Utafiti Sera
Research Policy Community on Social Protection in Kenya

1st Forum Report

Members of the Community of Practice
May10, 2016 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya

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We are indebted to all the participants who contributed to the forum agenda. We acknowledge support from the development partners and Government Ministries/Agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), County Governments (Kakamega and Bomet), researchers and the media representatives. We are also grateful to all the speakers and discussants from the national and county government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) who took their time to share their knowledge, experiences and even actively participated in the forum.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIHD	-	African Institute for Health and Development
APSP	-	Africa Platform for SP
ASAL	-	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
CDF	-	Constituency Development Fund
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
CT-OVC	-	Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children
CT-PWSD	-	Cash Transfer for People with Severe Disabilities
GoK	-	Government of Kenya
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
HELB	-	Higher Education Loans Board
ID	-	Identification Card
INCLUDE	-	Inclusive Development
IPRS	-	Integrated Population Registration System
KYEP	-	Kenya Youth Empowerment Programme
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MLEAA	-	Ministry of Labour and East African Affairs
NESC	-	National Economic and Social Council
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NHIF	-	National Health Insurance Fund
NSNP	-	National Safety Net Programme
NSPP	-	National SP Policy
NSSF	-	National Social Security Fund
OVC	-	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
OPCT	-	Older Persons Cash Transfer
PASGR	-	Partnership for Social Governance and Research
PMT	-	Proxy Means Test
PNC	-	Postnatal Care
PS	-	Principal Secretary
PWD	-	Persons with Disabilities
PWSD	-	Persons with Severe Disability
SP	-	Social Protection
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children Fund
WEF	-	Women Enterprise Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Utafiti Sera, established by PASGR and INCLUDE, represents a community of researchers and policy actors that work together to ensure appropriate policy actions and uptake occur either through programmes, legislation, policies or administrative and other actions around an issue for which research has provided evidence, in this case social protection (SP) in Kenya. AIHD is supporting PASGR to implement the activities under Utafiti Sera. This report focuses on the first Utafiti Sera forum on Social Protection that took place on May 10, 2016 at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Nairobi. The aim of the forum was to provide an opportunity for researchers, policy makers and practitioners to discuss pertinent and current issues on SP in Kenya that need policy attention. The issues of focus during the forum were: i) legislation on SP; ii) universalism as a way of reducing targeting errors; iii) exit and graduation mechanisms of cash transfers; iv) mechanisms for financing SP; and v) effective coordination of SP programmes.

Emerging issues from the forum: The forum provided an opportunity for participants to discuss pertinent and current issues that emerged from the mapping exercise report on SP in Kenya. These issues include: i) high fragmentation in SP programmes; ii) lack of a comprehensive approach to SP; iii) poor targeting of beneficiaries; iv) inadequate coordination of SP programmes; v) lack of sufficient evidence on the progress of the implemented SP programmes; vi) lack of effective exit and graduation mechanisms; vii) lack or poor legislation on SP; and viii) inadequate financing compared to the huge demand for social assistance.

Recommendations: Based on the presentations and discussions, several recommendations were generated and clustered under the following areas of work: legislation; programming; exit and graduation mechanisms; sustainable financing; universalism of cash transfers to senior citizens and persons with severe disabilities (PWSD); and research.

Legislation

There is need to put in place legislation and institutional frameworks to enhance delivery and coordination of SP. This could include:

i. Examining the outcomes of sector specific policies in areas such as education, health and agriculture;
ii. Cultivating political will, which is fundamental in gaining and maintaining fiscal space to sustain SP programmes;
iii. Availing data for informed policy decision making;
iv. Conducting policy evaluation to ascertain effectiveness of SP policies; and
v. Formulating universal legislation on all components of SP in Kenya.

Programming

i. Given the increase in cost of living and variability in poverty levels in the country, there is a need to review the budget allocated to the cash transfer programmes, types of cash transfers implemented, coverage of the interventions, and the funds transferred directly to beneficiaries.
ii. For cash transfers to be more effective, there is a need for better coordination with other forms of social assistance programmes including the provision of assistive devices for persons with severe disabilities (PWSDs) or nutritional programmes for infants and pregnant mothers. A multi-faceted cash transfer programme is likely to have broad-based impacts on the lives of beneficiaries compared to stand alone programmes.
iii. A comprehensive, practical participatory framework should be developed to provide communities with a platform for participating in any programme. This should include

mechanisms and structures for public engagement in the design, recruitment and vetting of administrators and beneficiaries, dissemination of fiscal audits and programme evaluations.

iv. Exit and graduation mechanisms should be established to enable beneficiaries: i) wean themselves off social assistance programmes and become financially self-sufficient whenever possible; and ii) graduation into other SP interventions.

Exit and graduation mechanisms

i. Establish post-graduation mechanisms;
ii. Enhance exit and graduation M&E mechanisms;
iii. Link SP programmes to poverty reduction mechanisms;
iv. Conduct research on exit and graduation to provide empirical evidence; and
v. Implement comprehensive cash transfers that encompass productive components, for example, microfinance.

Sustainable financing

This can be achieved through:

i. Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of existing SP expenditures;
ii. Better targeting, consolidation and building systems in SP;
iii. Increasing the amount of domestic resources allocated to SP;
iv. Mobilizing external assistance but using it appropriately to pilot approaches/methods and build effective systems; and
v. Integrating the disparate set of small interventions into one major programme to streamline administrative costs, thus increasing programme coverage with existing resources.

Universalism of Cash transfers to senior citizens and persons with severe disabilities (PWSD)

i. Increase government ownership of programmes;
ii. The Government should explore other avenues of obtaining additional revenue in the country such as debt relief, curbing illicit financial flaws and corruption, responsible borrowing and prudent use of funds; and
iii. Enhance grassroots participation to boost citizen buy-in to ensure access, transparency and accountability of SP interventions.

Research

i. Ensure programming is informed and shaped by research findings based on local results that are gathered on a regular basis or through the monitoring and evaluation systems established as part of the programmes.
ii. Increase research funding and its level of policy influence.
iii. Training partners on how to translate policy into legislation.
iv. Mainstreaming research in SP programmes.

Next steps for Utafiti Sera

i. The following activities will be undertaken in the next 12 months:
ii. Hold follow-up discussions with the Ministry to pursue further engagement on three key areas of interaction:
    a. Legislation – engage in the current efforts to produce a SP Bill;
    b. exit and graduation – explore areas for synergies and linkages that can complement the current social assistance interventions; and

c. research – explore possible areas of research that would inform policy and programming.

iii. Initiate discussions with the County Governments of Bomet and Kakamega to create a platform through which county officials and policy makers at the national level can interact to come up with policies and/or guidelines that can guide the implementation of SP programmes at the county level

iv. Work with the County teams to identify areas that the Utafiti Sera community can develop into research projects.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Social Protection has been implemented in Kenya for many years in various forms that include both non-contributory and contributory schemes in response to emergencies and to cushion workers against future vulnerabilities (National Social Protection Policy, 2011). SP interventions have significantly reduced extreme poverty and helped households escape from generational poverty. Despite these advances, no comprehensive analysis has been undertaken in the SP sector as a whole, with existing studies having confined themselves to examining only safety nets or contributory schemes. Furthermore, there is no comprehensive picture of how safety net programmes and contributory schemes ar performing either individually or as a set of programmes to address the vulnerability of the Kenyan population throughout the lifecycle (GoK, 2012).

In Kenya, SP does not operate in a vacuum but rather it draws from a multiplicity of interventions (GoK, 2014). The legislative component of SP is rooted in policy direction. For example, the NSPP (2011) aims at helping individuals and households to reach a better balance between caregiving and productive work responsibilities. Furthermore, the Government has developed a Sessional Paper on SP (2014) and is implementing several programmes (including cash transfers) that have long-term implications for both the poor and the country as a whole.

The research component of SP provides evidence on the implemented programmes. It is evident that many researchers in Kenya have undertaken studies on SP with the aim of using evidence from their studies to inform and influence SP policy and programme design as well as implementation. However, it is not clear how this evidence has influenced policies and programmes on SP in the country.

Notably, research evidence can influence policy uptake and programme implementation by ensuring:

i. The use of evidence to make decisions on the appropriate SP instruments and level of investment;
ii. Programming is informed and shaped by research findings based on local results that are gathered on regular basis or through the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems established as part of the programmes; and
iii. Forums are held regularly that bring together researchers, implementers and policy makers to deliberate on SP issues at the national and county levels.

Consequently, turning research evidence into policy action is likely to succeed when dedicated and well thought mechanisms involving a community of practice are developed. As part of PASGR's research-policy engagement processes, *Utafiti Sera* has been developed as an intervention that provides opportunities for new ways of thinking and collaborating to address the challenges that hinder the use of research evidence to inform policy action and programming decisions.

1.2 About Utafiti Sera

Utafiti Sera represents a community of researchers, programme and policy actors that work together to ensure that appropriate policy actions and uptake occur either through programmes, legislations, policies or administrative and other actions around an issue for which research has provided evidence in this case, SP in Kenya. As such, *Utafiti Sera* is a

"process", "space", "platform", "forum" and a "vehicle" for transforming research evidence-based knowledge for policy uptake.

As a "process", the project involves sequences of activities that enable the building of a community of interest and practice from where existing and new ideas and evidence flow from members of the community resulting in collective action and interventions to improve SP policies and programmes. As a "place", the project provides a space for key stakeholders with interest, power, capacity and motivation to act in diverse ways to ensure that research evidence becomes available and is used to make informed policy decisions and practices. As a "forum", it provides a non-partisan platform for knowledge engagement. As a "vehicle", it constitutes transmission channels for shared knowledge and experiences to influence policy uptake.

The Utafiti Sera Initiative aims to:

i. Sustain a vibrant research-policy community on SP in Kenya through well planned programme activities;
ii. Generate new research evidence and synthesize existing relevant research evidence on SP and make it available to policy makers and practitioners using policy briefs, newspaper articles, and video documentary, among other forms of communication; and
iii. Engage key policy makers and practitioners through direct contact, policy advocacy and use of issue champions during breakfast meetings, policy debates and workshops.

1.3 Overview of Utafiti Sera Forum

The forum that took place on May 10, 2016 at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Nairobi, was a follow-up of the May 13, 2015 meeting organized by PASGR and INCLUDE. The meeting dubbed "research-policy practitioners' forum" on SP brought together policy makers, practitioners, the media and researchers on SP in Kenya to discuss how research that aims to influence SP programmes and policy could be enhanced.

Purpose of the forum: The aim of the one-day forum was to provide an opportunity for researchers, policy makers and practitioners to discuss pertinent and current issues on SP in Kenya that need policy attention. They include:

i. Legislation on SP;
ii. Universalism as a way of reducing targeting errors;
iii. Exit/graduation mechanisms of cash transfers;
iv. Mechanisms for financing SP; and
v. Effective coordination of SP programmes.

Participants: The forum brought together key policy makers, practitioners and researchers. They included representatives from the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, Ministry of Labour and East African Affairs (MLEAA), County Executive Committee officials, development partners, CSOs, media and institutions involved in SP implementation, policy and research in Kenya.

Format of the forum: Given that this was a one-day initial forum, all discussions were done in plenary. Each of the five topics enumerated above was presented by an expert followed by remarks/comments by a discussant and then plenary discussions. This format allowed all the participants to engage in all the discussions.

1.4 Opening Remarks and Key Note Address

Prof. Tade Aina, the Executive Director of PASGR, welcomed delegates to the forum. In his address, he noted that PASGR and AIHD were keen to support the community of practice as a platform for engagement between researchers and policy makers on SP in Kenya. He indicated that this was the first *Utafiti Sera* to be formulated and there were other efforts to form similar forums for employment in Kenya and to expand to other countries including Nigeria.

Ms. Susan Mochache, the Principal Secretary (PS) in the Ministry of East African Community, Labour and Social Protection, officially opened the forum. In her speech, she congratulated the forum organizers and participants and observed that SP is a constitutional right from the government to its citizens. She recognized that the NSPP (2011) is one of the legal frameworks put in place to guide the implementation of SP in the country although there is a need to have a law passed by Parliament to ensure that the gains made in SP are secured. She observed that the Ministry was in the process of transforming the policy on SP into legislation. She further highlighted the following needs in the sector:

i. Development of more models of SP;
ii. Development of graduation mechanisms and proper monitoring of the available exit mechanisms;
iii. More in-depth research to inform legislation; and
iv. Integration of various SP programmes.

Ms. Susan Mochache, PS, Ministry of East African Community, Labour and Social Protection; Prof. Tade Aina, PASGR & Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo, AIHD

2.0 PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents a summary of the key issues discussed during the forum. It comprises a summary of the detailed presentation made by Dr. Nicholas Awortwi, Research Director, PASGR regarding the concept of Utafiti Sera. This is followed by thematic presentations on: i) legislation on SP in Kenya; ii) SP at the county level; iii) targeting vs. universalism: making cash transfers universal to senior citizens and persons with disabilities in Kenya; iv) exit and graduation approaches to SP in Kenya; v) coordination of SP programmes in Kenya; vi) sustainable financing of SP programmes in Kenya; and vii) research within SP in Kenya.

The Concept of Utafiti Sera

Dr. Awortwi observed that Utafiti Sera provides opportunities for new ways of thinking and collaboration to promote the transmission of research evidence into policy action. The main aim of the research policy community is to build and sustain a vibrant community of researchers, policy makers and practitioners who will advocate for evidence-based policy uptake. PASGR has set up *Utafiti Sera* in countries within which it supports research for policy uptake. The concept of *Utafiti Sera* in Africa has two fronts: i) SP policy uptake in Kenya; and ii) employment creation in Kenya and Nigeria.

He highlighted that *Utafiti Sera* builds on contexts and existing mix of actors and communities. The means of constituting *Utafiti Sera* are multiple which include short or long routes. The shorter route aims at ensuring uptake within a short duration of time while the long route emphasizes on communication, building bridges, advocacy, and identifying and mobilizing collective and individual champions. Further, he noted that there are different timeframes and steps in making *Utafiti Sera* work. It begins with building a community or an imaginary house (a space) where all stakeholders converge for building consensus as shown in figure 1.

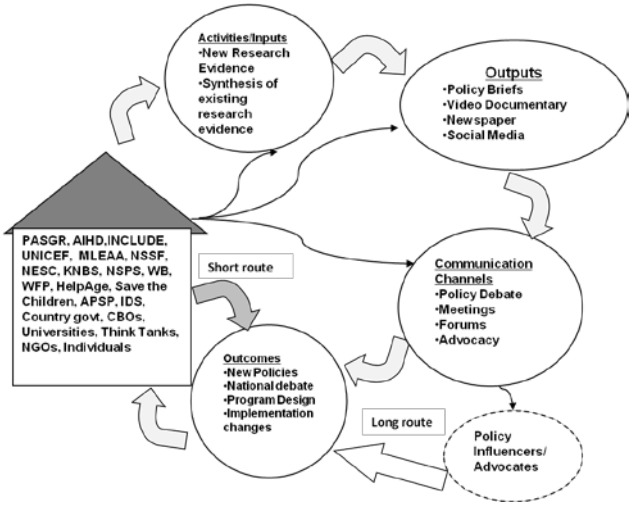

Figure 1: Schematics of Utafiti Sera

Dr. Awortwi further outlined that the overarching outcome of *Utafiti Sera* is uptake of research evidence defined as informing and influencing the design of new national or sub-national policies and laws, setting agenda for national or sub-national debate and changing programme design and implementation on SP.

2.1 Legislation on social protection in Kenya

Ms. Winnie Mwasiaji of the SP Secretariat in her presentation noted that poverty, unemployment and other vulnerabilities remain major challenges to Kenya's development process. Traditional (informal) safety nets have been affected by the breakdown in traditional coping mechanisms. Formal SP interventions continue to be implemented through various policies, strategies and programmes. However, the impact of these interventions has been limited due to fragmentation.

She noted that the main policies guiding the implementation of SP is the NSPP (2011), the Constitution of Kenya (2010) and Kenya's Vision 2030. The SP Policy builds on Kenya's commitment to reduce poverty and vulnerability while the Constitution contains a comprehensive Bill of Rights. Article 43 of the Constitution guarantees all Kenyans their economic, social, and cultural rights. It asserts the right for every person to social security and commits the State to provide appropriate social security to persons who are unable to support themselves and their dependants.

Ms. Mwasiaji further stated that the establishment of the National Safety Net Programme (NSNP) was informed by national and international instruments and experiences. The NSNP recognizes and builds on existing SP programmes which comprise of: school bursaries; fee waivers in public health facilities; cash transfer programmes; and agriculture subsidies among

others. The main aim of NSNP is to design and implement SP systems that ensure effective and efficient use of available resources. As a result of devolution, she emphasized the need for the National Government to work with the County Governments to ensure that regulatory frameworks adequately cover all vulnerable populations.

She opined that for the successful implementation of SP, the National and County Governments should:

i. Put in place sound institutions for implementing SP at all levels and provide essential financing to the programmes;
ii. Ensure availability and accessibility of essential basic services including education, healthcare and birth registration to all citizens to complement SP services;
iii. Ensure the delivery of SP is done at both the county and sub-county levels. Counties should prioritize SP interventions in their development plans based on their needs and funding to complement the National Government; and
iv. The County Governments should ensure the right beneficiaries are targeted and receive the benefits. In addition, they should provide support in M&E processes and lead in advocacy and awareness creation on SP at the county and sub-county levels.

Ms. Kimulu, of National Economic and Social Council (NESC), reiterated that the government has developed policies on SP. However, there is no clear legislation on SP, which makes it difficult to hold stakeholders accountable. She advised that policies that focus on sectors such as health, education and agriculture should be evaluated to ascertain their performance and quality.

In the plenary session, Dr. Tavengwa Nhongo, of the African Platform for SP (APSP) pointed out that for effective legislation of SP programmes, the following key questions should be answered: i) At what point should the stakeholders be involved in policy formulation? ii) How much is being done in terms of public participation? iii) How are policies being enforced? iv) How the various SP policies being recognized and coordinated? v) How can the various policies be linked to sectors such as agriculture and education?

The policy-related gaps in SP as highlighted in the forum include:

i. The implementation of the various policies on SP in Kenya are not well coordinated;
ii. Policies on disaster management are not aligned with SP programmes; and
iii. Current policies have failed to address issues of income and cultural equality.

Key recommendations for effective legislation in SP programmes include:

i. The need to put in place good legislation and institutional frameworks to enhance delivery and coordination of SP;
ii. Existing SP programmes are guided partly by sector specific policies for the welfare of poor and vulnerable members of society. These policies cover the education, health and agricultural sectors. These policies should be evaluated to ascertain their outcomes;
iii. Enhancement of political will: political will is vital to gaining and maintaining fiscal space to sustain the programmes;
iv. Data availability is fundamental for informed policy decision-making, e.g. evidence from the CT-OVC informed the expansion of cash transfers in the last few years;
v. There is need to conduct policy evaluation to ascertain the effectiveness of SP interventions; and
vi. There is a need for broad-based legislation on SP that makes reference to other relevant legislations.

2.2 Social Protection at the County Level: The Case of Bomet and Kakamega County

2.2.1 Bomet County

Mrs. Patricia Lasoi, a County Executive Committee (CEC) member of Bomet County, reported that SP programmes in the County are implemented by both the National and County Governments. They include: i) Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC); ii) Older Persons Cash Transfer (OPCT); iii) Cash Transfer for Persons with Severe Disability (CT-PWSD); and iv) Health cover for older persons. The County OPCT programme started in 2014 targeting older persons 70+ who were neither under the national OPCT programme nor National Social Security Fund (NSSF). The National CT-PWSD on the other hand, supports 500 PWSDs while the CT-OVC supports over 4,000 households.

In her presentation, she indicated that the County had domesticated the National Policy on Older Persons and Ageing, and developed the Bomet County Support for the Needy Act (2014). She informed the participants that the County is making efforts in linking the OPCT programme with National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF). Further, she stated that the County had comparatively reviewed the national cash transfer methodologies and through public participation identified key areas of concern, which include:

i. Inclusion and exclusion errors;
ii. The need to enhance support for many deserving older persons and PWSDs living in abject poverty; and
iii. High dependency ratio within the County.

Key challenges experienced in the implementation of SP programmes in the County include: i) long distances to pay points; ii) delays in payments; and iii) duplication in the case of school bursaries due to uncoordinated social support programmes e.g. CDF and the Presidential Bursary Fund are being implemented in parallel.

Ms. Lasoi outlined various recommendations for effective implementation of SP programmes in the County including:

i. Continuous registration of beneficiaries to enhance the process of budgetary allocations;
ii. Both national and county beneficiaries should be verified through the single registry to avoid double dipping;
iii. Development and implementation of a policy to harmonize SP programmes including cash transfers, bursaries and other social support components at the County level; and
iv. PWSDs should be integrated into other SP interventions.

2.2.2 Kakamega County

Mr. Hassan Maloba, Administrator, Kakamega County recognized SP as an aspect of great importance in the development of a sound society. He observed that the shift from extended to nuclear family has led to the neglect and increasing vulnerability of the elderly and PWSDs.

He reported on the SP programmes implemented in the County: i) shelter improvement for the elderly poor; ii) free maternity and support for poor mothers; and iii) bursaries to needy students. The shelter improvement programme involves building semi-permanent houses for the elderly persons who live in poor conditions with their attendant health hazards. The first phase of the programme targeted 360 elderly people and was scheduled to end in June, 2016.

The free maternity and support programme, supported by United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), encourages women to give birth in public hospitals and access post-natal care (PNC). Following delivery, a background check on the economic status of women is done. Those determined to be in need receive financial support with the aim of reducing deaths of children under five years. The bursary programme supports education of needy students by providing bursaries to secondary and college students. Furthermore, the County Government has partnered with the High Education Loans Board (HELB) to provide loans to needy students. This has been done to avoid duplication.

Mr. Maloba highlighted the following key challenges in the implementation of the programmes:

i. Duplication of interventions;
ii. The beneficiaries, especially the older persons, end up not benefitting from the programme due to deaths. For example, some elderly people pass on before the houses are constructed or before completion; and
iii. Limited coordination between the National and County Governments.

2.3 Targeting vs. Universalism: Making Cash transfers universal to Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities in Kenya

Dr. Tavengwa Nhongo observed that the definition of SP as outlined in the NSPP (2011) recognizes the need to extend SP to the poor and vulnerable in order to improve their lives, livelihoods and welfare. However, it does not incorporate the aspect of universalism. He noted that universalism exists in SP programmes such as free primary education and free maternity services scheme.

In his presentation, he outlined some of the key advantages of universalism particularly in cash transfers targeting older persons and PWSDs. Notably, when focus is shifted to these vulnerable populations, who are limited in number, the amount of funds required would not be significant. For example, it would cost between 0.3% for PWSDs and 0.6% of GDP for older persons in the country. Moreover, there would be savings as a result of reduced administrative costs which are currently incurred by the implementation structures scattered in various ministries and departments.

He observed that targeting, especially in Kenya, can be viewed as a subjective process. He opined that targeting aids corruption and limits programme effectiveness; it is divisive, humiliating and disempowering; and requires a number of layered processes for it to work effectively. Consequently, it is difficult to obtain best practices on targeting as opposed to universalism. Furthermore, he noted that targeting can work in different contexts such as pilot projects to analyze the practicability of interventions, as part of research in programme scale-up and as a crucial first step towards universalism. He indicated that his observations were based on research that has been conducted on cash transfers in Kenya that shows that targeting has immense challenges. These include high poverty rates in the country and the difficulty of using the same targeting tool to select beneficiaries in different communities taking due to their diversity.

Mr. Richard Rori, of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), observed that there is no SP programme in the country that is purely universal. He observed that what pertains is targeting within universalism where only the deserving poor are targeted in SP interventions due to scarce resources. The limited resource base for SP interventions in the country implies that

targeting will continue but it needs to be done in a manner that limits inclusion and exclusion errors.

The forum participants noted that although universalism in SP is a new concept in the country, there are various opportunities for its success including those listed below:

i. There is a supportive constitutive and legal framework that consists of the Constitution, NSPP and the Social Assistance Act;
ii. Political will by the National and some County Governments; and
iii. The basic systems are already in place such as government structures, payment systems, single registry, communication, MIS, etc.

Key recommendations on universalism of cash transfer programmes particularly to older persons and PWSDs as noted in the forum include:

i. Increase government ownership of programmes;
ii. The Government should explore other avenues of obtaining additional revenue in the country such as: debt relief, curbing illicit financial flaws and corruption, responsible borrowing and prudent use of funds; and
iii. Enhance grassroots participation to boost citizen buy-in to ensure access, transparency and accountability of SP interventions.

Some participants at the Forum

2.4 Exit and Graduation Approaches to SP in Kenya

Mr. Henry Narangui, of Save the Children, who was a discussant at the forum, observed that there was limited evidence and experience in the country on exit and graduation mechanisms in SP programmes. He observed that the CT-OVC programme covers OVC up to eighteen years; however, these children still require support to acquire labour skills to access employment and build their livelihoods following exit. He emphasized that challenges around exit and graduation require long-term solutions. Graduation can take place from one SP programme to another and it should be treated as a continuous process.

The forum participants identified key gaps on exit and graduation mechanisms in SP:

i. Limited coverage of SP programmes specifically the CT-OVC which covers vulnerable children up to eighteen years;
ii. Inadequate resources for SP programmes compared to the demand for services; and
iii. The risk of those who have graduated from the programmes falling back into poverty.

The forum noted that despite the various gaps on exit and graduation mechanisms in SP, various mitigation measures can be put in place including:

i. Establishment of a post-graduation mechanism;
ii. Enhancement M&E mechanisms;
iii. Linkages of SP programmes to poverty reduction mechanisms;
iv. More research on exit and graduation mechanisms to provide empirical evidence; and
v. Implementation of comprehensive cash transfers that encompass productive components, for example, microfinance.

2.5 Coordination of SP Programmes in Kenya

Ms Stefanie Bitengo, of the SP Secretariat, recognized that various measures have been put in place to ensure coordinated implementation of SP programmes. The NSNP has established a single registry to harmonize and consolidate the current range of fragmented SP schemes by building synergy across programmes. This has enhanced the ability of the programmes to maintain and access information and scale-up operations in response to crisis. Currently, the single registry works hand in hand with the Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS) and is expanding to link the four main cash transfers to NHIF and Cash for Work beneficiaries under the World Food Programme (WFP). She reported that plans are underway to include information of all actual and potential beneficiaries of other SP programmes such as the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF), UWEZO Fund and Kenya Youth Empowerment programme (KYEP).

Further, she reported that a common M&E framework has been developed for the cash transfer programmes. The main aim of the framework is to ensure harmonized targeting, enrolment and beneficiary recertification methodologies. A harmonized targeting methodology for the cash transfers has been developed to streamline the targeting process. In addition, biometric registration of beneficiaries along with electronic payment systems have been implemented to enhance transparency; efficiency and accountability in cash delivery; support financial inclusion of poor households by encouraging savings; and to ensure harmonized complaints, grievance and feedback mechanisms.

Ms. Marion Ouma, of the University of South Africa, noted that poor coordination of SP programmes has led to fragmentation, duplication, inconsistency in the programmes and wastage of resources. She opined that proper legislation could accelerate harmonization in SP programmes.

Key gaps in coordination of SP programmes as outlined in the presentations include:
i. Programme information sharing is still low and this increases the risk of duplication and wastage of resources;
ii. Some programmes are *ad hoc*, short-lived and with limited reach;
iii. Limited operational capacity in terms of skills and financial resources;
iv. Poor infrastructure and insecurity in some areas hindering effective targeting, payment and monitoring;
v. Inclusion and exclusion errors in targeting owing to the large number of deserving poor. For example, lack of national ID cards excludes potential beneficiaries such as PWDs; and
vi. Irregular and unpredictable cash delivery.

The forum participants appreciated efforts made by the Government in the area of coordination of SP programmes and highlighted several key areas for further consideration:
i. Involvement of stakeholders at all levels which builds greater awareness that is fundamental for effective delivery and sustainability of social assistance programmes;

ii. Recognition, collaboration and support to existing formal and informal SP interventions across the country. This can provide a base for programme graduation, realization of SP objectives and provide a long-term solution to addressing poverty and vulnerability;
iii. Good governance is fundamental in gaining fiscal space that can sustain SP programmes;
iv. There is need to strengthen the capacity and competence of families and communities to protect and care for their vulnerable members; and
v. The decentralization of SP services will enhance effective implementation of the programmes at all levels.

2.6 Sustainable Financing of SP Programmes in Kenya

SP programmes need secure long-term financial support to avoid uncertainty. The APSP calls for ownership of SP programmes by governments to ensure sustainability (APSP, 2012). In line with this, the Kenyan government regards SP as an investment and one of the most important aspects of its national social development agenda (NSPP, 2011) with support from non-state actors. The government's support includes: multi-year budget commitments based on periodic social budgeting and ring-fenced funding to finance cross-sectoral and coordinated programmes.

Mr. Michael Munavu of World Bank noted that developed countries typically spend an average of 1.9% of their GDP on safety net programmes. Similarly, low and middle-income countries devote approximately the same levels of resources, between 1.5% and 1.6 %, of their GDP. The levels of spending in developing countries are not only driven by income levels but by Government preferences, for example, the rise of cash transfers in Kenya, legal provisions, and fragile contexts such as the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs).

He opined that achieving national coverage of SP programmes is fiscally affordable. For example, extending health insurance to the entire population in Rwanda costs the government approximately 1% of GDP. Africa's recent and future economic growth has created some of the fiscal space needed to increase SP coverage. Just as economies have grown in recent years, so has the amount of spending allocated to SP as a share of GDP increased. He noted that the efficiency of spending can be improved by strengthening institutional capacity, coordination, programme administration and evaluation.

Mr. Munavu recognized that donor assistance will continue to be necessary in the medium-term, particularly in low-income economies that remain aid dependent. He pointed out that the scaling up of SP in some low-income countries, such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, had been not only the result of government commitment but also of increased donor funding.

Ms. Beatrice Njoroge of the Ministry of East African Community, Labour and Social Protection, noted sustainable financing can be assured if a mechanism to move the vulnerable population from dependence to independence is put in place. This will ensure the vulnerable become economically active and contribute to the economic growth of the country.

Key gaps on sustainable financing outlined in the forum include:
i. Increased demand for SP with limited coverage;
ii. Large degree of fragmentation hence wastage of resources in administrative expenditures; and
iii. Dependency on external financing that poses high risk of unsustainability.

The forum participants acknowledged the progress made by the Government in the expansion of funding in SP interventions in recent years. The following were key recommendations on financing of SP:

i. Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of existing SP expenditures;
ii. Better targeting, consolidation and building systems in SP;
iii. Increasing the amount of domestic resources allocated to SP;
iv. Mobilizing external assistance but using it appropriately to pilot approaches/methods and build effective systems; and
v. Integrating an often disparate set of small interventions into one major programme to streamline administrative costs, thereby increasing programme coverage with existing resources.

2.7 Research on SP in Kenya

Prof. Winnie Mitulah, of the Institute of Development Studies, University of Nairobi, observed that SP is currently a subject of interest to academicians/researchers, policy makers and practitioners. She mentioned that SP has been recognized as an approach designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks and enhancing their capacity to cushion themselves against shocks.

She highlighted that effective engagement of the research community in SP requires involvement of research students and academicians into policy formulation. Processes of informing policy should involve nurturing partnerships and sharing of knowledge between policy makers, researchers and practitioners. Moreover, she recognized the fact that research can influence policy if researchers understand the multifaceted phases of policy making and view policy as a political process with bargains and compromises. *Utafiti Sera* is a well targeted intervention with the potential of making a difference in evidence-based policy uptake by identifying knowledge gaps in SP, fast-tracking policy inputs and feedback and mainstreaming policy concerns in SP research.

Towards successful engagement of the research community in SP, the following key gaps should be addressed:

i. The predominant Eurocentric *'welfare state'* approach to research;
ii. Lack of SP panel data on vulnerable groups to support M&E and exit and graduation mechanisms;
iii. Inadequate funding for research;
iv. Short-term approach to policy research; and
v. Lack of a multidisciplinary approach to SP research.

Key recommendations on research based policy uptake noted in the forum include:

i. Use of research inputs by policy makers;
ii. Increased research funding and policy influence;
iii. Training stakeholders on how to translate policy into legislation;
iv. Mainstreaming research in SP programmes; and
v. Posting research data on networks such as the internet and social media to enhance accessibility.

Dr. Nicholas Awortwi (PASGR) gives closing remarks at the forum

2.8 Closing Remarks

Dr. Nicholas Awortwi appreciated the participants. He noted that the outcomes of the forum will inform subsequent planned *Utafiti*

Sera activities which include: i) the finalization of a mapping report aimed at packaging existing relevant research evidence on SP to inform and influence policies and programmes on SP in Kenya; ii) a breakfast meeting, which is intended to bring together policy makers and practitioners; and iii) the production of policy briefs and newspaper articles on SP, which will highlight pertinent issues on SP in the country with the aim of encouraging debate between policy makers and stakeholders and educating the general public. He also informed the participants that a documentary will be compiled and that some of them would be asked to participate in the planned activities.

Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo, the meeting facilitator, thanked the participants and closed the meeting.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Conclusions

Social protection has been shown to be one of the most effective mechanisms of poverty reduction. In Kenya, evidence shows that SP interventions have contributed to reducing poverty and vulnerabilities and helped households escape from generational poverty. However, challenges abound in the implementation of SP interventions. The limited resources argument which gives credence to progressive realization and targeting has allowed vulnerable cases deserving coverage (enrolment) to fall through the loops and fall further into poverty. Targeting mechanisms have been fraught with irregularities mainly due to inclusion and exclusion errors. Moreover, accountability and transparency in SP programmes remains weak. Firstly, accountability tends to be upwards towards government and Ministry officials rather than downwards towards citizens. This has meant that the quality and effectiveness of programmes has not been informed by prudent consideration of service delivery. It is for this reason that issues of delayed disbursement, double dipping and corruption continue to be key challenges for the programmes.

The design and implementation of SP programmes gets direction from policy prescriptions that seek to address poverty, sustainable development, cohesion, food security, healthcare benefits among others. Experience shows that effective enactment of SP interventions can be realized not only on establishing policy direction but also operationalizing the policy through legislation that creates institutions and mandates that then ensure the enjoyment of SP rights. In addition, political will is an essential catalyst to the fulfilment of SP benefits.

Evidence shows that availability of data on SP programmes is vital for informed policy decision making for example, evidence from the CT-OVC informed the expansion of CTs in the last few years. It is worth noting that although there is a high degree of policy interest in social protection in Kenya judging from the for cash transfer programmes being implemented in the country, there is ambiguity regarding how much of these programmes have been influenced by research. Although researchers in Kenya have undertaken studies on SP, it is not clear how this evidence has influenced the policies and programmes on SP in the country to-date. *Utafiti Sera*, therefore, comes at the right time with its intention to bridge research, programming and policy formulation and implementation.

3.2 Recommendations

Based on the forum presentations and discussions, several recommendations have been generated clustered under the following areas: legislation; programming exit and graduation mechanisms; sustainable financing; universalism of cash transfers to senior citizens and persons with severe disabilities (PWSD); and research.

Legislation

The main policies guiding the implementation of SP in Kenya is the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP, 2011), the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 and Kenya's Vision 2030. Despite the existence of several sector specific and relevant policy frameworks, there is no overarching legislation on SP. Moreover, the implementation of these policies is not well coordinated and fails to address issues of income and cultural equality. Therefore, there is need to put in place legislation and an institutional framework to enhance delivery and coordination of SP. This could include:

i. Examining the outcomes of sector specific policies in areas such as education, health and agriculture;
ii. Cultivating political will: political will is fundamental in gaining and maintaining fiscal space to sustain the SP programmes;
iii. Availing data for informed policy decision making;
iv. Conducting policy evaluation to ascertain effectiveness of SP policies; and
v. Formulating broad-based legislation on all components of SP in Kenya while acknowledging the existence of other relevant legislation.

Programming

i. Given the increase in cost of living and varied poverty levels in the country, there is a need to review the budget allocated to the cash transfer programmes, types of transfers, coverage of the interventions and ultimately, the level of funds transferred directly to the beneficiaries.
ii. For cash transfers to be more effective, there is a need for better coordination with other forms of social assistance programmes such as provision of assistive devices for PWD or nutritional programmes for infants and pregnant mothers. A multi-faceted cash transfer programme is likely to have broad-based impact on the lives of beneficiaries compared to stand alone programmes.
iii. A comprehensive, practical participatory framework should be developed to provide communities with a platform for participating in the programmes. This should include mechanisms and structures for public engagement in the design, recruitment and vetting of the administrators and beneficiaries, dissemination of fiscal audits and programme evaluations.

Exit and graduation mechanisms

Exit and graduation mechanisms should be established to enable beneficiaries who have the capability to exit social assistance programmes and facilitate graduation into other social protection interventions. Exit/graduation can be ensured through:

i. Establishing post-graduation mechanisms;
ii. Enhancing the M&E mechanisms for exit and graduation;
iii. Linking SP programmes to poverty reduction mechanisms;
iv. Conducting more research on exit and graduation to provide empirical evidence; and
v. Implementing comprehensive cash transfers that encompass productive components, for example, microfinance.

Sustainable financing

Social protection programmes require secure long-term financing to avoid uncertainty. This can be achieved through:

i. Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of existing SP expenditures;
ii. Better targeting, consolidation and building systems in SP;
iii. Increasing the amount of domestic resources allocated to SP;
iv. Mobilizing external assistance but using it appropriately to pilot approaches/methods and build effective systems; and
v. Integrating an often disparate set of small interventions into one major programme and thereby streamline administrative costs and increase programme coverage with existing resources.

Universalism of Cash transfers to senior citizens and persons with severe disabilities (PWSD)

Global evidence indicates that most countries can move from targeted to universal programmes for some segments of the population, particularly the older persons and persons with severe disability. This can be achieved through:

i. Increasing the government's ownership of programmes;
ii. The Government exploring other avenues of obtaining additional revenue in the country such as debt relief, curbing illicit financial flaws and corruption, responsible borrowing and prudent use of funds; and
iii. Enhancing grassroots participation to boost citizen buy-in to ensure access, transparency and accountability of SP interventions.

Research

Researchers have an important role to play in bridging the gap between research, policy and programming. This can be achieved by:

i. The use of evidence to make decisions on the appropriate SP instruments and level of investment;
ii. Ensuring programming is informed and shaped by research findings based on local results that are gathered on a regular basis or through the monitoring and evaluation systems established as part of the programmes;
iii. Ensuring research funding to generate data for comprehensive policy influence;
iv. Training partners in SP on how to translate policy into legislation; and
v. Mainstreaming research in SP programmes.

Way forward

The overarching outcome of the activities of *Utafiti Sera* is uptake of research evidence defined as influencing design of new national/sub-national policies, setting agenda for national or sub-national debates and changing programme design and implementation. The intermediate outcome is to inform public policy actors through programme outputs such as making available new and existing research evidence to policy actors in the form of policy briefs, info-graphics, video and audio documentaries, newspaper articles, forums and breakfast meetings.

Evidence shows that various counties such as Bomet, Kakamega and Turkana are implementing SP interventions. However, it is not clear how these programmes can be improved to ensure there sustainability. *Utafiti Sera* therefore can create a platform through which county officials and policy makers at the national level can interact to come up with policies and/or guidelines that can guide the implementation of SP programmes at the county level. The initiative can

also provide evidence on the interventions at the county levels, the gaps and recommendations highlighted by the members in the counties.

4.0 REFERENCES

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5.0 ANNEXES

Annex 1: Forum Agenda

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PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE RESEARCH

AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT
"Working with communities for better lives through evidence-based programming"

AGENDA

UTAFITI SERA (RESEARCH-POLICY COMMUNITY) FORUM ON SOCIAL PROTECTION IN KENYA

MAY 10, 2016

08:00 – 08:30	**Registration**
08:30 – 08:40	**Opening Remarks:** *Prof. Tade Aina*, Executive Director, PASGR
08:40 – 09:05	**Keynote Address**: *Ms. Susan Mochache*, PS – Ministry of Labour and East African Affairs (MLEAA)
09:05 – 09:25	**Introducing Utafiti Sera (Research Policy Community) Framework and objectives:** Dr. Nicholas Awortwi, Research Director, PASGR
Moderator:	*Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo*, Executive Director, AIHD.

Presentation and Discussions on Social Protection Policy Issues

09:25 – 09:45	**Legislation on Social Protection in Kenya: Issues, Challenges and Prospects:** Presenter: *Ms. Winnie Mwasiaji*, Social Protection Secretariat
09:45 – 09:50	Lead Discussant: *Ms. Elizabeth Kimulu*, Director of Social Services, National Economic and Social Council, the Presidency
09:50 – 10:10	Plenary Session
10:10 – 10:25	**Health Break**
10:25 – 11:00	**Social Protection at the County Level: Sharing experiences** Presenter: Mrs. Patricia Lasoi, County Executive Committee, Bomet County *Mr. Hassan Anzofu Maloba, Administrator*, Kakamega County
11:00 – 11:20	**Targeting vs Universalism: Making Cash Transfers Universal to Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities: Issues, Challenges and Prospects:** Presenter: *Dr. Tavengwa Nhongo*, Executive Director, African Platform for Social Protection
11:20 – 11:25	Lead Discussant: *Mr. Richard Rori*, Head of Public Relations and Communications, National Social Security Fund
11:25 – 11:45	Plenary Session
11:45 – 12:05	**Exit and Graduation Approaches to Social Protection in Kenya: Issues, Challenges and Proposals:** Presenter: *Mr. Peterson Ndwiga, Principal Children Officer, Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children*
12:05 – 12:10	Lead Discussant: *Mr. Henry Narangui, Child Poverty Specialist, Save the Children*
12:10 – 12:30	Plenary Session

12:30 – 12:50	**Coordination of Social Protection Programmes in Kenya: Issues, Challenges and Proposals:** Presenter: *Ms. Stefanie Bitengo, Programme Officer, Social Protection Secretariat*
12:50 – 12:55	Lead Discussant: *Ms. Marion Ouma, University of South Africa*
12:55 – 13:15	Plenary Session
13:15 – 14:15	**Lunch break**
14:15 – 14:35	**Sustainable Financing of Social Protection Programmes in Kenya: Issues, Challenges and Proposals:** Presenter: *Dr. Michael Munavu*, Senior Social Protection Specialist, World Bank
14:35 – 14:40	Lead Discussant: Ms. Beatrice Njoroge, Finance Officer, MLEAA
14:40 – 15:00	Plenary Session
15:00 – 15:30	**Research within Social Protection in Kenya: Issues, Challenges and Proposals**: Presenter: *Prof. Winnie Mitullah*, Director and Associate Research Professor, Institute of Development Studies- University of Nairobi Plenary Session
15:30 – 16:00	**Way Forward and other Utafiti Sera Activities for 2016**
1600 – 16:15	Closing Remarks: *Dr. Mary Nyamongo (AIHD) and Dr. Nicholas Awortwi (PASGR)*
16:15	Tea and Nibble Discussions

Annex 2: Participants List

Utafiti Sera (Research-Policy Community) Forum on Social Protection in Kenya
Held at Crowne Plaza hotel, Nairobi, Kenya
May 10, 2016

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