

Plan

Reaching the Most Vulnerable with Better Aid: Social Protection

Presentation for the APPG on Debt, Aid & Trade

October 20th 2005



Plan
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The Challenge

- MDGs are off track
- Aid has not been good at reaching the poorest
- Inequity is high and increasing
- Persistence of chronic poverty & extreme vulnerability
- G8 & EU commitment to increasing aid & debt relief
- Global reaffirmation of MDGs
- Growing popular interest in global poverty & development
- Questions about the capacity of some states to absorb increased aid and use it effectively

Who are the poorest & most vulnerable? Who is responsible?

- Intergenerational approach to poverty reduction is needed
- Children & older people are amongst the poorest and the most vulnerable
- Children born into poverty are likely to remain poor all their lives
- Developed world – state assumes some responsibility
- Developing world:
 - transition
 - break down of traditional support structures
 - charity & humanitarianism

Social Protection: The Potential

- Reach the poorest & contribute to breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty
- Develop a social contract between the state and the citizen
- A mechanism for better governance & improved accountability
- Absorb increased aid flows in effective manner

BUT in order to realise this potential, Social Protection systems need to be:

- Rights based
- Holistic
- Institutionalised & incremental

The contribution of a rights based approach to social protection

- considers social protection to be a right and entitlement, not just a matter of charity
- places clear obligations on the state to guarantee social protection
- uses a range of human rights standards to justify social protection and influence the design of schemes
- highlights core obligations and minimum standards, particularly for vulnerable groups, such as children
- places citizenship at the centre of the justification for and delivery of social protection and as a result requires a focus on the ability of states to deliver and citizens to claim their entitlements, thus building a social contract between the citizen and the state and contributing to good governance (Piron 2004).

The importance of a holistic understanding of social protection

- Social protection = an *approach* and *a set of policies* focused on reducing risk and vulnerability
- Social protection systems should be comprehensive, using a variety of interconnecting instruments to maximise impacts
 - Improving access to basic services
 - Encouraging positive behaviours
 - Reducing exclusion & encouraging empowerment

Social protection: institutionalised and incremental

- Institutionalised within government & donor planning and processes
 - component of overall poverty reduction (PRSPs)
 - capacity building of ministries
 - longer term & more committed donor financing
 - economic growth & increasing tax revenues
- Incremental
 - start of the process towards establishing welfare state
 - political buy in

Role of NGOs and civil society

- Mobilise communities to demand social protection
- Educate people about their rights and entitlements & provide resources to help simplify the process of accessing those entitlements
- Utilise their experience and understanding of grass-roots poverty to inform the design of social protection systems eg: targeting methods
- Innovate & implement pilot social protection programmes
- Monitor the impact, effectiveness & transparency of social protection instruments
- Support citizens to hold their governments to account
- Deliver social protection in difficult environments

The Forward Agenda: The role of UK Parliamentarians

- Enquire how DFID will deliver longer term and more predictable aid financing in order to implement its Practice Paper 'Social Transfers & Chronic Poverty'
- Raise the profile of social protection as a key mechanism for furthering the UK's human rights obligations to the chronically poor and vulnerable
- Scrutinize the implementation of the Commission for Africa recommendations on establishing social protection for orphans and vulnerable children
- Make recommendations to DFID and Bretton Woods institutions to use a proportion of additional aid resources to assist and support national governments to establish social protection measures, grounded in human rights, within overall poverty reduction strategies
- Support the efforts of Southern parliamentarians to build the necessary political will to implement social protection in their own countries
- Garner domestic support for social protection in developing countries by raising awareness of:
 - the universal right to social protection
 - its potential efficacy in achieving the MDGs
 - the contribution social protection has made in banishing extreme deprivation in UK & Europe