

Dutch social protection initiatives: INCLUDE and UNICEF

INCLUDE and UNICEF's work on social protection is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Through research groups, promotion of research uptake by policy stakeholders influencing and social protection programmes, INCLUDE and UNICEF work on integrating social protection into development policies. INCLUDE operates in seven African focus countries: Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda. UNICEF's social protection programmes are performed worldwide. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports UNICEF's HIV-sensitive social protection programmes in Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia. An overview of the activities is given below.

INCLUDE's research on social protection

Through seven research groups the INCLUDE Platform identifies the cost effectiveness of social protection interventions compared to other social policies. A key feature of these studies is that they focus on mechanisms through which the selected social protection interventions contribute to inclusive development. Some of their interim findings are presented in the handout '[How cost-effective are social protection interventions?](#)'.

- **Social protection in Uganda:** [This research](#) compares the cost-effectiveness of the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE), Early Childhood Development Programme, Public Works Programme and Food Assets Program (FFA) in Uganda. The evidence generated will guide decisions on expansion of the SAGE programme.
- **Post trauma services in Uganda:** [This research](#) compares the cost-effectiveness of cash transfers on their own with cash transfers combined with other complementary interventions (i.e. post trauma-related health and psycho-social support) and support through radio and social media. The aim is to generate evidence on a combination of interventions that would be cost effective for economic empowerment and facilitate the inclusion of women in post-conflict contexts.
- **Weather insurance for Ethiopian farmers:** [This research](#) examines the cost effectiveness of including agricultural weather insurance as an additional component of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), as opposed to providing the beneficiaries of the PSNP with an additional cash transfer. The findings are expected to be useful for policy-makers in their efforts to expand and improve the PSNP.
- **Social protection in the Afar region:** [This research](#) evaluates the effectiveness of the PSNP and other social protection interventions in the Afar region on poverty reduction, risk minimization, food security and livelihood improvement. The aim is to generate evidence of alternative social protection interventions that can contribute to inclusive development in pastoral communities.
- **Social health protection in Ghana and Kenya:** [This research](#) aims to generate knowledge on the effectiveness of cash transfer programmes and social health protection policies by comparing cash transfers to fee waivers (Kenya) and health insurance (Ghana). It also seeks to establish the complementarity of the two interventions and how the accumulation of health-related human capital and its spill-over effects contribute to inclusive development.
- **Free healthcare versus health insurance in Kenya:** [This research](#) looks at the cost-effectiveness of the free maternal healthcare offered in public health facilities in Kenya and the Community Healthcare Plan health insurance programme in Nandi County, Kenya. It assesses the effectiveness of targeting, quality of care, utilization and out-of-pocket expenditure of the two approaches to healthcare provision.
- **Maternity fee waivers in Kenya:** [This research](#) compares the cost-effectiveness of vouchers targeting vulnerable women with the free maternity care provided in public health facilities in Kenya. It considers the impact of the two interventions on maternal and child health in Kenya and how the link between the interventions and other social support systems works.

INCLUDE's policy-knowledge communities on social protection

INCLUDE not only provides research results, it also stimulates the uptake of existing and new knowledge by policy stakeholders in Africa. In the case of social protection this occurs through:

- **Utafiti Sera in Kenya:** [This community](#) aims to overcome the challenges that researchers in Kenya face in ensuring that policymakers use their evidence. It started in 2015 and organizes activities such as fora to discuss social protection issues in Kenya. It has also prepared a documentary on cash transfer programmes and published articles, policy briefs and infographics, which are presented to policy stakeholders.
- **Promoting women's entrepreneurship and social protection in Uganda:** [This community](#) aims to ensure that commitments on social protection in Uganda do not remain only on paper. Through activities such as targeted research on institutional constraints and national dissemination activities based on the knowledge developed, this community attempts to increase awareness and promote the adoption of new ideas and practices on social protection, particularly in relation to women's entrepreneurship.

UNICEF's technical support to national programmes on social protection

UNICEF [works on social protection](#) (cash transfers, school fee abolition, health insurance and social support services) in over 100 countries. The aim is to include children who are most vulnerable, by linking social protection with other sectors like education, social welfare, health and nutrition to ensure that the complex needs of children are met. In collaboration with national governments and other partners, UNICEF provides technical support to develop costed national action plans and strategies, including the design of targeting and registration models. A strong focus is on building capacity at national, district and local levels for cash transfer to be delivered at the right time to the right families. As the financial sustainability of social protection is key, UNICEF advocates for fiscal space in national budgets. Research on the impact of social cash transfers is conducted together with 'Transfer Project' and 'From Protection to Production'.

- **Supporting HIV affected households and adolescents in Malawi:** UNICEF provides technical and infrastructure support to Malawi's Ministry of Gender to target vulnerable households and roll out cash transfers; design a referral system for cash transfer beneficiaries; support families through social workers; and set up a common register for families in the National Social Support Programme.
- **Implementing a Cash+Care model in Mozambique:** This programme aims at providing cash transfers to beneficiary households along with services to respond to the multiple needs of children. The focus is on the design of tools that enable communities to identify children with multiple vulnerabilities and deprivations (such as the need for birth registration, social protection, placement in families, and access to health, education and nutritional rehabilitation). The support has enabled 150 community committees to help families that receive the cash transfers. Professionals working at provincial and district levels have stronger capacity (technical, mobility and communication) to monitor and supervise support to vulnerable families.
- **Increasing the uptake of HIV services in Zambia:** The focus is on creating linkages between cash transfers and HIV services for adolescents. The project has been working to increase the capacity of 1,000 community workers delivering cash transfers at pay points to double up by providing sexual and reproductive health messaging. Baseline data for the link between social cash transfer and the uptake of HIV services was collected in 16 participating health facilities and 4 control health facilities.
- **Providing HIV services for young people in Zimbabwe:** UNICEF is creating linkages between child care workers who are part of the ongoing case management system and HIV services volunteers known as Community Adolescent Treatment Supporters (CATS) in the most disadvantaged areas, to provide access to HIV/AIDS information and services at cash pay points. In this way, the child protection and social welfare systems converge at both national and district levels and down to community level.

Authors: **Frank van Kesteren & Jolijn van Haaren**

Weblink: <http://includeplatform.net/downloads/dutch-social-protection-initiatives/>