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Skills development as part of social protection programmes

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Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012

Background Paper:

Skills development as part of social protection programmes

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Skills development as part of social protection programmes

Anna McCord

Abstract

This review is a background paper for the 2012 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, examining the development and performance of skills development interventions as a part of social protection programming in middle and low income countries to address issues of youth unemployment.

This review comprises four sections. In the first the limitations of conventional social protection programming in the context of rapidly increasing levels of chronic unemployment among youth are examined, and the emergence of complementary skills interventions is documented, first in OECD and MIC countries and more recently also in LICs. The second section presents an overview of social protection in relation to labour market challenges and explores the constraints to labour market insertion and how social protection programming, allied to skills development and active labour market policies attempts to relax these constraints. In the third section a variety of programmes attempting to integrate skills development and social protection from Latin America, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are discussed. In addition a table highlighting six innovative and diverse programmes is presented, giving detailed information on programme targeting, training provision, objectives and key evaluation insights. The programmes included in this table are; the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) in Ghana, the Youth Employment Scheme (YES) in Sierra Leone, WFP's Food for Training programme in Afghanistan, Chile Solidario, BRAC's Targeting the Ultra Poor programme (TUP) in Bangladesh, and two South African programmes, Working for Wetlands and Working for Water.

Finally in section four, key lessons and conclusions are presented, drawing on the international literature. The report concludes that the integration of social protection with skills development as part of such a 'package approach' seemed to offer policy makers mutually reinforcing positive outcomes with the potential to promote transformation, supporting the poor while they gain skills, while also promoting graduation out of reliance on external support. With these objectives in mind, integrated ALMPs, combining social protection provision with skills development, have been implemented in Latin America, South Asia, and to a lesser extent in Africa over the last decade. However, the cost has been high, in terms of both financial and human resources, and they have had only limited success in terms of promotive social protection and graduation outcomes, particularly in contexts of chronic elevated unemployment. Hence it remains an open question whether the graduationist aspirations dominant in current social protection programming, are realisable through such interventions. The evidence currently available from OECD countries, and the limited evidence available so far in LICs and MICs, suggests they may not be, unless such interventions are matched by a significant growth in labour demand.

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Acronyms

AGETIP	Agence d'Exécution des Travaux d'Intérêt Public contre le sous-emploi (Senegal)
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
CFPR	Challenging the frontiers of poverty reduction
CLP	Chars Livelihoods Programme (Bangladesh)
CRIMP	Central Region Infrastructure Maintenance Programme (Malawi)
DDR	Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration
DWAF	Department for Water and Forestry (South Africa)
ELR	Employer of Last Resort
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme (South Africa)
FFE	Food for Education
FFT	Food for Training
FFW	Food for Work
FFTT	Food for Teacher Training
HICs	High Income Countries
IGA	Income Generation Activity
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LICs	Low Income Countries
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MICs	Middle Income Countries
NYEP	National Youth Employment Programme (Ghana)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSNP	Productive Safety Nets Programme (Ethiopia)
PWP	Public Works Programme
SMME	Small and Medium and Micro-Enterprise
TUP	Targeted Ultra Poor Programme (Bangladesh)
WFP	World Food Programme
YEI	Youth Employment Inventory
YES	Youth Employment Scheme
SIP	Special Investment Programme

Skills development as part of social protection programmes

Section I: The Origins of Social Protection and Complementary Skills Interventions

Social protection interventions were originally implemented in many LICs in response to labour market failures in the wake of structural adjustment, and were conceived as an essentially short term intervention, for which there would be no ongoing need once the disruptive effects of adjustment came to an end.

However, ongoing elevated unemployment in many LICs, coupled with chronic poverty, and the failure of growth to deliver large scale increases in employment to match new entrants to the labour market, has resulted in the search for social protection interventions to address poverty directly. The primary purpose of social protection is to protect consumption smoothing, in the case of temporary need, through the provision of temporary assistance in the form of 'safety nets', or ongoing support for households below the poverty line on a chronic basis. The provision of social protection has expanded from OECD countries to MICs, and in recent decades also to many LICs in Asia and Africa. However, in most LICs eligibility is limited, coverage is low, and transfers are rarely secure or predictable, often being provided only on a short term basis even in situations of chronic poverty and unemployment.

There is a hierarchy of objectives associated with social protection programming. The least ambitious of these is the provision of a transfer in response to a period of reduced income to smooth consumption ('protective' social protection); next is 'preventive' social protection which offers a form of income insurance in the event of a disruption of livelihoods to prevent those affected from consumption loss or asset sales; then there is 'promotive' social protection, which enables recipients to accumulate resources, and in this way reduces their vulnerability to factors which would otherwise disrupt their livelihoods; and finally there is 'transformative' social protection, which enables recipients to move out of dependence on social protection provision, into a situation of sustained higher productivity and reduced poverty, by addressing the range of social and cultural as well as economic factors which keep them in poverty.

However, it has become clear that the provision of social protection (most often in the form of cash transfers or public works) in itself is unlikely to result in promotive (or transformative) outcomes or graduation out of poverty, as cash transfers are typically used primarily for consumption purposes, and particularly in LICs are rarely sufficiently generous to allow for investment or accumulation.

Research has consistently shown that only after basic consumption needs have been met, are social protection transfer resources used to finance education and health, and only once these needs have been met, is cash used for productive investment. Hence receipt of a transfer may have an impact on human capital development, through improved nutrition within a beneficiary household, and potentially also improved education and health outcomes, if a sufficiently high value of transfer is provided and quality services are also accessible, but by itself, the provision of social protection is unlikely to result in significant accumulation or skills development. Particularly where social

protection transfers are well targeted to the poorest, they are overwhelmingly used for immediate consumption purposes.

However, there are increasing concerns about the need to achieve more through social protection, rather than just a temporary or ongoing reduction in income poverty, and the aim of developing promotive and transformative social protection (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004) which assists the poor to move out of poverty and 'graduate' out of dependence on social protection provision has become increasingly popular. Recognising the limited impact of social protection provision in terms of transformative outcomes, an attempt has been made in recent years to enhance the 'promotive' and 'transformative' impact of social protection through the provision of complementary interventions, which together are intended to promote the accumulation of a range of skills and assets to support the likelihood of graduation (assets, wealth, skills).

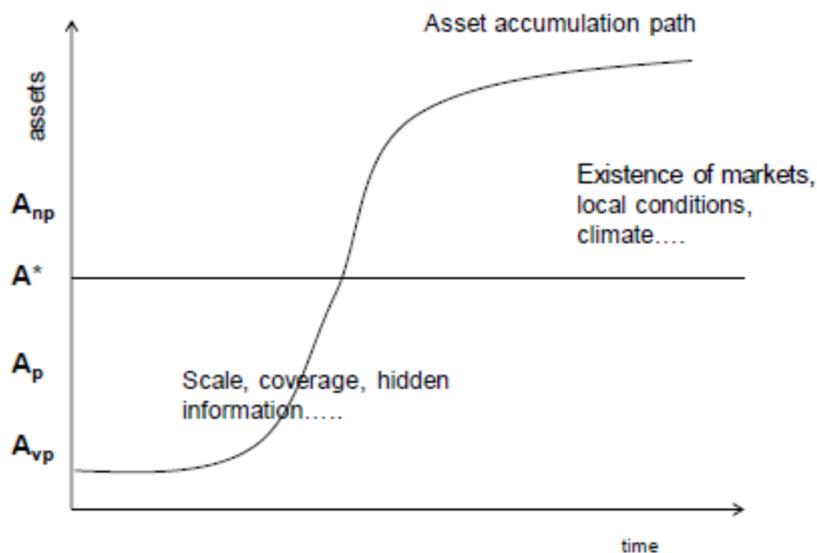
The concept of promotive social protection has gained popularity during the last decade, in part due to the fact that it makes social protection provision increasingly marketable to governments in LICs with constrained budgets who are reluctant to commit to interventions with recurrent financing implications. If graduation out of poverty and out of dependence on state support is the explicit objective of social protection provision, then a social protection intervention can be conceptualised as a time-bound 'treatment' rather than an ongoing long term fiscal commitment, rendering it more attractive to both donors and government with short term financing and planning horizons.

Graduation is a somewhat contested term, but can be described as;

'a process whereby recipients of support move from a position of depending on external assistance to a condition where they no longer need this support, and can therefore exit [the] programme.' (Sabates Wheeler and Devereux, 2011:7-8)

It is anticipated that this outcome is achieved through a process of accumulating assets to enable the poor to participate more actively in productive activities, either within the labour market, or through their own production. In this context transfers serve to protect consumption and support livelihoods, while complementary interventions 'enable further accumulation and increased productivity' until households reach a threshold at which point they are no longer dependent upon external help. At this point accumulation can enhance risk taking activity, and households graduate to a new higher productivity equilibrium, resulting in a state of sustained positive change in livelihoods, if local conditions are conducive and complementary (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, 2011). The theory of change underlying the aspiration of programmes combining social protection with other complementary interventions (including skills development) is summarised in Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, (2011), and represented in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Graduation pathways – enablers and constrainers



Source: Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, 2011.

The role of complementary interventions, such as training, in terms of promoting sustained productivity gains is likely to be contingent on a range of external factors. These include the existence of markets, local socio-economic conditions, and climatic factors, as well as the quality and relevance of the training, and are also contingent on the scale and generosity of ongoing social protection provision.

Social Protection, productivity and the labour market

The promotion of productivity enhancing social protection is consistent with the current draft of the World Bank social protection and labour market strategy (World Bank, 2011). Previously the Bank had focussed primarily on risk, but it now takes a broader approach to assessing poverty needs, including dimensions of poverty and the fact that a range of causal factors need to be addressed if poverty is to be addressed in conjunction with the provision of safety nets. The Bank has recently identified the integration of skills development with social protection provision as central to the 'promotive' component of its developing policy (World Bank, 2010). In line with this the Bank has highlighted the weak connection as *one of the four* global gaps in social protection and labour programming, attributing this to the insufficient linkages between 'human capital accumulation, skills formation and labor market insertion'. The rationale underlying this that ultimately 'the best safety net is a job' (Zoellick, 2011)¹.

¹ The Middle East and North Africa: A New Social Contract for Development, Zoellick, President, The World Bank Group. Speech at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, 6 April 2011.

One consequence of this analysis is the development of social protection programmes which explicitly attempt to promote productivity and employability through skills development. The popularity of such programmes grows from three main impulses; the first is a widespread recognition that growth is not going to address poverty, and that growth can and frequently does coincide with continuing high levels of poverty and unemployment for those excluded from the growth process in many LICs; the second is the fact that many LIC governments are reluctant to support social protection programmes which make an open ended commitment to support the poor, (and the associated ongoing fiscal commitment), preferring instead to select programmes of limited duration during which the labour market profile of participants is enhanced, such that their subsequent labour market performance will be superior, reducing future reliance on the state ; and the third major impulse for promoting 'productive' social protection provision, and skills development in particular, is a recognition of the potential destabilising force of a large body of unemployed, or working poor, particularly among the youth.

Hence skills development, and the promotion of human capital, is a key component of an emerging new agenda for promotive social protection programming, with labour market insertion a key component of successful social protection programming. This agenda acknowledges the structural nature of unemployment in many MIC and LIC contexts, subsequent to structural adjustment and globalisation, and defines the broad challenge as one of insufficient labour demand (see for example World Bank, 2007). However, having recognised the primarily macro-economic and supranational origins of the persistent levels of chronic poverty, underemployment, unemployment and the working age poor, policies to address unemployment at national level focus primarily on national interventions, and in particular Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) responses. In relation to youth employment the key question emerging from this policy approach is what role social protection can play in helping young people to more efficiently integrate into the labor market.

The extent to which ALMPs promote increases in aggregate employment, rather than the substitution of one set of workers for another, in situations of structural labour demand deficit is open to question (see for example Harvey, 2007), given the scale of the broader problem of inadequate demand, with new labour market entrants outstripping the number of new jobs created. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that many of the new jobs being created are of low productivity and low pay, contributing to the problem of adverse incorporation into the economy (see for example du Toit (2004) and the growth of the 'precariat' employed outside the norms of decent work anticipated by the ILO (Standing, 2010), challenging the assertion that a job is, by definition, 'the best safety net'.

In the remainder of this paper, the experience of programmes providing skills development in combination with social protection is explored in order to gain insights into the potential contribution this of dual approach in the light of the growing policy interest in this area, and concern with youth unemployment.

Social Protection and skills development

Public works programmes (PWP) are a popular mechanism for addressing unemployment, with some programmes, such as the *AGETIP* programme in Senegal, the *Youth Employment Scheme (YES)* in Sierra Leone, and the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) in Ghana, being exclusively or primarily designed to address youth unemployment. However when the impact of such interventions is reviewed collectively, it is apparent that their impacts have been inconclusive. While the *Trabajar* programme in Argentina showed sizeable income gains for younger participants (Jalan and Ravallion, 1999), little impact was found in Ethiopia, perhaps because transfer levels were very low (Gilligan et al, 2008). A number of studies concluded that once participants' opportunity costs were fully considered, alternative policies may be more cost-effective in terms of meeting short-term employment and poverty alleviation objectives (Ravallion, 1999; Ravallion & Datt, 1995; Datt & Ravallion, 1994, cited in World Bank 2010).

These conclusions on the adequacy of public works programming alone have led to programming experimentation, and the adoption of integrated approaches, with public works programmes being implemented in combination with skills development components. As the World Bank states, in order to 'increase the impact of public works on post-program employment of youth, a new model is being tested in several countries. These programs add mandatory behavioral skills, financial literacy, or job search training to the public works project' (World Bank 2010), but have not yet been evaluated.

These new programmes attempt to address one or more of five major constraints which limit young people's access to the labour market, as identified in the World Bank Youth Employment Framework (World Bank, 2010), namely:

1. *Job-relevant skills constraints*, including insufficient basic skills, technical skills mismatch, behavioral skills mismatch, or insufficient entrepreneurial skills
2. *Lack of labor demand*, both at the macro-level through slow job growth and at the micro-level through employer discrimination
3. *Job search constraints* such as information about job openings or being able to communicate skills to potential employers
4. *Firm start-up constraints* including lack of access to financial capital or business networks
5. *Social constraints* on the supply side, such as social norms that limit skills development or labor market entry' (World Bank, 2010)

If the provision of cash transfers is reviewed against these five constraints it is clear that on their own, they can potentially address at least some constraints and thereby improve labour market performance. Cash transfers can relieve capital constraints relating to job search (see for example Posel, Lund and Fairburn, 2006, in relation to South Africa) and to some extent start-up capital (contingent on the possibility of accumulating financial resources as a result of programme participation). Cash transfers can potentially also relieve constraints relating to labour demand, if cash transfers or PWPs are implemented on a sufficiently large scale and with adequate concentration to stimulate local demand, although mostly the limited scale and dilution of such interventions means that they do not have a significant impact on relieving labour demand

constraints at either micro or macro level. However, as with public works programmes, cash transfer interventions are likely to have a greater impact on skills constraints if offered in conjunction with relevant skills development interventions. This 'package' approach to social protection and skills development is discussed below.

Section II: Social Protection and Labour Market Insertion

Among developing countries, Latin America has pioneered the development of programmes which attempt to integrate social protection and labour market insertion. The programme *Chile Solidario*, has been described as the 'flagship for a new generation of social protection policies', linking the poorest with social workers to enable them to benefit from a range of programmes including job training, education and housing as well as income support (Green, 2010). The feasibility of implementing similar skills-intensive, social worker-based, programmes in LICs is a critical question, in terms of the extent to which the attempt to replicate MIC experience in LICs can and should be attempted. This question will be discussed once examples of current programming have been reviewed.

Chile Solidario is an example of the emergence of 'active welfare' (Barcelona 2002) in a MIC, where social protection is combined with measures to promote insertion, and conditional on engagement in activities to promote employability, including skills development. The relevance of the activation strategies and ALMP developed in OECD and MICs to LICs is a key current question, which it is necessary to review in order to assess the value added of combining programming elements to promote labour insertion. It is interesting to note that even in an OECD context, the efficacy of ALMPs in general, and training interventions in particular, has been widely questioned (see for example Betcherman et al, 2004). It has been argued that activation policies alone do not work, in part because they focus on training or job search mechanisms, without giving adequate recognition to the fact that there are a range of barriers to labour market entry, most notably a lack of effective demand.

Notwithstanding this critique, changes have been incorporated into social protection systems in many OECD countries, and increasingly in LICs which impose activation measures, providing social assistance on a short term basis, with some including an element of employment compulsion. However, one important insight is that it is a *quality* job, for example one which conforms to ILO 'decent work' criteria,² which is the best safeguard against poverty, and that temporary, poorly-paid jobs (such as those offered in many public works programmes) will not ensure sustainable economic inclusion. Similarly seemingly 'successful' labour market 'activation' can lead to engagement in sectors characterised by precarity and low quality employment. It has been recognised that employment and labour market insertion strategies will not necessarily result in the acquisition of quality employment or sustained poverty reduction in relation to OECD countries (Barcelona, 2002), but this is not necessarily adequately considered in many LIC contexts. Moreover, in contexts where unemployment is primarily structural, with a significant demand deficit being the main constraint to employment, it is not clear that activation is likely to result in successful employment outcomes on a significant scale.

² Add definition of decent work (ILO)

Social Protection Programming and Employment

During the 2000s the World Bank characterised the role of social protection in promoting employment as the protection of 'the income of workers from shocks to employment' (in the 'MILES' framework, World Bank, 2007). However, in recent years the emergence of social protection as a response to chronic poverty, in place of temporary social safety nets responding to shock-induced transient vulnerability, offers space for a different kind of integration between social protection and skills development to promote employment. In such a context social protection goes beyond just cushioning workers' consumption smoothing during periods of transition between jobs. The relationship between social protection and employment has various different aspects;

In some instances social protection is perceived as an *alternative* to employment, as in the case of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), in India, in which the state recognises the absence of market based labour demand, and assumes the function of an employer of last resort (ELR).

Elsewhere social protection functions directly to promote employability, for example through employment experience and on the job training in a PWP (the EPWP in South Africa), or by financing job search in the case of a cash transfer programme (Child Support Grant and Old Age Pension in South Africa).

Finally, social protection can be implemented alongside complementary training programmes, in order to promote employability and consumption smoothing simultaneously, as in the Productive Safety Nets Programme (PSNP) in Ethiopia. In such contexts, social protection provision ensures immediate consumption needs are met while skills are acquired. Some programmes simply link training to social protection provision, while others create an integrated package of mutually reinforcing interventions to try to promote skills development, or make participation in training a criterion for transfer receipt (as in the case of World Food Programme (WFP) Food for Training (FFT) initiatives).

The common objective throughout these programmes is to intervene in such a way as to change the labour market performance of participants. Common examples of linkages between skills training and social protection include;

- formal classroom training as part of 'food for training' or workfare programmes in which cash transfer receipt is conditional on participation in training,
- on the job training through public works programme employment,
- participation in income generation activity (IGA) training as a condition for receipt of a cash transfer of PWP employment,
- participation in life-skills training as a condition of PWP employment, and
- workplace experience through PWP employment.

Types of social protection and training

Increasingly social protection programmes contain an expectation of graduation either through training/skills development or asset accumulation. The extent to which these objectives are integrated into social protection varies according to the social protection instrument adopted.

Some public works programmes have explicit training objectives, which aim to result in transformational outcomes, for example the *Trabajar* programme, and *PSNP*, both of which have complementary skills development components, while others such as the *MGNREGS* do not anticipate any form of training or graduation outcomes, but rather anticipate the provision of programme support to poor households on an ongoing basis. Some, although not most PWP explicitly target the youth, for example through youth employment programmes, examples being the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) in Ghana, and the Youth Employment Scheme (YES) in Sierra Leone.

The labour market vision underlying many social protection interventions differs significantly, from integration into the formal sector, to increased informal sector activity or self employment, either through micro-enterprises or SMEs. However, where programmes are implemented in the absence of market demand or a complementary intervention to stimulate demand, such programmes run the risk of generating substitution effects, i.e. the substitution of one worker for another. Only in situations characterised by frictional employment, where jobs exist, but workers do not have the requisite skills to fill them, or expansionary labour market are such interventions likely to promote overall employment. Similarly, where levels of remuneration are low and other barriers to entry are deliberately reduced, PWP may result in the attraction of new labour market entrants, such as women previously primarily engaged in domestic activities, rather than addressing the needs of those previously unemployed.

Cash transfer programmes can have complementary training components, as in the case of the *TUP* programme in Bangladesh, and the *Puente* programme, designed to complement the provision of cash transfers under *Chile Solidario*. In such instances the provision of a cash transfer is inherently temporary, based on an anticipation of graduation through a combination of interventions.

Food distribution programmes can also have training components, particularly in the latter stages of an intervention which was originally humanitarian, as in the case of many WFP FFT initiatives. Similarly, DDR programmes often have a training component, implemented in combination with food or cash distribution programmes for ex-combatants, and in this way such programming is part of a programme of post-conflict reconstruction.

Section III: Discussion of Programmes

The need to integrate social protection with a range of other interventions, if poverty is to be addressed, has been highlighted in recent years (see for example Barrientos 2010). Innovations in this area of programming developed simultaneously in Latin America and South Asia. In Latin America, the impetus for such innovation was the significant labour market contraction which occurred in the wake of the financial crisis of 2002, while in Asia it was a recognition of the failure of conventional single issue approaches which failed to recognise the multidimensionality of poverty. Neither training alone, nor the provision of social assistance was sufficient to promote accumulation and graduation out of poverty, and so a combined approach was explored. The *Targeting the Ultra Poor* (TUP) component of BRAC's *Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction* (CFPR) programme in Bangladesh, and the *Chile Solidario* programme, are examples of the innovative integrated form of programming which emerged during the 2000s. Both these programmes attempt to integrate social

protection in the form of a timebound cash transfer provided simultaneously with complementary skills development interventions (Barrientos 2010).

The design and impact of programmes integrating skills development with social protection from Latin America, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are discussed below, and at the end of the section a table giving detailed information on the key characteristics of six diverse social protection and skills development initiatives is also presented. The programmes detailed in this table are; the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) in Ghana, the Youth Employment Scheme (YES) in Sierra Leone, WFP's Food for Training programme in Afghanistan, Chile Solidario, BRAC's Targeting the Ultra Poor programme (TUP) in Bangladesh, and two South African programmes, Working for Wetlands and Working for Water.

Latin America

Many social assistance programmes in Latin America integrate a range of interventions addressing the multidimensional nature of poverty. In addition to *Chile Solidario*, which integrated poverty transfers with training, other programmes in the region also had multiple complementary components, including *PROGRESA*, whose scope of interventions was extended when the programme was rolled out to urban areas to include, inter alia, training, post school education, and small enterprise skills development (Barrientos and Hinojosa-Valencia, 2009).

Chile Solidario - Chile

Chile Solidario aims to help the poorest support themselves, by ensuring they take up various social benefits and keep their children healthy and at school, while also offering training and a grant to set up a small business. The impact of *Chile Solidario*, however, is somewhat contested. An evaluation of the programme during the first two years of implementation found no evidence that participation in the employment programme translated into improved employment or income outcomes (Galasso, 2006). However, over time some positive effects were identified, notably increases in the number of workers in the family, the percentage of workers in the family and the employment of the head of the family (Hoces de la Guardia and Larranage, 2011).

Jefes y Jefas - Argentina

An alternative example of the attempt to provide social protection and skills development in the context of an employment crisis in Latin America is the *Jefes y Jefas* programme in Argentina (see Galasso and Ravallion (2003). *Jefes* attempted to integrate public works with training for improved labour market insertion. The programme was Argentina's main social policy response to the 2002 economic crisis and aimed to provide direct income support for families with dependents, whose head had become unemployed due to the crisis. The programme reduced aggregate unemployment, though it employed as many people who had previously not been economically active as those who would otherwise have been unemployed. Despite leakage to ineligible families, and incomplete coverage of those eligible, the programme was found to have partially compensated many households affected by the crisis and reduced extreme poverty (Galasso and Ravallion 2003). By registering the unemployed, issuing them social security cards, and involving them in training and employment, the unemployed were assisted in re-entering private sector markets, and the programme successfully moved participants from the informal to the formal sector. The success of this model of labour market reinsertion is, however, contingent on the availability of private sector demand (Tcherneva and Wray, 2005).

Latin America Overview

Overall the World Bank argues that ALMP comprising public works combined with jobs and skills training programmes such as Jefes and Child Solidario 'can play a crucial role to spur employment' during periods of crisis and the immediate aftermath, and that such policies are critical because of the disproportionate impact of reduced labour demand on young people. On this basis it is argued that recent lessons from evaluations of youth interventions in developing countries show promising trends and should be taken into account when designing new programmes (World Bank, 2009). However, overall the evidence on impact is less conclusive. An empirical study examining the impact of training on employment and income in Argentina found that the programme had no significant impact in Argentina, and did not result in significant improvements in the transition from welfare to work (Galasso, Ravallion and Salvia, 2001). Similarly an evaluation of the youth training programme, *Proyecto Joven*, indicated limited impacts in relation to the objectives of increasing the employability of poor and unemployed young people with low human capital; it also found that the effect on employment was not statistically significant (Alzua and Barssiolo, 2006). These findings are consistent with recent international reviews of the impact of training as one component of active labour market policies (Betcherman et al 2004, Martin and Grubb, 2001). The general conclusions from these studies are that training tends to have modest, if any, impacts on income and employment, for example Ibararán and Shady's review of IDB funded job training programmes in Latin America (2008) concludes that programme benefits were limited and modest. Overall, such programmes typically increase the employment rate by between 0 and 5 percentage points. The high cost of achieving these modest results through integrated programmes in Latin America has been noted in the literature. Attempting to address chronic poverty in particular through education and training has been recognised as a high cost option (Barrientos, Hulme and Shepherd, 2003).

South Asia

As with Latin American programmes, there has been extensive experimentation in South Asia, most notably Bangladesh, in combining social protection with skills development to promote graduation.

Targeting the Ultra Poor (TUP)- Bangladesh

The TUP programme is one component of the Challenging the frontiers of poverty reduction (CFPR) initiative in Bangladesh, which combines cash transfers with carefully sequenced support, including training. The programme provided a complete package of support including asset grants and skills development, on the basis of intensive staff support to ensure 'laddered strategic linkage', with the objective of providing systematic, intensive and comprehensive support to the poorest, covering economic, social and health dimensions (Hossain and Matin, 2007:382, cited in Lawson et al). The benefits of the programme identified over the period 2002-5 were increased asset accumulation, a reduction in the chronic food deficit from 60% to 15%, and a 20% increase in per capita calorie intake, compared to controls. However, achieving such results has been at a high cost in terms of staffing inputs;

'Getting the right match between the TUP member and the enterprises is critical. This is not straightforward and requires good consultation and discussion, often over more than one sitting. This can be time consuming but the key to the success of the programme. Very often, the ultra poor are more used to receiving relief... which is clearly not what we are giving. For

relief you don't need to engage and discuss. We are investing in the ultra poor with an asset which they will use as a weapon to improve their lives."

Zakir Hossain, Programme Supervisor, CFPR (Matin et al, 2008).

Sub-Saharan Africa

In sub-Saharan Africa a number of programmes have attempted to combine skills development with social protection in order to reduce poverty on a long term basis during the last decade. These programmes have explored different ways of combining social protection provision and skills development, primarily through public works programming, in recognition of the fact that a PWP wage alone will not be sufficient to promote graduation. Several different examples are set out below.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)- South Africa

One large national programme implemented in South Africa since 2003 was the *Expanded Public Works Programme* (EPWP), which attempted to integrate training with primarily short term public works employment by making two days training for every month worked a compulsory component of PWP employment. In this programme training took a range of forms including 'lifeskills' (HIV awareness, and job search skills), on the job, and formal training. However, the programme has faced key challenges, primarily identifying appropriate and relevant training content, the quality of training (and absence of service providers), and notably the limited contact time available for skills development in the context of short term public works programmes, (with a mean duration of 4-6 months), which limits potential for skills transfer. These problems were compounded by the fact that the EPWP wage was too low to enable the alleviation of any significant capital constraints to increased productivity, with workers typically investing only in survivalist micro-enterprise activities, if at all (Ndoto and Macun, 2005, cited in McCord, 2009). Most notably, however, the fundamental problem was the lack of market demand for the skills provided, since lack of market demand was the key constraint to successful training outcomes, leaving the state as employer of last resort even after completion of training (McCord, 2005).

Other programmes in South Africa associated with the EPWP have also attempted to combine social protection provision, most notably public works with skills development. The *Zimbabwe* programme, initiated in KwaZulu Natal in 2001 provided ongoing employment, together with support for group formation, optional access to a savings scheme, and some support for micro-enterprise development.

In terms of the on the job training and basic skills gained from participation in the road maintenance and road construction programmes implemented in South Africa, one key insight was that the relevance of the training in terms of subsequent labour market performance was contingent on the transferability of the skills acquired, and also the mobility of the labour which had acquired the skills. Interviews with older female household heads in rural Limpopo who had gained skills in road camber shaping and scaffolding as part of the *Gundo Lashu* PWP, indicated that for them, the investment in skills development as part of the PWP had not been an appropriate investment (McCord, 2003). The relevance and likely impact of skills acquired is critically dependent on both demand for these skills and the demographic of those receiving them. Some programmes under the EPWP attempted to use PWPs as vehicles to promote the development of small and middle enterprises (SMMEs), but in these

instances failure rates were high, and the cost per SMME created represented a per capita investment many thousands of times higher than the investment in the PWP employees, receiving only temporary employment and limited training, raising questions of equity and distributional justice.

The *Working for Wetlands* and *Working for Water* Programmes in South Africa, run by the Department for Water and Forestry (DWAF), within the framework of the *EPWP* attempted to promote an innovative approach by providing scarce skills in environmental resource management through the national public works programme, and in this way to promote the employability of workers after programme exit. The programmes also hoped to create small enterprises to employ workers in the longer term by providing skills training for workers to create products from the natural materials produced through environmental management (garden furniture, wooden coffins etc). However, in the absence of adequate market demand for either environmental management skills, or the products created, outcomes in terms of sustainable employment after programme employment were poor (McCord, 2009). Similar lessons have been found in Latin American programmes, for example the results of the *Trabajo por Uruguay* programme were of limited success because the skills component provided the wrong type of skills for which there was limited market demand, ie non-transferrable skills which were not valued by the community receiving them (Reuben et al, 2008).

Central Region Infrastructure Maintenance Programme (CRIMP) - Malawi

In Malawi, another programme attempted to address constraints to capital accumulation by integrating income generation training in to a PWP which provided employment on a medium term basis. The *Central Region Infrastructure Maintenance Programme (CRIMP)* was initiated in 1999 and employed 1600 poor women in rural road maintenance, providing income generation and skills training as well as PWP employment, and a 'forced savings' component, under which a proportion of the PWP wages were retained to ensure the accumulation of a lump sum. The objective of this programme was to 'create new micro-entrepreneurs with adequate skills training and seed capital from the forced savings (CGAP, 2006, cited in Del Ninno et al, 2009). However, investment in income generating activities (IGA) using income from public works programmes ceased following drought related price rises, as the accumulation of resources achieved through the period of programme support was not adequate for significant changes in productivity, nor did it enable the growth of sufficiently robust enterprises able to withstand future shocks, e.g. drought, in the absence of local market demand (UK DFID, 2004). In this instance neither the value of the capital transfers nor skills transfers were sufficient to enable households to meet the threshold for transformative social protection, reflecting the argument set out in Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2011) that only a particular package of skills and financial resources, correctly targeted, can achieve the desired transformative outcomes.

Detailed Programme Summaries

Six innovative and diverse programmes which attempt to combine social protection and skills development components are presented in detail in the reference table below. The table gives detailed information on programme targeting, training provision, objectives and key evaluation insights. The programmes included in this table are; the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) in Ghana, the Youth Employment Scheme (YES) in Sierra Leone, WFP's Food for Training

programme in Afghanistan, Chile Solidario, BRAC's Targeting the Ultra Poor programme (TUP) in Bangladesh, and two South African programmes, Working for Wetlands and Working for Water.

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Table 1: Social Protection and Skills Development Programme Detail

Programme Name	Country	Target Group	Training Provided	Objectives	Complementary programming	Insights from evaluation
National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP)	Ghana	Youth aged 18-35	Workplace training (e.g. internships, on-the-job training schemes) Non-formal apprenticeship schemes (Most NYEP beneficiaries are employed in the public sector to provide basic social services)	Training and temporary employment for youth to promote medium term employment performance Address labour market barriers/failures: inadequate technical skills, lack of financial capital, lack of labour market information and lack of labour demand. Prevent rural urban youth migration by creating rural employment	Incentives for skills training Training subsidies and access to credit (training vouchers) Access to microfinance Employments services (job search assistance, access to labour market information, job placement)	High cost Not poverty targeted Mainly reaches educated urban youth with at least junior secondary education - employment modules require at least basic education Youth hired by programme lack training and qualifications to carry out their tasks Minimal impact on poverty
Youth Employment Scheme	Sierra Leone	Marginalised youth; ex-combatants, unemployed, returnees and refugees.	School, workshop and workplace based training In-classroom technical and vocational education and training Life/ soft skills training (classroom and workplace) Agriculture training Entrepreneurship training Advisory services (mentoring, business development services, and business formalisation)	Address threat to national stability Provide rapid employment opportunities and income-generation activities to for marginalised youth through public works, private sector incentives, and self-employment programmes Promote graduation from dependence on social protection	Increase youth participation in decision-making processes and work to strengthen capacity of key institutions (Ministry of Youth and Sports, youth groups and youth networks, creation of district youth committees) Creation of jobs through enterprise development and public works projects	Concerns regarding dependency resulted in programme design offering one-off social protection grants and long-term livelihood promoting activities at expense of meeting immediate needs for the economically active Short-term support only Lacks long-term sustainability
WFP Food for Training	Afghanistan	Youth included but not targeted	Functional literacy Non-formal training on health, nutrition and HIV/AIDS Vocational skills training - handicrafts, tailoring, embroidery, carpet weaving, vegetable gardening and other income-generating skills (poor widows) Food for Teacher Training (FFTT) (for teachers in provincial and district capitals with formal contracts)	Promote shift from relief to recovery and provision of free food in favour of Food-For-Work (FFW), Food-For-Training and Food-For-Education (FFE)	n/a	Urban bias of FFT - excludes rural teachers without formal contracts One-off, one-month family food ration for FFW too little to have sustained impact on livelihoods Weak poverty targeting – participating women not the poorest or most food insecure. Literacy classes <i>not</i> offering food aid equally well-attended. In areas of acute and high food insecurity, duration of work opportunities too short to address hunger or reduce asset depletion

						<p>and distress migration</p> <p>FFW programme not implemented to scale due to difficulty developing and approving sufficient number of new project proposals and shortage of qualified implementing partners and trainers</p> <p>Food-for-training difficult to scale up, due to constraints in the supply of teachers.</p>
Chile Solidario (includes Puente Programme)	Chile	Youth included but not targeted. Primary target group is households in extreme poverty	The programme links social protection beneficiaries with range of training and vocational opportunities outside Chile Solidario	Provide a system of social protection which goes beyond the provision of cash transfers, through the development of tailored bundles of programmes to meet the specific needs of hard to reach households	Two years of psycho-social support through social worker who assesses needs and devises extreme poverty exit strategy through provision of cash transfers, social programmes and training. After this households given direct cash transfer and preferential access to assistance programmes, including free health assistance and small business support, for three years.	<p>Strong take-up of labour market programmes; training, self-employment promotion, public works and labour re-insertion</p> <p>Results include; increased enrollment in the local employment office, improved education and health outcomes, increased take-up of cash assistance, employment and social housing programmes</p> <p>No evidence that employment programme participation translated into improved employment or income outcomes in short term</p>
Targeting the Ultra Poor	Bangladesh	Youth included but not targeted. Primary target group is the economically active 'ultra-poor' and the poorest women		<p>Enable the ultra-poor to develop improved options for sustainable livelihoods.</p> <p>Equip the poorest with skills that will allow them to participate in mainstream development activities</p>	<p>A systematic approach which is intensive and comprehensive, covering economic, social and health needs, combining both promotional (asset grants, skills training) and protective approaches (stipends, health services).</p> <p>Technical support and input supplies to ensure enterprises run successfully</p> <p>Income generating asset transfer' (e.g. poultry, livestock, horticulture), with the objective of increasing household asset base for income generation</p>	<p>Close follow-up is necessary for programmes attempting to reach the ultra-poor</p> <p>Assisting the ultra-poor in planning their future is critical</p> <p>Social mobilization is necessary to create an enabling environment for the ultra-poor</p>

Working for Wetlands	South Africa	Unemployed youth (18-25) are one target groups along with women and the disabled, comprising (20%) of the workers	On the job skills training related to project activities	Conserve South Africa's wetlands Incorporate unemployed poor people into employment and skills development opportunities	n/a	Benefits of employment may not be sustained beyond the period of project employment as workers used income for immediate consumption Limited market demand for skills gained on-the-job Neither beneficiaries nor local communities directly use the natural resources protected by the project to promote their livelihoods
Working for Water	South Africa	Unemployed youth (18-25) are one target groups along with women and the disabled, comprising (20%) of the workers	On the job technical skills training Small business development Health education, including HIV prevention, living with HIV/AIDS, and reproductive health	Clear alien invasive plants while providing social services and rural employment, hiring and training unemployed members of marginal communities	n/a	The programme is not long term employer, but aims to provide training to enable alternative employment The programme exit strategy does not permit workers to be employed for more than 24 months during a five year period Workers do not anticipate finding alternative employment after programme exit.

The programmes included in table 1 are indicative of the diversity of programming approaches to integrating social protection and skills development, the range of skills transferred, and also, the variety of interventions with which skills training can be linked. However, a review of the evaluation comments indicates that there may sometimes be a tension between the two objectives of immediate consumption support and improved labour market performance. This suggests that the provision of only short term social protection support on the basis of the assumption that skills enhancement will result in graduation may not be well founded in these contexts. The evaluation comments also highlight the exclusion of some categories of potential beneficiaries due to their inability to meet the basic criteria for programme participation, in terms of basic education levels.

Section IV: Key Lessons and Conclusions

Key Lessons

The international experience of ALMPs, social protection and skills development is surprisingly consistent across HICs, MICs and LICs. Such programmes remain popular with governments and many international development agencies for a range of reasons, largely linked to the prospect of 'transformative social protection' and 'graduation' from poverty, with the associated limited draw down on the fiscus this implies. However, a review of the international evidence points to an overall scepticism regarding impact of training and social protection provision in terms of improved labour market performance and income.

Evidence suggests that transfer receipt may in and of itself support increased labour market engagement, such as job search activity, even in the absence of training or other complementary interventions. The provision of social protection can in and of itself have an impact on labour market participation. In South Africa, for example, receipt of a social protection transfer at household level has been found to have a significant impact on job search activity, by covering the cost (and risk) of investment in job search activity (Fairburn, Posel and Lund, 2006). Similarly it is argued that the provision of social protection can in itself stimulate investment in skills formation, with different levels and types of social protection (pensions, unemployment benefits etc.) having differential impacts on investment in skills development (Estévez-Abe and Iversen, 2001). However, this is likely to be contingent on the relative generosity of the transfer in relation to the household consumption gap, the availability and accessibility of appropriate training providers, and also the nature of the labour market context.

Linking social protection to training may create incentives to participate in training, particularly where such participation is a hard condition for grant receipt. While generally the impact of PWP employment combined with training seems to be limited, gendered impacts have been identified, with greater impacts found on female participants, often taking the form of increased female labour market participation, rather than significant increases in employment among those already unemployed. Particularly where social protection provision is targeted at those outside the labour market, it can promote new entrants into the markets, e.g. female labour market participation, even in the absence of complementary skills development interventions.

In terms of the skills transfer component of joint social protection and skills interventions, the key question emerging from experience relates to whether the skills transferred are in demand. Is there

patent or latent demand for the skills in which participants are trained? The answer to this question depends on the broader labour market and macro-economic context, as well as local demand.

Where the skills are more oriented to the promotion of self-employment are they likely to result in increased productive activity? Or are other interventions, such as those to promote capital accumulation or support demand (e.g. through improved market integration) required if increases in productive activity are to be supported by the market?

If unemployment is frictional, training in job search skills may be effective, and cash transfers have been found to also promote job search activity by lifting capital constraints, and so can play a role complementing training in assisting beneficiaries to access work. However, this can only occur if there is unmet demand, and labour is mobile. In the absence of unmet demand, substitution rather than increases in aggregate employment are likely to be the primary result.

Are skills transferrable? The acquisition of scaffolding or road construction skills among older female household heads in remote areas may not be effective, whereas transferable skills relating to IGA for products or services for which there is latent local demand might be more appropriate. However, training in micro-enterprise activity may or may not be effective, depending on adequacy of local demand. While for youth, specific technical skills may be of greater use, if there is the possibility of migration in search of construction employment. In such contexts the provision of accredited certification of skills gained may be of value, although again this may result in benefits at the household rather than community or economy wide level if this results in the substitution of one employee for another in the absence of any increase in labour demand (Harvey, 2007).

Are the skills provided those which beneficiaries would prioritise, given their knowledge of the local market? Where questioned, beneficiaries have proposed that the menu of skills to be transferred should be demand-driven, reflecting local knowledge of skills and service provision gaps to promote the likelihood of ongoing and sustainable market demand. Examples might be driving skills (in order to provide a taxi service), or support in setting up as a local telecom service provider (through training in mobile phone usage). However, given the low literacy and numeracy of many workers entering social protection programmes, particularly where the poorest are targeted, the options for providing appropriate and locally desired training are limited, and it may not be possible to bridge the gap between available formal and informal employment opportunities, and the skills level of programme entrants. This problem is exacerbated by the short duration of contact time for training in many programmes, which can undermine prospects for meaningful skills transfer, particularly where social protection provision is only offered on a short term basis.

Where large scale programming is provided, the identification of adequate numbers of training providers and the ability to monitor the training provided, thereby ensuring an adequate quality of training, represents a major institutional challenge.

Where skills training takes place on a large scale, the challenge is to ensure that the economy can absorb the newly trained workers, either through market demand, or, through increases in public sector employment, as in the case of the South African *EPWP*, which included the training of workers in the social and education sectors or the Ghanaian *YES*. In such instances it is necessary to allocate sufficient budgets to the relevant government ministries, to ensure that investment in training will

pay off in terms of both future employment and improved service provision, and as such is efficient rather than wasteful of scarce resources.

While impact findings have been modest, the cost of integrated programmes has been found to be high in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Seeking to address chronic poverty, in particular through education and training, has been recognised as a high cost option (Barrientos, Hulme and Shepherd, 2003), and the costs of programmes which attempt to integrate skills development with social protection provision are higher still, requiring significant investments of time and individual case by case support (Matin et al, 2008).

Youth employment programmes are not typically linked with social protection provision, which in resource constrained MIC and LIC contexts tends to be limited in coverage and highly focused on provision for vulnerable households with children, elderly or disabled members. Where youth employment programmes are in place, such as the *NYEP* in Ghana, these are not integrated with social protection provision, which tends to be financed, designed and managed from separate sources. However, the lessons from the provision of cash transfers and public works employment more generally are relevant to youth employment programming.

In terms of youth, a key problem particularly in MICs and LICs is the insufficiency of formal education and training systems to reach substantial majorities of young people and prepare them for productive employment, a problem which is particularly severe where the limited number of jobs available are primarily for skilled rather than un- or semi-skilled workers (as in South Africa, see Kraak, 2005). In such an instance what is required is comprehensive rather than narrowly-targeted programmes, in order to respond to the multiple and inter-linked sources of disadvantage faced by poorly educated youth (Freedman, 2008).

Conclusion

The emergence of youth unemployment is one aspect of the structural emergence of elevated unemployment in many low income countries. It is linked to the reduction of subsistence activity and small scale production in the wake of structural adjustment and globalisation processes in recent decades, which have been exacerbated by successive economic crises.

The provision of youth employment programmes and training schemes has been one visible response to this emerging crisis, which threatens prospects for future human development, economic development and even stability. The desire to provide skills training and labour market experience has motivated a number of youth employment programmes in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, including the *AGETIP* public works programme in Senegal, which have shared an objective of preventing destabilisation. Similarly, the desire to address youth unemployment in the interests of stability has also motivated the development of youth employment programmes in countries emerging from conflict, including in Liberia and Sierra Leone as one component of DDR campaigns, in an attempt to offer an alternative source of immediate income and skills development to promote future employment to those emerging from conflict.

While social protection can promote consumption smoothing in the face of employment and income shocks, its limitations in terms of overcoming poverty in contexts of chronic unemployment or under employment are now well recognised. Social protection can have a role to play in lifting constraints to employment, notably by reducing financial constraints to investment and job search activity, although only if transfer amounts are sufficiently generous, which is not the case in most LICs. However, social protection interventions which relieve constraints to labour market participation are only effective and likely to have a sustained impact if they are linked with latent or patent demand, which is itself an artefact of broader macroeconomic policy. Social protection can also play a role in stimulating large scale demand, acting as a significant complement to skills training, with the potential to create local markets and hence labour demand, functioning as a Keynesian pump primer, particularly valuable in contexts where counter cyclical economic stimulation is required. But again, only if implemented on a large and sustained scale.

As Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux conclude in their recent paper on graduation and social transfers;

‘Social transfers are an inadequate instrument on their own for building sustainable livelihoods and resilience against fluctuations and shocks. Social transfers can be effective in smoothing consumption and protecting assets, but complementary interventions are needed to increase incomes and assets to the point where participants are ready to graduate from the programme. Delivering both ‘livelihood protection’ and ‘livelihood promotion’ requires a ‘package’ approach, including both support to household consumption and support to livelihoods.’ (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, 2011:16)

The integration of social protection with skills development as part of such a ‘package approach’ seemed to offer policy makers mutually reinforcing positive outcomes with the potential to promote transformation, supporting the poor while they gain skills, while also promoting graduation out of reliance on external support. Integrated ALMPs, combining social protection provision with skills development, have been implemented in Latin America, South Asia, and to a lesser extent in Africa over the last decade with this outcome in mind. However, the cost has been high, in terms of both financial and also human resource requirements, and they have had only limited success in terms of promotive social protection and graduation outcomes, particularly in contexts of chronic elevated unemployment. Hence it remains an open question whether the graduationist aspirations dominant in current social protection programming, are realistic. The evidence currently available from OECD countries, and the limited evidence available so far in LICs and MICs, suggests they may not be.

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