of Congo

45 Save the Children (December 2011) Assessing the cost of a nutritious diet in Muzaffargarh, southern Punjab, Pakistan, Unpublished

46 Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2010) Cash Transfers and High Food Prices: Explaining outcomes on Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme. Available at http://www.chronicpoverty.org/uploads/publication_files/sabates_wheeler_food_cash.pdf

47 Save the Children (December 2011) Assessing the cost of a nutritious diet in Muzaffargarh, southern Punjab, Pakistan, Unpublished

48 The Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2011) Girls Grow: A vital force in rural economics

49 Engle, P.L., Black, M.M., Behrman, J.R., Cabral de Mello, M., Gertler, P.J., Kapiriri, L., Martorell, R., Young, M.E., 2007 Strategies to avoid the loss of developmental potential in more than 200 million children in the developing worlds, available at

http://www.who.int/child_adolescent_health/documents/pdfs/lancet_child_dev_series_paper3.pdf Leroy et al (2009), Macours, Karen, Norbert Schady, and Renos Vakis. 2008 Cash Transfers, Behavioral Changes, and the Cognitive Development of Young Children: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment+ available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPPOVANA/Resources/MacoursSchadyVakis_041108.pdf

3 years⁵⁰. However, there are variations within this age group, with most of the evidence from South Africa's Child Support Grant, Familias en Accion in Colombia and Oportunidades in Mexico showing stronger impacts for younger children or earlier entry⁵¹. There are a number of different possible target groups that may ultimately impact on children. For example, South Africa's State Old Age Grant (SOAG), a non-contributory pension, has been found to have significant positive impacts of pre-school girls' height-for-age, especially when the recipients are grandmothers⁵².

As explained above, using the HEA framework can also help to identify the households that are most at risk of falling into crisis in the event of a shock. Ensuring that these households and income groups are targeted means that they can rely on a set availability of cash or food, reducing the likelihood that they will require further assistance in the event of a shock. In addition, an established social protection programme using the HEA framework for targeting can more easily scale up as an immediate first response to meet any income gaps that emerge at the early stages of a humanitarian crisis.

Incorporation of complementary services, conditionality or messaging/labelling

As section 1.2 of the HLPE report demonstrates, achieving food and nutrition security **unquestionably requires a multi-sectoral approach**. This indicates that social protection programming will be most effective when it is linked to and/or complemented by access to other critical sectors including health, education, water and sanitation.

Impact on nutrition can be enhanced by incorporating **complementary services**, conditionality or messaging/labelling into the social protection programme. In particular, the delivery of social protection can be linked to other nutrition and health programmes, such as support for nutrition and hygiene or breastfeeding groups, to enhance their impact on nutrition. The Mexican cash transfer programme, Oportunidades, which linked cash payments to the distribution of nutritional supplements was shown to increase mean growth per year by about a sixth and to lower the probability of stunting.⁵³

As stated earlier, although conditionality may increase the impact on nutrition, there are likely to be high costs for the programme and beneficiary in doing so. In order to enhance the impact on nutrition it is critical that the social transfer is complemented by other interventions to promote good nutrition, and linkages are made to ensure that beneficiaries have access to these interventions.

Beneficiaries of Save the Children's cash transfer programme in Sri Lanka which provided livelihood support to the poorest tsunami-affected households were told that transfers were intended to help improve the nutrition and health of their children. The increase in household income through unconditional cash had a positive impact on the nutrition of the children of poor

50 Agüero, Jorge, Carter, Michael and Woolard (2007), Ingrid The Impact of unconditional cash transfers on child nutrition: The South African Child Support Grant (CSG) Available at <http://www.ipc-undp.org/pub/IPCWorkingPaper39.pdf>, Ministry for Social Development (MSD) and Fight Against Hunger, Secretariat for Evaluation and Information Management. 2005. Health and Nutrition Day: A Nutritional Survey of Children Living in the Semi-Arid Area and Land-Reform Settlements in Northeast Brazil. Brasilia: Secretariat for Evaluation and Information Management and UNICEF (cited in Bassett, 2008) Paes-Sousa, R., Pacheco Santos, L.M., Shisue Miazaki, E., (2011) Effects of a conditional cash transfer programme on child nutrition, Bulletin of the World Health Organisation, 89: 7 p496-503, Fernald, L.C.H., Gertler, P.J., and Neufeld, L.M. 2009. 10-year effect of Oportunidades, Mexico's conditional cash transfer programme, on child growth, cognition, language, and behaviour: a longitudinal follow-up study Lancet 2009; 374: 1997-2005

51 Agüero et al (?); Attanasio et al (2005) Fernald et al (2009) ; Neufeld et al (2008)

52 Duflo (2003)

53 J R Behram and J Hoddinott (2005) 'Programme evaluation with unobserved heterogeneity and selective implementation: the Mexican PROGRESA impact on child nutrition', Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, 67:4

families when compared with a matched control group, suggesting that simply labelling unconditional cash transfers in line with their desired impact may be effective.⁵⁴

Empowering Women

Given the critical role that women play in the nutrition of children, transfers should be delivered where possible in a manner that **increases their control over family resources**. Evidence suggests this greatly enhances the impact of the transfer on nutrition.⁵⁵ This supports other evidence from south Asia that women's control over assets is a strong determinant of good nutrition.

There is evidence to show that cash transfers also have a positive impact on the status of women in the community.⁵⁶ Analysis by Save the Children has shown that the greater gender equality there is in a country, the lower the rate of under-five mortality, suggesting that benefits of women's empowerment extend to their children.⁵⁷ The extent to which women's control over household resources or decision-making is affected by social protection policies varies. Social protection programmes seeking to improve the nutrition of children should be delivered in ways that increase the decision-making power of women and recognise their role in caring for children and in ensuring a nutritious diet for the family.⁵⁸

A recent study of the impact of the Mexican social protection programme, Oportunidades, on household budgets concluded that the proportion of the participating households' budget that was spent on food either remained the same or increased.⁵⁹ This was contrary to the expectation that it would fall as a proportion of an increased budget; this was attributed to the fact that the cash was put directly into the hands of women.

Supporting country level ownership

All donors should support identified national and regional priorities. It is critical, for example, that the international community supports the African Union to implement its 2009 Social Policy Framework. Given the high percentage of recurrent costs and the importance of predictability for cash recipients, **predictable multi-year financing is necessary** with the flexibility to respond in chronically food insecure areas. Donors should particularly focus on technical and financial support to **high initial start-up costs** in ensuring quality design, implementation and delivery capacity, and evaluation. This should include funding the establishment of national HEA baselines. Where appropriate, this should be in the form of **budget support, in order to strengthen national leadership**.

To increase sustainability and predictability, social protection programmes should, in the medium to long term, support building capacity for domestic resource mobilisation, combined with budget accountability mechanisms to ensure that government can fulfil their social protection commitments. Here, coordination with the IMF Fiscal Affairs Division, ECOSOC, and the OECD Taskforce on Tax and Development is crucial.

Harnessing the potential of agriculture for tackling food and nutrition insecurity

54 Save the Children (2010) Livelihood Assistance to the Poorest Tsunami Affected Households in Sri Lanka, Unpublished End Line Nutrition Survey

55 E Duflo (2000), Grandmothers and Granddaughters: Old age pension and intrahousehold allocation in South Africa, MIT Working Paper 00-05

56 IFPRI (2003) The importance of Women's Status for Child Nutrition in Developing Countries, Washington DC

57 Save the Children (2011) An Equal Start: Why gender equality matters for child survival and maternal health

58 However, programmes must also be mindful of the risk of increasing the workload of women by introducing impractical conditions or reinforcing traditional gender roles.

59 O Attanasio and V Lechene (2010) Conditional Cash Transfers, Women and the Demand for Food, IFS Working Paper 10/17, Institute for Fiscal Studies

In order to improve food and nutrition security, agricultural policies and interventions must be combined with other activities that are shown to improve nutrition, which include social protection programmes as well as direct nutrition interventions.

National governments developing agricultural policies must ensure that nutrition is an explicit objective of agricultural programmes. Policies should be designed with the local markets in mind and seek to improve accessibility for small-scale farmers to the markets, and availability and affordability of nutritious foods.

Donors and governments must recognise the key role of women as food producers and providers and ensure that they have equal access to vital resources, knowledge and income. The wider community should have access to information in regards to the value of producing and preparing nutritious food as well as the value in using the income they have generated to purchase nutritious food. Donors, civil society and national governments all have a role to play in developing and improving the evidence base on how best to integrate nutrition and agriculture and improve child nutrition.

Appropriate Roles for International Community

Social protection, including cash transfers, should be viewed as a fourth basic service alongside health, education, and water and sanitation. The current global financial crisis is placing greater demands on aid budgets and government resources, at a time when the need for cash transfer schemes is rising. As a result, there are likely to be funding gaps in countries most in need of cash transfers in order to improve child survival rates. ***Donor support in the medium term is therefore necessary.***

In order to be responsive to shocks and ready to scale up in the event of crisis, it is vital that social protection programmes ***are well-established, reach the majority of the poor and are well administered.*** A World Bank study that assessed the readiness of safety net programmes to respond in 13 countries facing high food price increases in Spring 2011 found that ***only 1 country had a strong basis for response***, while 3 countries were unprepared⁶⁰. It is therefore critical that countries and donors take the opportunity to invest in social protection before crisis escalate in order both to decrease poor communities' vulnerability to shocks, and to prepare for an effective response when those shocks occur. In practice this means that social protection programmes in chronically food insecure countries should have long-term flexible funding that includes contingency funds that can be quickly deployed for scale-up when agreed triggers are crossed and established contingency plans are put into practice. This requires that development and humanitarian donors work flexibly to build contingency funds into social protection programmes.

While the UK Department for International Development, the ILO and the World Bank have shown considerable leadership in supporting social protection, broader donor financing and technical assistance is needed. To achieve these goals, ***bilateral and multilateral donors should set targets for social protection spending and report on progress against these targets.***

Developing countries use money from several sources to finance social protection systems. Analysis by the ILO shows that alongside ***debt and debt-service reduction, social contributions*** were one of the types of income most frequently used to fund social protection. ***Budget redefinition***, i.e. a reallocation of resources away from non-priority areas, or a reduction in military expenditures, is another source of funds that several countries have

⁶⁰ World Bank 2011 Assessing Safety Net Readiness in response to Food Price Volatility Margaret Grosh, Colin Andrews, Rodrigo Quintana and Claudia Rodriguez-Alas

used⁶¹. The international community, including donors, should **support developing countries to strengthen systems that collect these forms of government income**, and should be supportive of the allocation of these revenues towards social protection.

Save the Children welcomes the HLPE report's recommendation "that the compilation of social spending statistics (totals and disaggregated by key components) should be assigned to one of the multilateral organisations of the UN system. At present, social spending statistics are not reported systematically by any organisation" (p.72). The absence of consistent statistics in this area is both a sign of the lack of engagement and a barrier to better analysis and policy.

Mexican President and 2012 G20 President, Felipe Calderón, confirmed in Davos the importance of the G20 tackling poverty as well as restoring global growth and highlighted the importance of social protection programmes, such as Oportunidades, as part of the economic adjustments required.⁶² As noted by the Global Agenda Council on employment and social protection at Davos, in the developing world the establishment of a social protection floor is essential to reduce poverty and create the conditions for development.⁶³

28. Syntyche Nakar Djindil, Wageningen University, The Netherlands

I am happy that FAO organizes this panel on food insecurity and social protection. My contribution will focus on the long-term impact of political stress, via the resulting breakdown of social support mechanisms, on food security, child malnutrition and adult health in post-conflict situations.

As we know, over the past decades war, political oppression, bad governance and failing markets have become important causes of food insecurity especially in Africa. These phenomena caused not only structural and infrastructural deficits; they also damaged social networks and destroyed people's endogenous capacity to cope with natural crises. Political instability is one of the major drivers of social and cultural change within communities that affects their social protection, and as consequence, food security and well-being. Nearly all of the countries in which the Global Hunger Index (GHI) rose since 1990 are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most countries with highest GHI scores are affected by war and violent conflicts, giving rise to widespread poverty, social destitution and food insecurity. In Africa, people from rural areas most often use their own capacities, knowledge, and social relationships to cope with ecological and natural crisis and they need a peaceful environment. Unfortunately, exogenous human actions as war, oppression, repression, bad governance cannot be managed by indigenous knowledge. And yet, they disturb social relationships and destabilize households' access to food, affecting the physical and psychological condition of people.

For example, in Chad, political stress has been the main driver of socio-cultural change that translated into food insecurity. As my own research shows, many villages are facing food insecurity, child malnutrition and child and adult mortality but the degrees are different from one village to another depending on the severity and the impact of political stress.

⁶¹ ILO 2012. Children, Social Protection Frameworks and the Social Protection Floor Initiative. Presentation by Michael Cichon to the UNICEF Global Social and Economic Policy Consultation. Florence, 21 February 2012

⁶² President Felipe Calderon remarks at the 2012 World Economic Forum, Davos. Available here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyjQw1gGBxY&feature=relmfu>. See also BBC article: 'Davos 2012: Working to prevent a "lost generation"', 26 January 2012.

⁶³ Global Agenda Council on Employment and Social Protection, *The Case for an Integrated Model of Growth, Employment and Social Protection*, 2012, available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_CaseIntegratedModelGrowthEmploymentSocialProtection_Report_2012.pdf

From my research, I found that villages that were deeply affected political violence have anymore social network, people are mistrustful, no community activities, and the migrant have little or no way to transfer cash to their village. These villages are highly food insecure with high of child malnutrition and mortality.

Another village that were not strongly affected by political violence have still peaceful social cohabitation and this allowed people to organize livestock, agriculture even the climate condition is poor. In these villages the level of productivity is better than the other villages and also child malnutrition and mortality less.

Regarding my field experience and my research results, I suggest that:

- In post-conflict/post-crisis situations, reconstruction and aid should focus on re-building/creation/development of social protection institutions to help victims of political violence to reorganize their networks of social support mechanisms;
- During acute and chronic crises, support/reestablishment/improvement of peoples' capacity and ability to rely on social support. It is the main survival strategy used by poor people living in insecurity and instability;
- Developing ways to protect/avoid damage of norms, values, social relations, and community's social capital. As shown by several studies, social capital is an important aspect of livelihood resilience to shocks of all kinds, sustainable development toward economic and social well-being. And damages to its norms values and social relations affect structurally its ability to recover after crises (war, drought, conflicts).

Reinforcement of vulnerable groups' participation in communities

Syntyche.
PHD- Student

29. Victor Abramovich, IPPDH – MERCOSUR, Argentina

Spanish original

El Secretario Ejecutivo del Instituto de Políticas Públicas en Derechos Humanos del MERCOSUR, (IPPDH), Víctor Abramovich, acoge con satisfacción el documento de Consulta sobre Protección Social y Seguridad Alimentaria que está siendo llevada a cabo electrónicamente por el Grupo de Alto Nivel de Expertos en Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional (HLPE) del Comité Mundial de Seguridad Alimentaria (CFS).

El secretario ejecutivo considera una gran iniciativa la apertura de este foro, el cual constituirá el insumo principal para el reporte final que presentará el HLPE en la sesión plenaria del CFS. Asimismo, le gustaría felicitar a los autores y sugiere prestar atención en el ámbito de política alimentaria a las discusiones sobre enfoque de derechos humanos en políticas públicas.

En particular, recomienda tomar en consideración las actividades y seminarios organizadas durante 2011 por la Iniciativa América Latina y Caribe Sin Hambre (IALCSH), FAO y el Alto Comisionado de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos (ACNUDH), junto con la colaboración técnica de CEPAL, y que tuvieron un fuerte énfasis en la relación de la protección social con los derechos humanos (www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa/expertos). En particular, se sugiere considerar como insumos, los temas examinados en la guía de análisis sobre Programas de Transferencia Condicionadas (PTC) con enfoque de derechos humanos (http://www.rlc.fao.org/proyectoiniciativa/expertos/documentos/guia_1-v2.pdf).

En este sentido, el IPPDH está impulsando en los países de MERCOSUR un enfoque de derechos de políticas sociales a través de guías similares y también está impulsando un concepto amplio de seguridad social que abarca no sólo la esfera contributiva sino también la no contributiva.

Por último, el secretario ejecutivo quisiera compartir el siguiente documento titulado "Aportes preliminares para la discusión de una Convención Interamericana para la Promoción y Protección de los Derechos de las Personas Mayores" presentado en la última reunión del Grupo de Trabajo sobre la Protección de los Derechos Humanos de las Personas Mayores de la OEA.

<http://scm.oas.org/pdfs/2012/CP28295T.pdf>

English translation

The Executive Secretary of the Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights of MERCOSUR (IPPDH, in its Spanish acronym), Victor Abramovich, welcomes the Consultation on Social Protection and Food Safety being conducted online by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The executive secretary considers the opening of this forum an important initiative as it will constitute a major input for the final report that shall be presented by the HLPE in the CFS plenary session. Additionally, he would like to congratulate the authors and suggests paying attention in the field of food policy to the discussions on human rights approach in public policy.

In particular, he recommends taking into consideration the activities and seminars organized during 2011 by the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative (HFLACI), FAO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) along with the technical collaboration of ECLAC, which had a strong emphasis on the relationship between social protection and human rights

(http://www.rlc.fao.org/proyectoiniciativa/expertos/index_en.htm). In particular, it is suggested that topics reviewed in the assessment guide on Conditional Cash Transfer Programs (CCT) with a human rights approach are considered as inputs.

(http://www.rlc.fao.org/proyectoiniciativa/expertos/documentos/guia_1_v2.pdf)

In this sense, IPPDH is fostering a social policy rights approach in MERCOSUR countries through similar guides and is also promoting a broad concept of social security that covers both the contributive and non-contributive field.

Finally, the executive secretary would like to share the following document entitled "Preliminary contributions to the discussion of a Convention for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Elderly", presented at the last meeting of the OAS Working Group on the Protection of the Human Rights of the Elderly. <http://scm.oas.org/pdfs/2012/CP28295T.pdf>

30. Switzerland, through the Permanent Representation of Switzerland to FAO, IFAD and WFP

Firstly, there are many social protection instruments that affect food security, including: public works, school feeding schemes, conditional and unconditional cash transfers, grain reserves, price subsidies, etc.

- **Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted? Which instruments should be avoided, and why? Should interventions in food markets designed to stabilise prices be used?**

No particular comment: the draft HLPE provides a good overview of the main conceptual and operational issues. It is hoped that such wealth of knowledge be utilized for fostering informed debates and decisions related to the design, implementation and monitoring of effective social protection instruments.

Secondly, no clear consensus has yet emerged concerning many basic design choices and implementation modalities of social protection programmes, and we welcome feedback and debate on these unresolved issues as well.

- **Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid? Do social transfers cause ‘dependency syndrome’? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?**

Same answer as above.

Thirdly, there are increasing trends towards making social protection ‘rights-based’ rather than ‘discretionary’ – a justiciable claim rather than a charitable handout – but this has various implications that have not yet been fully thought through.

- **Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported? Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? grievance mechanisms? legislation? What are the challenges to strengthening the rights foundations of social protection, and how can they be overcome?**

As mentioned in the draft HLPE report, all implications of rights-based approaches have not yet been fully thought through. Additional research on current experiences is necessary in any case.

Finally, food security for all cannot be achieved with a single social protection scheme. Rather, it requires a more systemic approach to meet diverse food security needs, as well as building linkages to other sectors.

- **What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security? Should impact on nutritional status be seen primarily through dietary diversity and food consumption, or extend into broader nutrition security and encompass also security for water, sanitation, disease control and arrangements for special care of vulnerable groups like women and young children? Which agricultural, trade and other policies should complement social protection for more sustainable food security outcomes? What are the appropriate roles for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security?**

Since the 2007-2008 global food security crisis, food and nutrition security have been increasingly recognized as multisectoral by nature. Consensus has also emerged to state that action against hunger and malnutrition is required by all stakeholders, in a coordinated manner and at all levels: therefore, we support a holistic perspective that links social protection with other sectors. It is hoped that through actionable policy recommendations, the HLPE report can trigger further reflections on how inclusive institutions (for consultation, decision-making and monitoring) can be strengthened and/or built up in order to support food security at large and in priority for the most vulnerable populations. Consequently, the need for political will and leadership at country level as well as for adopting an inclusive strategy to shape food security-relevant programmes and activities should be explicitly mentioned in the report.

31. International Labour Organization, Social Security Department, Switzerland

We welcome the FAO's initiative to discuss the relationship between social protection and food security in a comprehensive manner, especially considering the FAO's involvement to the Social Protection Floor Initiative. Agreeing with many of the points raised in earlier comments by others, we limit our comments to a few selected points, focusing on highlighting the linkages to relevant developments within the UN system, including the ILO. We remain available for further consultation if necessary.

Social protection and food security: The consultation paper highlights that social protection has increasingly been recognized as a relevant tool to address food insecurity over the last decade or so. While traditional food aid interventions constitute a short term response to an acute crisis or temporary problem, more comprehensive measures, such as social protection measures, can be more effective in addressing the underlying causes of hunger and food insecurity.

Definitions and conceptual frameworks: While the effort to disentangle various definitions of social protection and related terms is appreciated, these should be discussed in a comprehensive and precise way. The statement that "social protection emerged out of an earlier 'safety nets' agenda" (p. 15) disregards the long history of social protection policies in both industrialized and developing countries (including existing international standards) before such policies were re-discovered as a policy instrument relevant for developing countries in recent years. While recognizing the broader (but rarely consistent) meaning of the term social protection, the ILO usually uses the term "social security" to cover all measures providing benefits, whether in cash or in kind, to secure protection, inter alia, from a lack of work-related income, lack of access or unaffordable access to health care, insufficient family support, as well as general poverty and social exclusion (see ILO World Social Security Report 2010/11, p. 13). The enumeration of various functions of social protection (p. 14) does not consider the redistributive function of social protection, which is extremely important in view of rising inequality, also with a view to food security.

The discussion of the social protection floor approach (which is somewhat mixed up among the various types of conceptual frameworks pp. 15-18) would be more complete if it contained references to the conclusions of the International Labour Conference 2011 and the upcoming discussion of an international Social Protection Floor Recommendation, which may be adopted at the International Labour Conference in June 2012 (see below in more detail).

The Social Protection Floor: The consultation paper rightly highlights the role of the social protection floor (SPF) framework as a comprehensive approach to social protection that encompasses transfers and ensuring effective access to essential services (yet its presentation in sections 1.3.2 and 2.4.2 could be streamlined and updated). This holistic view of the SPF encourages coordination across sectors and promotes the integration of various measures in a coherent, system-wide approach facilitating synergies between policy areas. Well-designed and effective social protection floors should be financially sustainable, benefits should be rights-based and embedded in a viable legal and institutional framework. This is particularly relevant when the objective of the measures is to address the underlying causes of chronic food security. The need for humanitarian food aid focusing on temporary and immediate alleviation remains relevant in certain contexts. There is however, a need to move out of the vicious cycle of emergency appeals into longer-term policies with predictable resources to address chronic hunger and deprivation, particularly in low-income countries. (see also the report of the Advisory Group to the Social Protection Floor Initiative, 2011).

The social protection floor approach has been endorsed in a number of international and regional fora, including the MDG Summit 2010 (UN, 2010) and the G20 Summit in Cannes (G20, 2011).

At the International Labour Conference, at its 100th Session in June 2011, governments, employers' and workers' representatives from the ILO's 183 member States called for "the rapid implementation of national social protection floors, containing basic social security guarantees

that ensure that over the life cycle all in need can afford and have access to essential health care and have income security at least at a nationally defined minimum level.” (ILC Resolutions and Conclusions, 2011, para. 9) They also emphasized the role of social protection floors in ensuring access to essential goods and services, as well as in promoting productive economic activity, which would include access to food and agricultural/food production. They also identify the need for an international standard on the social protection floor that complements existing international standards. Accordingly, a standard-setting discussion on such Recommendation was placed on the agenda of the International Labour Conference in June 2012, with a view to the possible adoption of such instrument. The proposed Social Protection Floor Recommendation will provide further guidance to member States in designing, implementing and monitoring of national social protection floors, and their role within increasingly progressive national social security systems. The proposed Recommendation is firmly based on the notion that social protection floors need to be defined at the national level, tailored to national circumstances, in a national social dialogue.

Human right to food, social security and social protection: While the first part of the paper extensively discusses the human rights to food, social security and social protection, the second part of the paper does not attempt to operationalize these concepts with regard to the relationship of social protection and food security. Much more could be said about existing social protection instruments that aim at improving food security with regard to their potential and limitations in fulfilling States’ obligations in realizing these universal human rights. This could include a stronger focus on legal and institutional frameworks in providing adequate legal entitlements, complaint and appeal mechanisms, mechanisms to ensure accountability, transparency and the participation of beneficiaries, and effective implementation and monitoring mechanisms, as well as overall coordination within a country’s social protection system and wider economic and social policies. Linking to the question of affordability (below), this could also include a closer analysis of the instruments’ financing structures and the respective roles of national and external resources, and their implication for national ownership, governance, sustainability and effectiveness. Such stronger conceptual links would also further inform the discussion of “unresolved issues”, especially with respect to the discussion on targeting and dependency (for a more detailed discussion, see ILO, *Social security for social justice and a fair globalization*, 2011, especially Chapter 4).

The role of cash benefits in ensuring food security: The discussion of transfer modalities (cash, food or vouchers in section 4.2) appears to shy away from defining conditions under which the provision of in-kind assistance (food) would be superior to cash transfers. The ILO has repeatedly highlighted (e.g. *Extending Social Security to All*, 2010) that guaranteeing income security through social protection schemes has a direct effect on both food consumption and production. Evidence from developing countries has shown that regular cash transfers are mostly spent on food and investments in livestock or agriculture (seeds, tools, fertilizers etc.). Increased consumption also supports agricultural demand for local services which has a direct knock-on effect on agricultural production. Beside these direct and indirect effects of social protection on the food system and food security, a multiplier effect can further be achieved by promoting the design of policies and schemes which support the purchase of local food (e.g. requiring the purchase of a certain percentage of food required for school feeding programmes locally where possible). The report mentions (sections 3.6 and 3.7) that studies providing evidence on impact of cash transfers on food security are limited to Latin American countries and although positive about the results in terms of both quantity and quality of food, more significant and convincing examples could be cited.⁶⁴

Affordability: The discussion on affordability has advanced beyond the earlier costing exercises conducted by the ILO and others some years ago. More recent work that the ILO has conducted in cooperation with the IMF looks into much more detail of country-level information on

64 See for example Save the Children et al. 2005, Government of Zambia and GTZ 2006; DfID 2005, Barrientos/Scott 2008.

expenditure on a broad range of existing national programmes, based on a detailed coverage gap analysis discussed in a broad national dialogue, in order to establish the fiscal space available for the extension of social protection measures in the short, medium and longer term. With regard to statistics, the ILO's World Social Security Report (2010) and Social Security Inquiry database include data for a large number of countries which reflects – as far as available – also data from other existing data sources such as IMF and OECD.

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ILO Social Security Department
13 April 2012

32. Claudia Robles, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Chile

I would like to congratulate the authors for a thorough work. It truly contributes to filling a vacuum on the conceptual and empirical connections that exist between food security and social protection policies.

As other contributors to this forum have already pointed out, I would like to stress two set of issues that I believe have not been sufficiently addressed in this version of the report. These issues arise from the recent experience in consolidating integral social protection systems in Latin American countries.

1. On the definition of social protection

In the first place, I believe that the document would benefit from adopting a clear position concerning what definition of social protection will be taken in account. As reviewed in the report, there are relevant differences between approaches emphasising social protection as efforts for poverty-reduction –and therefore, targeted exclusively on the poorest and most vulnerable groups of the population-, and those who understand it as a set of policies aiming to realise social rights for all citizens. Clearly, the instruments and the goals that will be promoted as part of these two approaches will vary in scope and density. Generally speaking, it might be argued that while the former tend to be focused on cash transfers (often, with a greater role of conditionalities), the latter aim for the increasing articulation between non-contributory (such as CCT programmes and social pensions) and contributory instruments (including, health and pension systems). Also, from a comprehensive social protection approach, labour market regulation is a core component of social protection issues (see, for instance, Barrientos and Hulme, 2008), which is an aspect absent from the discussion presented at the report. In particular, I believe that this is an issue that could be included among the “Unresolved issues in social protection thinking and practice”.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has claimed for the adoption of an integrative perspective to social protection built from a human-rights based approach. Under this perspective, social protection should be designed primarily through examining the extent to which its many instruments might contribute to realising social rights for all, rather than exclusively focusing on leveling the incomes of the population living in extreme poverty above the poverty line. Following from this approach, questions emerge, for example, concerning the potential risks that creating dual systems might endanger for realising equal rights for all citizens. Thus, in spite of fiscal constraints faced at a given moment, states should aim for unifying social protection systems in order to guarantee the same results of protection in the long-term. Clearly, this approach ranges considerably from others that are centred exclusively on poverty-reduction.

2. On the implementation of social protection policies: flexibility, institutional challenges and awareness of particular groups' necessities and rights

In the second place, I think it is important to place some attention in the report on different issues that emerge from the implementation of social protection policies. First, greater attention

should be paid to the adaptability of social protection instruments to different socioeconomic realities and emerging risks. This is particularly true in the case of social protection for food security. The design of social protection systems must assure having flexible instruments and mechanisms for protecting all citizens that might experience food insecurity as an effect of natural disasters or other events, such as economic crisis. Part of the population benefited by these measures might or might not have been previously targeted within social protection instruments, such as CCTs. However, targeting methods and social protection institutions should guarantee adequate access to these instruments, when required. This requires incorporating a thorough definition of what vulnerability, chronic and transition poverty means from a multi-dimensional approach. Furthermore, it should be considered that according to ECLAC figures for Latin America, around 2009, 36% of households has neither access to contributory nor to non-contributory social protection (see, for instance, the latest Social Outlook of Latin America, online: <http://www.cepal.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/5/45175/P45175.xml&xsl=/dds/tpl-i/p9f.xsl&base=/dds/tpl/top-bottom.xslt>). Hence, there is still much room to improve existing instruments and their articulation.

Consolidating stable social security institutions in the long run is crucial for these aims. However, intersectoral coordination for social protection should be promoted within existing state's institutions at all times, an issue which has not been mentioned in the report. The institutional challenges for implementing comprehensive social protection systems are many and often, the impact of social protection policies is highly dependent on their institutional performance. In fact, protecting all citizens from different sources of risk does not necessarily imply a substantial increase in the fiscal demand, but better articulation among existing programmes and instruments that may form part of a social protection system.

Finally, various critiques have arisen concerning the controversial impacts that CCT may have from a gender approach (Gammage, 2011; Martínez-Franzoni and Voreend (2010); Pautassi, 2009, among many others). The fact that they reproduce traditional gender role in the accomplishment of conditionalities should be taken in account so as not overcharge women with non-remunerative work. This is an issue that could form core part, for example, of the transformative approach to social protection which is discussed in the document. From a human-rights approach, social protection systems and food security programmes ought to consider this reality and introduce positive actions to prevent these risks.

Similarly, social protection systems should acknowledge differentiated territorial realities and needs, detaching from a one-size-fits-all approach. In particular, within Latin America, cautions should be taken in order to include indigenous peoples, often excluded from social protection systems –notoriously, in the case of both contributory social security systems and programmes, such as CCT-. Furthermore, mainstreaming the rights of indigenous peoples into the design and implementation of social protection policies is one important challenge ahead for this and other developing regions, if solid citizenship is to be furthered within these countries. I firmly recommend introducing a mention to this issue within the report.

Congratulations, once more, to the team!

Best regards,

Claudia Robles
Social Development Division
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

33. World Food Programme, Italy

WFP appreciates the opportunity to comment on the zero draft of the paper. There is growing consensus on the importance of social protection (SP) in general, and safety nets in particular. This paper further reinforces such consensus by stressing the need for effective and efficient social protection measures. It provides the conceptual foundation and empirical evidence to help advance SP initiatives with a food security focus. We are delighted for such initiative, and look forward to review and contribute to the next drafts. Enclosed is a set of 12 comments that we hope the HLPE will find useful.

1. When defining concepts, there is often a trade-off between analytical comprehensiveness and practical relevance. In this case, the proposed definition of social protection is perhaps excessively broad, hence making the process of drawing practical and implementation implications challenging. The paper could be considered almost as a review of any food security instrument, without really discerning the specific relevance and role of social protection in the domain. For example, input subsidies may fall under agricultural policy more than SP. And various price-related mechanisms may go well beyond the SP domain. There are also some questions around the connection between empowerment/transformation and SP, including issues perhaps more compelling to the general rights agenda.
2. The report leaves the reader with the impression that safety nets is an outdated concept (i.e. section 1.3.2.1). In our view, the terms “safety nets”, “social transfers” and “social assistance” all refer to non-contributory transfers. However, there is sometimes a degree of discomfort with the term “safety net”. This is because of, for example, difficulties in translating the term into national languages, the possibly disturbing image of catching people as they fall, or association with austere, compensatory measures. While actors may use one term or the other, it is important to recognize that, substantially, they all indicate the same set of social protection instruments. Indeed, the paper itself highlights “innovative public works programmes” as well as that school feeding programmes are (rightly so) referred to as “safety nets instruments”. P. 74 also makes the case for “having standing safety nets”. Therefore, we would recommend to adjust those inconsistencies in the report by making sure that section 1.3.2.1 doesn’t take an ideological position, but rather reflects definitions and evidence later rightly used and highlighted in the paper.
3. The paper makes little reference to different country contexts. These could range from low-capacity, post conflict environments to upper-middle income countries scaling up safety nets and insurance through domestic revenues. We would welcome a contextualization of the discussion based on a general typology of settings, or at least an acknowledgment of the various contextual challenges (these are offered, for example, in some of the enclosed papers). This is key in order to have SP systems that are aligned to country capacities.
4. The concept of developing “systems” of SP seems to receive little attention. This is perhaps the single most interesting feature of recent SP-related developments (see WFP, UNICEF and World Bank’s new SP frameworks). Building integrated systems, including the process of reducing fragmentation, coordinating different actors to

devising common design features, ironing out harmonised institutional and financing arrangements (e.g. risk financing) etc. makes the difference between a “collection of instruments” and an institutionalized set of SP measures.

5. Related to the above point, the role of SP and scalable safety nets in emergencies (or unpredictable shocks), which often constitutes the backbone of SP in many contexts, is not dealt with adequate attention and should therefore be expanded and developed – WFP could assist in providing additional information on this point if useful and if so required.
6. The paper makes very limited (or almost none) reference to nutrition. When it does so in p.60, it surprisingly claims that “RUFs products suppress breastfeeding”. We are surprised to see such a statement even in a draft report. We urge to reconsider the whole section in an objective and evidence-based fashion.
7. The section on social protection instruments (3) introduces a list of eight social protection instruments, building on the illustrative and interesting ‘entitlement’ framework developed earlier. We think that grouping the different social protection instruments under the four entitlement failures may not do justice to the fact that most social protection instruments do or should address multiple problems and achieve multiple outcomes. For example, public works programmes certainly address a lack of employment and income opportunities (i.e. labour-based entitlement failures), but they also entail a conditional cash (or in kind) transfer and with that also address transfer-based entitlement failures. Ideally, they also contribute to rehabilitating community lands or building rural infrastructure which, over the longer term, should have an impact on production and with that address production-based entitlement failures. On a different vein, grain reserves should probably be placed under section 4.7 (“stabilizing food prices”).
8. Under the same section on instruments, the paper does not consider unconditional food transfers. This leaves out a huge portion of safety net instruments, including some 60% of WFP-supported programs.
9. In the section on weather and health insurance (3.2) social protection in shock-prone environments is presented as an ex-post response by definition. This should be either further explained or more differentiated based on the actual contexts (e.g. in the Ethiopian context this is certainly not the case). The section also does not clearly explain what moral hazard or adverse selection is. It could also elaborate more on the ‘imperfect information’ part, i.e. explain the key issue of ‘basis risk’. Index-based insurance is equated with ‘local rainfall indices’, which is not the case. There is a diverse range of indices being developed and tested. This section could make reference to the Horn of Africa Risk Transfer for Adaptation (HARITA) project in Ethiopia and the lessons learned on insurance up-take, introduce the “insurance-for-work” (IFW) concept, and maybe make reference to [WFP-Oxfam R4 Rural Resilience Initiative](#) (for an overall overview pls see <http://www.wfp.org/disaster-risk-reduction> and <http://www.wfp.org/climate-change>). The section could also include a short paragraph on the [WFP-IFAD Weather Risk Management Facility](#) (WRMF),

quote its [landmark study](#) and briefly highlight what lessons emanated from the analysis of the pilots in terms of bringing it to scale and making it sustainable:

- The Weather Risk Management Facility, a joint undertaking of IFAD and WFP, reviewed recent experiences with index insurance programmes around the world, analysing the key actors, products, and their successes and challenges. These pilot programmes suggest that index insurance could not only provide an additional effective, market-mediated solution to promote agricultural development, but it could also make disaster relief more effective.
- While the potential benefits of index insurance are great, implementation can be difficult. Small producers often do not understand the benefits of insurance – and often cannot afford it. The cost of premiums, especially in major scaling up, can be daunting, putting insurance out of the reach of those who need it most. The many hurdles indicate that important public goods need to be in place, and a facilitating role played by non-profit organizations, donors, and others, in order to launch index insurance in most regions.
- The [Potential for Scale and Sustainability in Weather Index Insurance report](#) identifies eight principles to help index insurance reach scale and sustainability: (1) Create a proposition of real value to the insured, and offer insurance as part of a wider package of services; (2) Build the capacity and ownership of implementation stakeholders; (3) Increase client awareness of index insurance products; (4) Graft onto existing, efficient delivery channels, engaging the private sector from the beginning; (5) Access international risk-transfer markets; (6) Improve the infrastructure and quality of weather data; (7) Promote enabling legal and regulatory frameworks; and (8) Monitor and evaluate products to promote continuous improvement.

Another example that could be mentioned in the report is the [Livelihoods, Early Assessment and Protection \(LEAP\) project](#), which builds on a WFP-AXA pilot intervention in 2006. Alternatively, LEAP would also very well fit into section 3.3.2 on page 43, explaining how LEAP is making the PSNP ‘disaster proof’ through the triggering of contingent finance that feeds into the temporary scale of the scheme in case of a drought. Finally, and it actually might be best placed there, LEAP would fit into section 4.6 on page 74 (third para) where the report talks about ‘contingencies’ (those PSNP inbuilt contingencies are very small and can only cover a very limited number of people in case of a climatic shock – and this is where the US\$ 160 million come in that can be triggered by LEAP to scale up the PSNP temporarily). If possible, WFP would be happy provide case studies, e.g. on R4 and LEAP, that could go into boxes.

10. In the section on “unresolved issues” (4) the report discusses many important and sometimes sensitive issues. We would suggest to change the title of this subsection because “unresolved” may be confusing, as many of the issues are addressed don’t actually seem to be unresolved, or are resolved in the paper itself. For example, the section on dependency concludes that “there is negligible evidence... that social protection generates negative dependency syndrome” – so it may be unnecessarily ambiguous if this issue was presented as “unresolved”. Moreover, given the contentious nature of the debate, the discussion on whether a program should be conditioned or not could unfold in section 4. At the moment, it is embedded in

section 3.6, although the text clearly shows that it is indeed an issue that raises debate.

11. The “cash versus food” section is generally inadequate, both quantitatively and qualitatively, not reflecting the range of complex issues underpinning the issue. Discussion seems to heavily revolve on the microeconomics of transfers rather than on the issues and evidence emerging from a wealth of contexts and experiences. For instance, the 6 factors listed on page 65 should be expanded with evidence and examples, as well as being enriched with various implementation-related issues (admin capacity etc.) which shape transfer decision making. For instance, there is much more to vouchers programming than mentioned in section 3.4.3. For instance, the Malawi example is a combined food and cash-for-work transfer one, not a vouchers program. Reference in footnote 51 should be inserted in the bibliography.
12. We would welcome, finally, a wider use of WFP-related materials and references as appropriate. While the final safety nets policy paper will be available in May, enclosed are a set of other policies, working papers and publications that we hope the HLPE will find useful.

34. Trans-Atlantic Food Assistance Dialogue (TAFAD), Belgium

The TAFAD members welcome the HLPE Zero draft of the report on Social Protection for Food and Nutrition Security. The report provides a good overview of social protection definitions and social protection interventions that have an impact on food security. Below are presented the TAFAD’s inputs to some of the questions raised by the HLPE.

Concerning the most effective instruments for addressing food insecurity:

An effective social protection system should efficiently include risk reduction, risk mitigation and risk coping strategies, and be financially and administratively feasible. Rather than promoting a single instrument, social protection measures must be conceived as a way of integrating other critical sectors (health, education, water and sanitation) and indicators (reduction of mortality of people suffering from hunger) by also taking into consideration existing informal social protection mechanisms, and be context specific.

In contexts of increasing risk and vulnerability, social protection instruments can make important contributions to protecting food consumption for the most vulnerable as well as protecting assets to basic services when people face livelihood shocks, and promoting livelihood diversification. In the long term, social protection programmes should be promoting the development of government-led programmes and building capacity of governments for domestic resource mobilization in support of the establishment of integrated systems to improve people’s resilience to shocks and provide long term social assistance and social welfare.

Nutrition should be a fundamental component of social protection programmes. When these programmes are designed to take into consideration poor households’ purchasing power and the cost of nutritious diets, they can play a fundamental role in reducing undernutrition. Social protection can also have an impact on chronic and acute malnutrition in food insecure areas and help increasing resilience to shocks. Malnutrition is a major health problem in developing countries and the major cause of diseases and early death.

It is important therefore that national governments and donors ensure that nutrition is an explicit objective of food security, and recognize the key role of women as food providers allowing them equal access to resources, knowledge and income.

About the role for the international community in supporting national social protection systems for food security:

The implementation of social protection programmes usually depends on many partnerships. To be effective, the nature of these partnerships, the mandates and coordination strategies of the actors involved, should be well defined to avoid duplication and overlap or possible shortcomings. A particular challenge in poor countries is to formulate overarching national frameworks to guide the provision of the resources coming from various actors at national and international level. These frameworks should ensure coherence among national policies, international strategies and programmes in promotion of social protection, and working towards common goals.

When social protection systems are well designed, properly managed and placed within coherent and strategic frameworks, they can fully contribute to alleviate poverty and hunger. Implementing such mechanisms under a common framework can also facilitate more integrated and harmonized efforts in linking relief efforts to early recovery and longer term development strategies.

Also predictability of donor funding is very important while implementing social protection programmes. Multi-year financing programmes need to be predictable but as well flexible in responding to chronically food insecure areas. Predictable access to nutritious food or cash means that poor families are able to plan in advance. In chronically food insecure areas, predictable social protection programmes can be fundamental in strengthening families' ability to respond to emerging food crisis and reduce malnutrition.

It is also important that southern countries and donors invest in social protection before a crisis may intensify with the aim of reducing people's vulnerability to shocks and strengthening people's resilience in the future.

35. Stuart Kean, Kevin Savage and Douglas R. Brown, World Vision International

Dear FSN Members,

I'd like to take this opportunity to share some feedback on the zero draft of the document on social protection and food security. The substance of what follows has been provided by two of my colleagues who work extensively on these matters – Stuart Kean, Senior Policy Adviser, Vulnerable Children and HIV & AIDS and Kevin Savage, Research Co-ordinator, Humanitarian and Emergency Affairs, both of World Vision International.

The four questions raised by the HLPE project team in their request for feedback are each massive. Much could be written about them, particularly from an academic/theoretical perspective. The draft paper written for the HLPE appears to cover most of the issues in great depth and rather than restate what is there my colleagues have selected specific areas for comment, arising from their experience. World Vision's main area of experience with social protection has been in the area of safety nets and cash and/or food in emergency contexts. It is on this subject that Kevin has commented. On the other hand, Stuart, who has been working principally on HIV-sensitive social protection and child sensitive social protection, responds to questions 3 and 4.

Comments related to emergency response settings as well as safety-nets:

1. Emergency/humanitarian response

Understandably, this paper puts the nation state at the focus of the discussion; however, I feel that more consideration should be given to the role of regional and global cooperation, institutions and agencies, in achieving food security/addressing food insecurity. I think this is particularly important in the first chapter of concepts and definitions, where it might at the least be touched on conceptually and dealt with in definitions.

I think it might be useful to consider, in the first chapter, a typology or hierarchy of roles, responsibilities, responses, and duty bearers that would match the social risk management impact hierarchy (idiosyncratic, covariant, and macro-level/shock). Who plays what role, who should play what role, in response to these different levels of impact? Much of the discussion seems to be about addressing food (in)security, from all of these levels of impact, through the nation state. It may be the central player and focus of action for achieving food security, but I think it would be useful to have a section discussing the various levels and types of actors and actions from local, through state, to global.

Also, I am of the opinion that this chapter should address in more detail the difference between addressing chronic and transient food insecurity when considering various types of macro-level shocks. Does not achieving food security "at all times" mean, for example, following natural disasters (or any kind of major disaster), which is transient. The emphasis of the paper and examples are focused mainly on countries with long running chronic food insecurity for large populations. This may be correct as a priority, but I think the issue of large scale disasters and resulting, transient, food insecurity, should be considered at least in the first chapter. For example, is emergency food aid following the Tsunami part of this discussion or not? It may be clear to the commissioners and the HLPE that it isn't, but the wider audience might like to see that clearly explained. If not, then the reader is left wondering why the document is incomplete.

Related to this, for example, a question I would like answered would be whether the international humanitarian response system, WFP and its partners of course come to mind, is itself a type of global, macro, social-safety net or part of global social protection system. Or, is international humanitarian response something different? (See for example, World Bank (2011) Natural Disasters: What is the Role for Social Safety Nets?). The panel experts who wrote this paper are very well aware of these things and of humanitarian response, so I know that if they've not addressed these things it's for good reason, but I'd like to see that explained in chapter 1 – if for no other reason to clearly outline what they are going to talk about and what they consider to be outside the scope of this piece of work.

However, I think such questions are quite relevant to section 4.6 with respect to scaling up. One of the most food-insecure countries and disaster prone countries is Pakistan, which does have experience both with safety nets that address food insecurity from idiosyncratic and covariant risks and with scaling-up such systems to address large macro-level shocks such as earthquakes and massive floods. I'm surprised that this hasn't been mentioned and I suspect that there is useful knowledge that could inform the paper from the Pakistan experience, and I do suspect there should be more to help inform this section from other examples (Bangladesh, Indonesia?).

2. Section 4.2, Paragraph 4: specific point about an 'ideal study'. This ideal study seems wrong for precisely the factors listed in the sentence before. The differences between cash and food with respect to storage, usage, receipt, mean that the factors of timing, size of transfer, frequency, delivery mechanisms are exactly the factors that would determine whether cash or food was preferred or more effective. The described 'ideal' study would only prove which modality was better for the particular set of constant aspects. It seems to me the 'ideal' study is one in which those aspects are the independent variables. Simply put we need to compare the

most effective food delivery option (that with the ideal choice of transfer size, frequency, mechanism, etc. for *food* delivery) with the most effective cash delivery option (that with the ideal choice of transfer size, frequency, mechanism, etc. for *cash* delivery).

3. Section 4.3, Paragraph 8: 'crowd out'. I'm not sure I understand the point being made here and would like more explanation of what transfers crowding out remittances or money from NGOs.

4. A missing issue? *How much to give?* In Section 4.1.2 at the bottom of the paragraph on Self-Targeting the last sentence seems to be an undiscussed yet profoundly important issue for this paper – how to determine the size of transfer. I haven't gone through in enough detail but the basic question of 'how much' to assist people seems something fundamental to the whole discussion. I certainly think it is a continuing problem with those emergency response interventions that are directed (by non-recipients, both donors and responders) towards food security exclusively and not towards the complete set of basic needs for which the recipients are aiming. It's simply a fallacy to design a food basket and then convert it to a cash transfer size, according to an exact dietary requirement (without considering other needs/gaps), distribute the cash, and then measure or report against the subsequent food consumption. Yes, most of the transfer goes to food consumption but small amounts for other things may be equally important. Food security cannot be looked at in isolation from other basic needs. And this I think is particularly important when considering modality (cash/food) and size of transfer.

5. The reason for the paper seems to be something like "*How do we achieve food security and nutrition? Maybe social protection and safety nets would help. Let's look at them.*" The resulting paper is starting to, but I think not going quite far enough with the argument, turn such a question on its head and point to a greater goal of social justice through social protection (which by the way will achieve food security and nutrition along with other equally important things). I'm sure I read somewhere that there are more sections to be added to the report (implications, recommendations, conclusions), so perhaps more will be made of this in those sections. It seems to me that you can't treat a 'right to food' and a 'right to social security' separately, even though achieving global food security, meaning the whole of global food production and distribution etc., is a separate problem.

6. With respect to the second question, which reads "Secondly, no clear consensus has yet emerged concerning many basic design choices and implementation modalities of social protection programmes, and we welcome feedback and debate on these unresolved issues as well.

→ *Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid? Do social transfers cause 'dependency syndrome'? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?"*

It seems to me the paper has answered some of these already. There simply isn't any evidence that conditionality is effective but it may be a political necessity that comes at a high cost and this needs to be continually presented and argued so that it stops being necessary. Also, I think the question of conditionality applies just as much to in-kind as it does to cash doesn't it? There is ample evidence that dependency is a fallacy and is mostly a concern of particular ideologies, though very widespread. However, the size of the transfer is a disincentive issue, so, again, I think more needs to be said about 'how much to give'.

Comments related to HIV-sensitive social protection and child sensitive social protection:

Question 3: "Thirdly, there are increasing trends towards making social protection 'rights-based' rather than 'discretionary' – a justiciable claim rather than a charitable handout – but this has various implications that have not yet been fully thought through.

- *Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported?*

WVI's approach to social protection, as laid out in a 2007 Discussion Paper, is linked with its position on rights based approaches based on its endorsement of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The international human rights instruments that guarantee social protection and adequate livelihoods as a basic human right are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The principles of social protection are enshrined in Article 27 of the CRC as follows:

- 1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.*
- 2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capabilities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.*
- 3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programs, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.*

Question 4. "Finally, food security for all cannot be achieved with a single social protection scheme. Rather, it requires a more systemic approach to meet diverse food security needs, as well as building linkages to other sectors.

- *What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security?"*

WVI signed on to the Joint Statement on Child Sensitive Social Protection in 2010 and which is attached. There are several key principles in the Joint Statement that should be considered in the design, implementation and evaluation of child-sensitive social protection programmes. These are as follows:

- *Avoid adverse impacts on children, and reduce or mitigate social and economic risks that directly affect children's lives.*
- *Intervene as early as possible where children are at risk, in order to prevent irreversible impairment or harm.*
- *Consider the age- and gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities of children throughout the life-cycle.*
- *Mitigate the effects of shocks, exclusion and poverty on families, recognizing that families raising children need support to ensure equal opportunity.*
- *Make special provision to reach children who are particularly vulnerable and excluded, including children without parental care, and those who are marginalized within their families or communities due to their gender, disability, ethnicity, HIV and AIDS or other factors.*
- *Consider the mechanisms and intra-household dynamics that may affect how children are reached, with particular attention paid to the balance of power between men and women within the household and broader community.*
- *Include the voices and opinions of children, their caregivers and youth in the understanding and design of social protection systems and programmes.*

UNICEF recently published their social protection strategic framework entitled "Integrated social protection systems" (<http://www.unicef.org/socialprotection/framework/>) and in this they have a useful section on linking health and nutrition that sums up well the importance of having a systemic approach. In the section on page 51 entitled "Linking health- and nutrition-specific vulnerabilities and social protection" they write:

“The UNICEF joint health and nutrition strategy for 2006–2015 recognizes the need for ‘intersectoral exchange’, as well for increasing effective ‘coverage of interventions’. Improving health and nutrition is a critical component of social protection frameworks and social protection programmes have proven effective in enhancing households’ capacities to overcome financial, economic and social barriers to accessing services and necessary goods, especially among the most vulnerable populations. For instance, there is evidence of cash transfers having strong impacts on the main determinants of child mortality, helping to reduce the incidence of preventable diseases, increasing access to health care and food, improving maternal welfare and improving nutrition levels. Moreover, social protection interventions to increase access to key services (e.g., health, education, water and sanitation) can directly and indirectly contribute to improvements in children’s nutritional status by addressing the underlying causes of health- and nutrition-related vulnerabilities.”

Table 8 (page 52) shows how the different SP instruments can contribute to nutrition.

Table 8: Social protection interventions and health- and nutrition-related vulnerabilities: Examples

Causes/ determinants of health and nutrition-related vulnerabilities	Social protection interventions: Child mortality/ ill health and nutrition
Poverty and inequity – financial barriers to access health services	Social transfers, removal of user fees, health insurance, etc. can contribute to removing financial barriers to access healthcare services; help families address food insecurity; improve dietary diversity; increase expenditure on high-quality foods; and provide maternity benefits to ensure economic well-being of mothers and proper nutrition
Distance and location of services	Cash transfers can help cover costs of transportation as well as time and energy costs associated with health visits.
Education and information	Training and information sessions linked with social transfers can increase access to information on causes of illness/ preventive measures as well as effective nutrition and hygiene practices; community-based services can complement other interventions, providing counselling and support to vulnerable sectors.
Gender and social norms	When there is differentiated treatment in terms of feeding practices and care between girls and boys based on traditional and social norms, policy reform as well as changes in key legislation can contribute to ensuring equal access to services for women and men; and cash payments given to women can enhance their decision-making role, as well as increase investments in children’s health and nutrition

Finally, to conclude, we are grateful for the opportunity to comment on this draft document. Admittedly, it is a work in progress, but we trust that our comments will assist in its improvement.

All the best,

36. CARE International

CARE International greatly appreciates this opportunity to comment on the HLPE FSN report on Social Protection for Food Security. CARE as an organisation with a remit for social justice, greatly welcomes the move in the report to position social protection to focus on rights, particularly as this may help galvanise commitment to social protection (SP). We find the report to be an extremely comprehensive review of social protection, with a well-articulated, thorough and useful analysis of the evolution of SP, which acknowledges that political ideology has influenced its development and identifies where gaps in SP persist.

We have aimed to structure our comments within the four questions posed by the authors, with a few outstanding comments related both to the report overall, as well as specifics. Comments refer to documented examples from CARE where possible and we would be happy to provide further information if required.

Outstanding comments: Conceptualisation and approach

1. Diagrammatic conceptualization of food security (Figure 1): It could be useful to diagrammatically 'present' food security, but as others have commented, the presentation of Figure 1 is confusing to digest and requires an explanation of what it is trying to portray. It seems to be showing how household/national(?) FS is achieved, and how goods/services and SP mechanisms intervene in that process. However,

- a. the social/political/legal//physical/economic areas identified as framing the context for FS are shown as passive orbits rather than how they interact with FS. (it is not clear how community participation/food subsidies contribute to FS through the diagram, and also where infrastructure/services fits into this, including agricultural inputs);
- b. It is unclear where the diagram is going – (surely the 'end point' should drive towards a box saying 'food security'?)
- c. Shouldn't HH Health, food acquisition, healthcare, public health etc, lead to 'improved health and nutrition' rather than 'illness'?

2. Is the human rights approach regionally specific?: It is noticeable in section 2.3 that all the examples of HR approaches in national social policies refer to Latin America, apart from Benin. It would be useful to include some regional analysis as to the reasons that these policies predominate in this region and whether/how this can be replicated elsewhere.

3. Affordability of social protection is a political choice: This argument is made elsewhere in the paper, but seems pertinent to emphasise in conjunction with section 4.5 around affordability. Some of the poorest countries in the world have non-contributory universal old age social pensions (Lesotho, Nepal), which have arisen out of government commitment.

4. Inclusion of social contracts: Sen's Entitlements analysis starts as a useful and strong framework for the SP agenda, but becomes diluted in the latter part of the report (as observed by other commentators).

- a. The critical requirement of political support for SP is well taken, but it could give more coherence to the paper overall, if this was linked back to Sen.

- b. A discussion lacking in the social protection analysis is that of social compacts and contracts between government and citizens (and even internationally from donors). Sen's well-cited analysis on India's ability to apparently stave off famine due to its Famine Laws, seems relevant and a possible starting point for this. Is the ability to avert famine or serious food insecurity more possible where there are social contracts in other countries and do social contracts point to better social protection systems?
- c. In this context it might be valuable to refer to Ethiopia's recent ratification of its national social protection policy – how unique is this both internationally and in Africa, and what does this mean for food security for the long term. Worth noting too, that Ethiopia's SP policy does acknowledge the challenge raised by the authors, of a more inclusive approach to SP which embraces commitments to health, education and other services, in achieving food security.

Authors' questions

Qu 1 SP instruments

1. **Analysing the effectiveness of SP mechanisms needs to distinguish between programme design and implementation.** Missing this distinction can risk a mistaken assessment in what is/not effective in a programme, as 'tweaking' a programme's design (for example ensuring low transaction costs, payment times, duration, payment locations, etc.) can effect food security outcomes but not be a 'fault' of SP inherently.
2. **The Bangladesh FFA** (section 3.3.1) notes participants' preferences for food (also broadly in common with Ethiopia's PSNP) but this needs to be qualified with an explanation, acknowledging that these are not typically preferences for a particular transfer *per se*, but rather often about programme design (ie has the project provided a comparable value between a cash transfer a food basket, cash transfers that meet market prices, and factored in transaction costs for the HH – time and travel costs) as well as household type (gender, age, physical ability).
3. Analysis of **Ethiopia's PSNP** (section 3.3.2) **should acknowledge the contribution that creation of public assets may/not make to food security.** The section focuses on food/cash wage in HH food security but should also comment on whether the public assets created under the public works contributed to food security. For example creation of feeder roads to assist in market access for remote communities, small-scale water harvesting in assisting with irrigation, natural resource management and seedling plantation to protect and improve soil, etc. If there is insufficient data measuring this, it implies a gap in programme monitoring full contribution of social protection activities to food security, and this needs to be acknowledged.
4. **Public works activities can have multiplier effects**, ie social protection can benefit a wider population beyond the target waged group. Community assets created by public works activities can have a beneficial impact upon a group wider than the target group. This can bring some necessary benefit where the programme does not include the full caseload, and for other low-income groups, and even there are numerous examples of good public works being replicated in non-target communities. These multiplier effects could be mentioned in section 3.3 – CARE can provide numerous anecdotal cases from Bangladesh, but is there any useful data quantifying this? At the same time, it would also be useful to be wary of donors' emphasis on the 'catch-all' of public works social protection programmes

that may be overcommitted in what they can realistically accomplish – and the need to gather more evidence and learning to inform this.

5. **Sustained improvements in food security from SP need to be measured and documented.** Is there any analysis of whether the improvement in food security documented in the examples in 3.3.1-5 (and other examples) were evaluated in the short term or were maintained in the long term? This is of course essential for ensuring that SP programmes contribute to sustained FS.
6. **Transfer modalities need to be sensitive to local preferences and may need to vary across regions.** Section 4.2 explores the different factors affecting the impact of food transfers. It would be useful to note here that these may need to vary across region and communities. The PSNP has amply shown that food grain preferences differ between Somali and Amhara regions, although food donors did not make this distinction. This led to food transfers being sold therefore reducing the initial transfer value and compromising intended consumption benefits (?).
7. **Graduation/Affordability** (sections 4.4/4.5) **Estimation of cost of a permanent caseload.** It would be useful to give a calculation of what % of a population are unlikely to ever graduate in order to help estimate what a social protection system would cost to a government (data for OECD countries, or estimated disability levels).
8. **Recognition of informal social protection** (section 1.3.2). However, has the debate for the growing need for more comprehensive, formal social protection arisen partly due to the decrease of informal social protection systems? Are there examples of where formal SP has supported informal systems where they do exist – such as tried in Ethiopia’s idirs and eqqubs?

Qu. 2 Targeting & dependency, conditional v unconditional

1. Targeting HSNP, Section 2.2.4.1: CARE International has been one of the INGOs to implement the targeting component of the HSNP and this section presents and accurate reflection of what has been happening under the HSNP.

- a. The complaints committees and rights committees in this (and other) SP projects could be emphasised as a unique and important facet of SP interventions – an SP approach really can offer a ‘public space’ is a useful vehicle to enable better governance and accountability enabled/demanded through civil society participation.
- b. The following requires clarification: The registration process is open to challenge through the independent rights committee. During the registration period, paper copies of the registration are posted publicly for review, and can be challenged before enrollment. The registration team may be asked to review cases, but after around 10 days they move to other locations. However, the rights committee remains, and any issues raised are then referred to the ‘admin component’ agency (currently the implementing NGO) within each county. There is still a rights mechanism independent of the admin component that acts as an independent ‘watchdog’ over the system. Hence it might be useful to recognise the current involvement of the NGO body because this will need to be considered for project effectiveness in the transition to a fully government implemented programme.
- c. Five different targeting strategies were tested during the first phase of the HSNP. The evaluation report concluded that there were not substantial differences in the different mechanisms. This reinforces the conclusions also reached in 4.1.3.

2. Gender dimensions in conditional versus unconditional transfers are absent in the report.

a. It is worth noting that conditional transfers are not always inclusive of women's needs and rights because they may reinforce rather than challenge women's roles, by treating women primarily "as instruments" of their children.

b. However, CARE has found interesting and conflicting dynamics around this. CARE International's CCT work in Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, promotes gender equity and women's empowerment. Research showed that cash transfers for health and education care for children led to a number of protection gains for female participants, including increased decision-making powers at home, improved access to health checks, greater self confidence and enhanced knowledge of their rights as citizens. In all three countries women gained greater power at home to negotiate and decide priorities for the household and satisfy their children's needs. Being income earners helped to reduce family tensions and domestic mistreatment. Further details available here:

<http://www.careinternational.org.uk/research-centre/governance/147-cct-programmes-and-womens-empowerment-in-peru-bolivia-and-ecuador-care-policy-paper>

Qu 4 Breadth, Depth and roles for the international community

1. What is the role for NGOs? While the paper rightly focuses on government programmes as part of nationally run SP systems if it would benefit from some discussion and recommendation on what should be the role for local and international NGOs in effective SP programming. Where does the panel see the involvement of NGOs/INGOs? It seems very clear that NGOs are well-positioned to provide innovation around SP and develop and adapt to pilot and provide learning for SP activities, to feed into wider government programmes. NGOs have contributed considerable learning and evidence around effective SP implementation and pilots and it is unfortunate that some of these case studies are not included.

37. Technical Cooperation Department, FAO, Italy

1. Global Comments

Resilience building

As a global comment, I would give more place to resilience building as a core objective of social protection for food security. It could help to progressively move towards resilience asset building and to avoid increasing dependence. In other words, the best social protection measures are the ones which drive to better performance and reduced dependence of households.

Comparative analysis of social protection measures

This drives me to propose to scan the different social protection measures presented in chapter 3 within a multi-criteria appraisal matrix using the following set of criteria:

Cost per head

Positive graduation

Easyness of implementation

Food price shock resilience building

Natural disaster resilience building

Crop failure and asset loss resilience

Food supply resilience

Productivity enhancing safety net

etc.

Additional social protection instruments

In chapter 3 (page 36), I would propose to add two types of categories:

(i) Institution-based entitlement could cover the strengthening of risk-management local institutions as cereal-stores (“greniers villageois”) or Self saving groups (“Tontines”) self-help groups; and

(ii) Environment-based entitlement which would include Payment of Environment services (PES) which provides additional income to small holders and generates an ecosystem resilience.

A need to integrate social protection in agriculture policies

The links between social protection and agricultural growth go beyond positive feedbacks where reduced vulnerability promotes growth and growth reduces vulnerability. Social transfers have greater growth effects if they take people or economies across critical poverty trap thresholds and impacts also depend on other interventions: for example, risk of insurance mechanisms may only induce people to invest in riskier higher return activities if input financial or output marketing services needed for these activities are present. Similarly agricultural policies promoting higher risk/higher return activities may be ineffective with inadequate social protection mechanisms (Dorward and al, 2006)

If social protection policies can help poor rural people expand their assets, use them more efficiently and adopt higher return but higher risk activities than they would otherwise, there should be strong synergies with agricultural development policies. Reverse synergies should arise if agricultural policies can help people improve their livelihoods and food security.

There are also potential conflicts between social protection and agriculture development: in the impacts of social protection and agriculture policies, and in the resourcing of these policies. First, some forms of social protection may undermine incentives for investment, in particular, agricultural activities (for example food aid may depress food market development and production) and some agricultural policies may increase the vulnerability of particular people (for example, by increasing food prices). Secondly, if agricultural and social protection policies are seen as different spheres of policy, and are implemented by different agencies, they are likely to compete for limited financial resources and influence (Dorward and al, 2006).

Risk management and social protection

Creating mechanisms to deal with catastrophic, spatially covariate risks for large populations must be done in ways that do not undermine coping mechanisms by individuals. Households use to deal with chronic day-to-day and year-to-year independent risks. Worldbank⁶⁵ recently recommended to mainstream risk reduction in policies and programmes for sustainable development: *“It is possible to reduce risks by improving pre-event prepared-ness, designing and implementing risk mitigating strategies, developing reliable and timely early warning and response systems, and spreading residual risks through innovative risk financing instruments. Therefore risk reduction must be mainstreamed in policies and programs for sustainable development”*.

Despite advances in policy design to reduce chronic poverty through asset creation improved opportunities to use assets more productively, and more inclusive social protection programmes targeted at the poor, exposure to uninsured risks remains an important source of new poor as

⁶⁵ Agriculture Investment sourcebook, module 11: Managing Agriculture Risk , Vulnerability and Disaster June 2006.
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTARD/EXTAGISOU/>

well as an impediment to sustainable upward mobility. While greater understanding has been gained about the dynamic links between risk and poverty (Fafchamps, 2003; Dercon, 2006), little attention has been given to ways of protecting those who are exposed to uninsured risks from slipping into poverty. As a consequence of this, while many programmes targeting to the chronic poor have been effective in lifting large numbers of people out of poverty, they have often not managed to reduce aggregate poverty since an equal number of people moved into poverty due to exposure to uninsured risks.

Risk transfer, defined as shifting the responsibility or burden for disaster loss to another party through legislation, contract, insurance or other means, can play a key role in helping to manage natural hazard risk and mitigate or minimize disaster losses. Recent developments in this field include the use of a range of risk transfer mechanisms such as catastrophe bonds, catastrophe pools, index-based insurance and micro-insurance schemes. Social protection programmes such as safety nets and calamity funds can also provide effective financial instruments for managing risk and dealing with natural disaster shocks.

Strengthening Climate Change risk management as part of HH protection

The rural sector's lack of resilience to climatic accidents seems to be one of the main reasons for the transformation of climatic accidents into environmental, economic and social disasters for local communities. Thus, the integration of activities geared towards the improvement of community resilience seems to be of utmost priority. This can be achieved by integrating prevention and risk-management tools into already existing social safety-nets within the framework of food security and poverty reduction strategies.

"Social protection initiatives are as much at risk from climate change as other development approaches. They are unlikely to succeed in reducing poverty if they do not consider both the short and long-term shocks and stresses associated with climate change. Adaptive social protection involves examining opportunities that approaches to social protection provide for adaptation, and for developing climate-resilient social protection programmes".

Adjustments will need to take into consideration present risk through additional investment in risk reduction and a renewed emphasis on preparedness to manage more frequent and intense disasters. It will also require increasing capacities and flexibility to plan for future changes. Management of climate risk will be instrumental in protecting livelihoods and food security from evolving and less predictable natural hazards and shocks. More specific implications for effective climate risk management include:

- adapting traditional coping strategies, since climate change alters patterns of risk and might erode the assets on which they are based;
- revising land-use planning schemes to include evolving hazard profiles and subsidized relocation schemes in high risk areas;
- renewing emphasis on sustainable natural resource management practices (water, soil, fisheries, forestry) which constitute the baseline for all risk reduction and adaptation options;
- investing in collection, management and dissemination of more accurate climate information that facilitates meteorological risk appraisal/assessment;
- investing in further preparedness so all levels (local communities, governments, regional and international organizations) can respond more effectively to consequences of climate change;
- ensuring that food security contingency plans consider multiple global and local climate and market shocks and diversified responses (production, trade, stockpiling, food and cash transfers);
- increasing investment in social protection and risk transfer, since the increase in frequency of hazards may erode peoples' abilities to recover and the increase in magnitude of hazards will result in additional pressure on national social protection systems and humanitarian aid; and

formulating better communications and awareness-raising methodologies and strategies to ensure that climate information reaches end users and that communities and policy-makers are mobilized at all levels to initiate preventive action.

2. Answer to Specific questions from HLPE Project Team

Many social protection instruments, how to select?

- a. Which social protection instruments are most effective in addressing problems of food insecurity, and should be promoted? Under which conditions should household food security be protected with cash transfers rather than food aid?

Choice of type of transfer (e.g. cash, food, inputs or vouchers) should take into account: multiplier effects of different transfer types; specific programme objectives; programme and recipient costs; and market development and effects.

<http://www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00128/>

One important link to inclusive growth is how social protection through the injection of cash and thereby increasing purchasing power which in turn helps to realize potential local demand, can stimulate the development of local and rural markets. In the debate about agricultural development and the efforts to eradicate hunger, the development of local markets is often seen as a key issue. However the focus is often on the supply side, rather than on the demand side. The link between social protection and development of local markets is an issue that should be explored more. The economic and population structure of low-income countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, differ in particular from that of the industrialized countries of Europe.

http://www.aprodev.eu/files/Development_policy/Dev-Aid-Coop/aid-policies/response%20aprodev%20social%20protection.pdf

- b. Which instruments should be avoided, and why? Should interventions in food markets designed to stabilize prices be used?

Over reliance on market based mechanisms in poor rural areas which have not yet experienced growth may be ineffective because of a lack of effective markets. As development proceeds, however, and markets 'thicken' then market based interventions may become more effective and efficient in both social protection and agriculture.

Implementation modalities of social protection programmes

- a. Should social protection interventions for food security be targeted or open to all? Should cash transfer programmes be conditional or unconditional?

Agricultural and social protection instruments should be designed and implemented to exploit synergies and avoid conflicts between them. A number of issues need to be addressed: Timing is critical in seasonal agriculture, and interventions should support, not undermine, people's strategies for coping with seasonal vulnerabilities and exploiting seasonal opportunities.

Scale: Both the size and number of transfers have important threshold and multiplier effects affecting social protection and agricultural outcomes in livelihoods and economies.

Conditionality often results in unintended effects which have to be considered in terms of cost and outcome trade-offs across multiple objectives.

Stability and reliability of programmes have critical effects on their ability to deliver risk insurance benefits, as these depend on people’s trust in being able to access services when needed.

Targeting: Effective targeting is critical to the success of non-universal social protection, but is difficult to achieve and requires substantial resources.

Costs increase sharply with targeting strictness and the remoteness of the target population. The political economy of local, national and international relations: the funding, design and delivery of social protection and agricultural policies are highly political. Support for different initiatives depends upon their objectives and the interests of financiers, implementers and intended and unintended beneficiaries. <http://www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00128/>

- b. Should the trend towards linking social protection to the right to social security and the right to food be supported? Which mechanisms are most effective in upgrading social protection from discretionary projects to enforceable claims: social audits? Grievance mechanisms? Legislation?

I would advocate for inserting it in projects and for strengthening existing local risk management mechanism and institutions.

- c. What are the challenges to strengthening the rights foundations of social protection, and how can they be overcome?

How to reduce dependency and ensure resilience building

- d. Do social transfers cause ‘dependency syndrome’? What principles should guide the design of a comprehensive social protection system for achieving household and individual food security?

Complementary roles for social protection and agricultural development policies revolve around their contributions to poor people’s ‘hanging in’, ‘stepping up’ and ‘stepping out’ strategies. Early social protection welfare instruments focused on supporting ‘hanging-in’ strategies. These are still important but newer insurance and resilience based instruments aim to help people escape from poverty traps so that they can ‘step-up’ or ‘step-out’, taking risks to engage in more productive activities. Agricultural policies provide services supporting the same process.

- e. Which agricultural, trade and other policies should complement social protection for more sustainable food security outcomes?

There is a need to complement social protection measures with other risk management tools; below an example of other complementary tools within three countries.

	India	Niger	Madagascar
Food security stores	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Calamity funds	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Weather-based insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Crop insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Livestock insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Micro insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Agriculture-price risk management	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
Contract farming	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Commodity markets	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Price Stabilization Fund (PSF)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		

Electronic Spot Exchanges	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Tontines/self help groups	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revenue Based Farm Income Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Cereal mutual banks		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Warrantage/warehouse receipt system		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

38. Centre for World Food Studies, the Netherlands

The present version of the paper *Social Protection for Food Security. A zero draft consultation paper* has four chapters: 1. concepts and definitions; 2. rights-based approaches; 3. instruments and 4. unresolved issues. A chapter on policy recommendation and conclusions is to be included in a next draft.

Even though the report is unfinished, these four chapters provide an impression of the intended nature of the report. The HLPE team aims to present a broad survey on social protection for food security, expanding in the first chapter on the numerous definitions of social protection, and presenting after that various conceptual frameworks, for use in subsequent analysis. Several examples serve as illustration, with special reference to rights-based approaches as laid down in UN covenants and conventions. Next follows a long list of possible instruments that attempt to strengthen entitlements to food, in four categories. Implementation of food security policies through these instruments may lead to a series of classical problems (called ‘unresolved’ in the report), such as how to target, how to avoid aid dependency, how to obtain sufficient funding. We disagree that these problems are unresolved, and would rather argue that they are subtle and need detailed information about specific conditions, and, therefore, fall beyond the scope of the report.

Since the report is not meant to enter into practicalities, the policy recommendations announced for the next submission will inevitably be quite general, which raises the question whether such a broad report can contribute to CFS’s mission of promoting food security and tallies with the aims and ambitions of the renewed CFS and its HLPE.

As the renewed CFS is not even two years old, it would be far too early to even suggest significant reforms of the full process. By the same token it, however, is still timely to draw some lessons and allow for revisions in the HLPE-procedures, given the experience with the reports commissioned so far.

1. A first remark would be that the CFS, in view of its limited political mandate, will presumably be most effective if it focuses attention on subjects related to world food security that are quite controversial in the public debate. While its reports and debate cannot resolve the controversies, it can help making the discussion balanced and based on best available information: price volatility, land grabbing, biofuels, GMOs, greenhouse gas emissions by ruminants would be typical cases but the list of topics is obviously very much longer.
2. The way to improve the balance in the debate depends on the nature of the imbalance. It might be that:
 - a. the public was poorly informed by researchers
 - b. researchers are still fighting among themselves
 - c. researchers have neglected concerns by the public
 - d. private lobbies are quarrelling among themselves or with government

- e. geopolitical interests are clashing

The topics selected should be well focused. Broad subjects such as climate change, or social protection, and papers which point out that everything relates to everything will not qualify. Topics currently under negotiation say, in WTO should be filtered out as well.

3. Highlighting the nature of the controversies will also make it easier to draw attention from the public and in the media, and to organize the electronic consultations as well as broader debate. Small scale expert meetings, large conferences, Round Tables, public events, publications in the form of reports or leaflets, can all be part of a wider set of actions organized by the CFS around a specific topic. Clearly, different types of activities have their own audience, rules and goals. An expert meeting is a meeting of acknowledged experts in the field who jointly identify scientific controversies, without being diluted by UN type requirements of country representations and political statements. Likewise, a Round Table is successful only if all relevant stakeholders participate, possibly under the Chatham House Rule to guarantee open discussions that identify strategically or politically sensitive issues. World Food Day provides an excellent opportunity for thematic public events, where the major goal is to inform the general public and mobilize support. Provided they are well orchestrated, such complementary activities could bring new energy to the process and provide more weight to the CFS in setting the agenda on food security.

Regarding the procedure of commissioning reports itself the focus on bringing balance would imply the following distribution of tasks:

- The HLPE Steering Committee guards the process to ensure that the report remains focused on the points where there is a debate and discussion, avoiding a too broad scope to develop in response to the often diverse comments provided in the consultation stage.
- The consultation process starts only when a complete draft version of the report is available, complementing the passive openness of the internet consultation with active openness towards specific scientists and field level experts.
- The project team responds to the inputs provided upon their own initiative in the electronic consultation, or after an explicit request from HLPE steering committee, by field experts and scientists, indicating where arguments have been taken on board and where they have been dismissed or deemed irrelevant, while explicitly granting credit to all those who contribute to the process.

Limiting the consultation process to comments on the draft report offers the advantage that the process will require less inputs from professionals, and that at the same time a more active policy to approach experts for their specific expertise may increase the quality of inputs provided. In addition, transparency of the process is increased and the credibility of the report enhanced through the requirement of an explicit reaction by the project team on the comments made.

We are positing these suggestions to make the process through which the CFS wants to further its goals more dynamic, more focused and more attractive. It is more dynamic since it avoids the fixed calendar and becoming routinely, more focused since it its

driven by the policy questions themselves, and more attractive since participants can join via the kind of participative action they like most.

4. Suggestions under 3. refer to preparation of individual reports and orchestration of the larger ongoing debate for each topic separately. As all reports – and also other CFS activities – focus on specific aspects of food security, it is likely that insights gained in one activity have broader relevance for other activities. This would suggest introducing say, on a biannual basis a phase during which the HLPE Steering Committee takes stock, and comes up with a synthesis that provides an overall picture, summarizing the main policy conclusions, questions pending, and, also to secure sustained commitment, documenting the involvement of experts and professionals in the various processes. The synthesis would provide the basis for the next cycle.

39. Savina Tessitore, Institute of Development Studies, UK

Comments

p.13

The first paragraph, introducing social protection, states that “one obvious reason for its popularity is that it tackles poverty and vulnerability directly, *so its impacts are immediately and invariably positive*”.

This statement is dubious, since social protection programmes can also have quite negative effects on a number of counts, and its positive effects are greatly dependent on the way programmes are designed. This is also evidenced in the paper itself, for instance in discussing Public Works (p.45, §3.3.6), CCTs (p. 55 second paragraph), targeting (p.64 §4.1.3), dependency (p. 67, last paragraph).

For this reason it is suggested that the sentence be changed to:

“One obvious reason is that ideally social protection tackles poverty and vulnerability directly, so well designed programmes are bound to have a significant impact on the different aspects of poverty and vulnerability, including food security.”

p.25

In commenting the inclusion of non-state actors as bearing a responsibility for the realisation of the right to food within GC12, it is stated that this “may be said to ‘legitimate’ certain conditionalities for measures of social protection...”.

But this depends on whether this inclusion is interpreted as the responsibility towards oneself - in which case it legitimises “enforcing” this responsibility through conditionalities, or as the responsibility towards others - in which case it is more of a call towards social solidarity.

It is therefore suggested that the sentence be modified accordingly.

p.58

There is a third consideration to be set against the preoccupations with the cost of school feeding. It is suggested that the following be added:

“Third, if linked with the local economy, for example by ensuring local procurement of food and employment of cooks, the higher costs can actually translate into positive spillover effects which can benefit the whole community. Furthermore, if the programme is accurately designed, these effects can be directed towards the more needy households and individuals.”

Quoted in the text but not in list of references:

Rinku Murgai et al 2012

Cummings et al 2006

Freeland(er!) 2007

de Janvry 2011

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