

# International Conference on **Resilient Social Protection** for an Inclusive Future **2019**

*19-20th September 2019  
Kathmandu, Nepal*



## **Concept Note**

### **Background**

Social protection has emerged as a major new focus in efforts to reduce poverty around the world. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to end poverty in all its forms by expanding social protection for all, with SDG Target 1.3 aiming to ‘implement nationally appropriate social protection systems’ towards that objective.

From over half a billion in 1990, the number of poor in South Asia dropped to 216 million people in 2015. However, it is estimated that 15 per cent of the population still live on less than US\$1.90 a day, and around four in 10 are multidimensionally poor according to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

The impacts of poverty are often felt disproportionately among the most vulnerable groups, including children, women and girls, people from excluded minorities and low-status castes, casual and migrant labourers, senior citizens, and those living with disabilities. Poverty also results in lower labour productivity and economic growth as well as inequality and instability in societies.

In South Asia, as in the rest of the world, there is increasing momentum towards the expansion of social protection schemes in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG Target 1.3 aims to “implement nationally appropriate social protection systems for all, including floors” as a key step for eradicating poverty and enhancing prosperity for all.

Social protection has proven effective in addressing poverty, reducing inequality and promoting economic growth. By providing cash directly to people, social assistance programmes not only protect livelihoods, but evidence finds they also have multiplier effects on local economies, enhancing prosperity and inclusive growth. However, substantial coverage gaps remain in key programmes for vulnerable groups such as child and family benefits, maternity protection, unemployment protection and disability benefits. Countries in South Asia spend less than 0.2 per cent of GDP on social protection for children compared with 1.1 per cent of GDP across the globe.

#### **Social Protection in Nepal**

Nepal is at a crucial juncture in its development trajectory, as it undergoes significant economic, demographic and social changes that will transform the country. Between 2006 and 2014, Nepal halved its multidimensional poverty index, and extreme poverty fell by two thirds. Nevertheless, it is estimated that a quarter of the population still live below the poverty line, and inequalities are a rising concern.

Following the 2015 Constitution, which guarantees the right to social security for the economically and socially vulnerable, Nepal has continued to invest in its social protection system by expanding flagship social assistance programmes, such as its Child Cash Grant towards a universal approach, and is also on its way to introducing new protections through social insurance and labour market schemes.

## International Conference

The **International Conference on Resilient Social Protection for an Inclusive Future** aims to support the Government of Nepal to deliver in its vision to deliver a core package of social protection for all and become a more prosperous nation, with a focus on the next generation and the most vulnerable. Recognising that there are many paths towards universal social protection, and programmes in different countries have followed different paths towards their expansion and consolidation, the Conference aims to bring regional experience and practice to offer a realistic path to support Nepal achieve on this ambition moving forward.

The Conference will focus specifically on social cash transfers including (but not limited to) the following themes:

- Child and family benefits such as child grants
- Linking cash transfers with key services
- Productive inclusion programmes aimed at increasing productivity and labour market participation
- Shock-responsive social protection
- Programmes reaching minority and particularly disadvantaged groups, such as disability grants

The conference is organised by the National Planning Commission and Social Science Baha in collaboration with International Labour Organisation, GIZ, UN ESCAP, The World Bank, UNICEF and UK Aid.

### Participation

Senior officials of key ministries involved in social protection, social services and disaster response in Nepal and other countries in South Asia, as well as researchers and representatives of international organizations and civil society organizations with an interest in national social protection.

### Call for Papers

Papers are invited from interested participants to present at the Conference. Interested participants can submit a 600-word abstract to [kathmandu@unicef.org](mailto:kathmandu@unicef.org) with subject line 'Call for Papers'. The closing date for submission is 20 July 2019. Authors of selected abstracts will be invited to submit the full papers by 30 August.

Papers with research standards and a regional focus will be considered for publication in the *Asia-Pacific Development Journal*. Conference proceedings will be also made available online.

## Programme

Day 1	
08.30 am	Registration
09.00 am	<b>Opening remarks</b> · Dr. Yuba Raj Khatiwada, Finance Minister
09.30 am	<b>Unequal life chances: Measuring poverty and inequality of opportunity in South Asia</b>
10.30 am	<b>High-level Panel on Social Protection in South Asia: Investing in a more inclusive future</b>
11.30 am	Coffee break
11.45 am	<b>Investing in the future: Child and family benefits</b>
1.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	<b>Enhancing the impacts of cash: Building links with key services</b>
3.00 pm	<b>Promoting Social Inclusion: Impacts of social protection on vulnerable groups</b>
4.00 pm	Coffee break
4.15 pm	<b>A social protection agenda to improve productivity and access to jobs</b>
5.30 pm	<b>Social protection showcase</b>
6.30 pm	<b>Reception</b>

Day 2	
09.00 am	<b>Welcome</b>
09.15 am	<b>Developing systems: Policy integration, implementation systems and financing</b>
11.00 am	Coffee Break
11.30 am	<b>Shock-responsive social protection: Building resilience and protection against shocks</b>
1.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	<b>Moving forward: Promoting regional collaboration on social protection</b>
3.00 pm	Coffee break
3.15 pm	<b>Translating lessons into action: An agenda for integrated social protection in Nepal</b>

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