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Investing in rural people

Strategic Discussion Paper on Rural Social Protection

Note to Executive Board representatives

Focal points:

Technical questions:

Guoqi Wu
Associate Vice-President
Corporate Services Department
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2880
e-mail: g.wu@ifad.org

Jyotsna Puri
Director
Environment, Climate, Gender and
Social Inclusion Division
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2109
e-mail: j.puri@ifad.org

Dispatch of documentation:

Deirdre Mc Grenra
Chief
Institutional Governance and
Member Relations
Tel.: +39 06 5459 2374
e-mail: gb@ifad.org

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Strategic Discussion Paper on Rural Social Protection

I. Background

1. Today, social protection in rural areas, or “rural social protection”, is more important than ever, given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, increasingly frequent and severe climatic shocks, conflict, rising food insecurity and the many other risks faced by the rural poor. This paper will explore how IFAD’s work relates to social protection, highlight possible linkages between IFAD’s investments and social protection, and lay out areas for discussion. The paper is timely since the Board will consider IFAD’s new targeting policy at the end of 2022.

II. Rural social protection defined

2. **Definition.** Social protection entails public interventions to address issues that are considered unacceptable by society, such as high levels of vulnerability, risk and deprivation. It includes actions that promote equal rights for vulnerable populations so that they may become full citizens.¹ For IFAD, rural social protection consists of investments that reduce vulnerability, risk and deprivation of rural poor people. Social protection activities can be supported by government and non-government actors.
3. Definitions of social protection vary (see annex I). Investments in rural social *protection* differ from *productive* investments in that the former target the more vulnerable and deprived members of society, who would be poorer and more vulnerable in its absence. The latter aim to make people more productive rather than protect them. The most common types of social protection interventions are:²
 - (i) **Social assistance or social safety nets.** These are interventions that transfer resources to households or individuals (also called non-contributory programmes). Transfers can be conditional or unconditional and include direct support to livelihoods, nutrition and education³ in the form of cash transfers, food and in-kind transfers of assets such as livestock and inputs, vouchers, school meals, labour-intensive public works and humanitarian assistance.
 - (ii) **Social insurance programmes.** These include health insurance, pension programmes and agricultural insurance.
 - (iii) **Labour market (skill-enhancing) interventions.** These include job training, job matching or placement assistance interventions. They also include activities related to unemployment insurance.
4. In developing countries, the last two categories of programmes are usually provided to people in the formal sector, i.e. individuals registered with the state and relatively well off. In contrast, social assistance is directed at poor people in the informal sector.⁴ In 2018, social protection programmes reached approximately 1.5 billion people globally. Social assistance is generally provided by national governments.⁵
5. Social protection programmes aim to reduce risk, vulnerability and current, and future poverty. By reducing poverty, they are expected also to address inequality (although this may not always translate into a reduction in income inequality). Indeed most of the effects of social protection can only be witnessed when poverty is recognized as multidimensional and as including more than income poverty (see table 1). In this sense, the role of rural social protection in enhancing voice and recognizing agency in rural areas is often overlooked. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated that in 2015, 45 per cent of the world’s population

¹ IFAD (2016); Department for International Development (2001).

² Fiszbein et al. (2014); Correa et al. (2021).

³ <http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/ab825d80-c277-4f12-be11-fb4b384cee35/>.

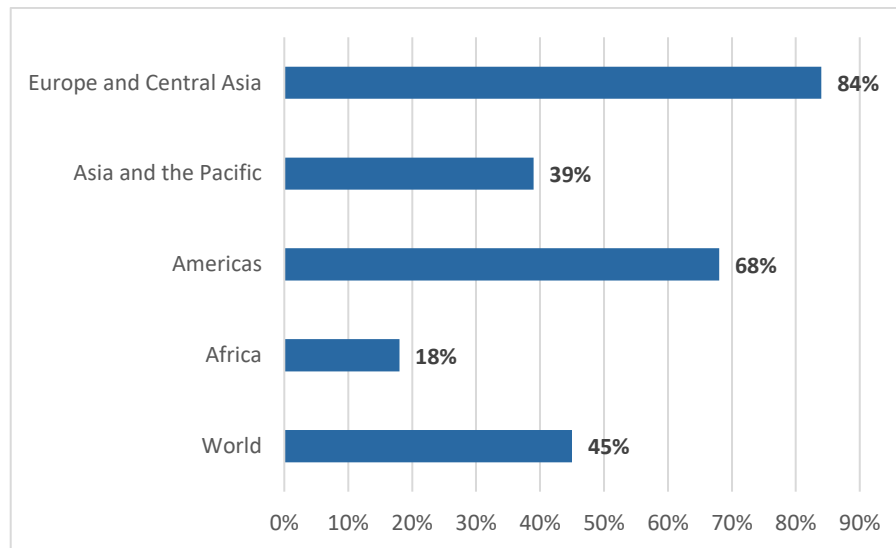
⁴ Fiszbein, et al. (2014).

⁵ Alderman et al. (2018).

were covered by social protection policies (see figure 1 for geographic disaggregation).

Figure 1

Proportion of population with at least one social protection benefit in 2015



Source: ILO, 2017

Note: At the beginning of the century, no country in Africa had a national social policy programme. By 2019, 35 countries had at least one such programme (Devreux, 2020). Despite this, only 18 per cent of the population of Africa benefits from social protection support, excluding health (ILO, 2017).

6. **There is evidence that social protection programmes can lift people out of extreme poverty, and that solely productive investments may not be able to do so.** Social protection programmes support the extreme poor by providing them with cash, credit and the conditions to be employed. These programmes can enable poor people to be productive by reducing liquidity constraints and by making them creditworthy. Additionally, these programmes provide food and in-kind transfers to reduce food insecurity, provide dependable income and increase resilience to shocks. Better nutrition also enables households to work both on-farm and off-farm, which in turn increases the availability of labour. Incorporating rural social protection interventions into agricultural development programmes (that contain productive components such as extension services, value chain investments or input subsidy programmes) has synergistic benefits that would not accrue if protective and productive investments were undertaken separately.⁶
7. Interventions aimed at helping the ultra-poor escape from extreme poverty – known as ultra-poor household livelihood packages⁷ – are particularly noteworthy as they link protective and productive investments. Typical ultra-poor household packages include cash transfers, business training, business mentoring and access to savings as well as asset transfers. They are frequently perceived as providing the poorest populations with the “big push” needed to move out of poverty.⁸
8. **Social protection programmes are not always successful in lifting people out of poverty.** While social protection programmes may help reduce the depth of poverty, they do not necessarily provide an escape from the poverty trap. The effectiveness of these programmes in lifting the poorest people out of poverty is closely related to various attributes, including implementation fidelity on the ground, their scope and scale, the amount of protection offered per household, targeting and distribution of support in the community, consistency and duration of support.

⁶ Correa et al. (2021).

⁷ In the literature these are also called “graduating from ultra-poverty” household approaches.

⁸ Bannerjee et al. (2015); Bannerjee et al. (2018).

9. Table 1 shows how much is known about the effect of protection and productive investments on poverty reduction, from global experiences. It shows specifically that the effects of value chain investments on poverty are unclear. Few studies explicitly address the impact on voice, agency and human dignity (but the positive impact of labour-related interventions on youth employment may in turn affect dignity). The role of social protection programmes as well as ultra-poor livelihood packages in nutrition and food security is however well established. Investments in public goods such as natural resource management and awareness campaigns are also effective in increasing social cohesion and improving nutrition.

Table 1

Impacts of protection and productive investments on poverty: Selected evidence systematic reviews⁹

| <i>IFAD activity</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Evidence of effectiveness</i> |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Social protection | | |
| Social assistance | Vouchers | + Nutrition and food security |
| | Conditional cash transfers, unconditional cash transfers | + Poverty reduction + Nutrition and food security + Gender equity/empowerment ? Environmental and climate resilience ? Social cohesion |
| Social insurance | In-kind transfers | + Nutrition and food security |
| | Health and agricultural insurance | + Poverty reduction ? Nutrition and food security ? Environmental and climate resilience +/? Social inclusion |
| Labour policies | Job training, job matching and job planning | ? Poverty reduction + Youth employment + Gender equity/empowerment ? Social inclusion ? Voice/empowerment/agency |
| | Unemployment insurance | + Poverty reduction + Nutrition and food security |
| Ultra-poor graduation / livelihood packages | Package of interventions | + Poverty reduction + Nutrition and food security + Gender equity/empowerment ? Youth employment ? Social inclusion |
| 2. Productive | | |
| Financial inclusion | | +/? Poverty reduction ? Nutrition and food security + Gender equity/empowerment ? Youth employment ? Social inclusion ? Voice/empowerment/agency |
| Value chain investments | | ? Poverty reduction ? Social inclusion ? Voice/empowerment/agency ? Social cohesion |
| Public goods investments | Natural resource management Public education programmes and campaigns | + Poverty reduction + Nutrition and food security + Social cohesion + Voice/empowerment/agency |

Note: Impacts in outcome areas; '+' = positive, '0' = no impact, '-' = negative, '?' = unclear

10. **National social protection programmes are usually supported through grants or domestic revenue (taxes).**¹⁰ A recent ILO study shows very large financing gaps for social protection programmes, particularly in developing

⁹ Sources available on request.

¹⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018).

countries. It is estimated that low-income countries will require the equivalent of 45 per cent of their tax revenues pre-COVID to fill their social protection financing gaps. Official development assistance will be required to supplement domestic spending on social protection, particularly in these countries. In the past, international organizations have provided such assistance through budget support, programme support or structural adjustment finance. Borrowing is not viewed by many countries as a sustainable strategy because of the financial and political risks involved. With the hardening of lending terms, countries are even more reluctant to borrow for soft activities such as social protection. Traditionally, donors and multilateral agencies have provided support for social protection through analytical work; enabling and advising governments on developing social protection strategies and policies; providing budget support; and building national capacity for targeting and delivering social protection. Most international financial support is provided through conditional modalities or as grants, which can pose challenges for articulating exit strategies and affect sustainability. IFAD's current focus on concessional lending is not the best-suited route for supporting activities related to rural social protection in-country.

III. How is rural social protection related to IFAD's work?

11. IFAD's Strategic Framework 2016-2025 closely reflects the principles of rural social protection: its development objective is to invest in rural people to enable them to overcome poverty and achieve food security through remunerative, sustainable and resilient livelihoods. IFAD's **three strategic objectives relate directly or indirectly to social protection**. The first objective is to increase the productive capacities of the rural poor. As discussed above, there is increasing evidence that social protection interventions have an impact on productive capacity. The second strategic objective is to increase poor people's benefits from market participation. Similarly, evidence indicates that people who benefit from social protection (in addition to productive investments) are better able to take advantage of market opportunities. IFAD's third objective is to strengthen the environmental sustainability and climate resilience of the rural poor's economic activities. Projects that invest in non-private goods such as environmental diversity, forests and natural resources in rural areas, afford rural populations safety nets and insurance that are not currently priced but are nonetheless critical.¹¹ Furthermore, social protection in the form of predictable cash or in-kind transfers, employment and insurance enhances the ability of rural populations to protect the environment and adopt climate- and environmentally friendly activities, investments and behaviour.
12. IFAD's investments are predominantly productive investments. Few investments could be formally called social protection interventions:¹² IFAD's investments primarily focus on creating/sustaining rural markets and value chains, and strengthening rural household productivity and production capacity. Of the 105 investments approved during the Eleventh Replenishment of IFAD's Investments (IFAD11), more than half (55 per cent) had a component directly related to social protection. Table 2 shows the proportion of IFAD's investments at design categorized as protective and productive. In monetary terms, almost one third of IFAD11 investments can be categorized as social protection (which is a sum of social assistance, social insurance and job skills related investments).
13. **IFAD's productive investments are linked with rural social protection in three ways.** First, they assume that entrepreneurial and economic activity will include otherwise marginalized and vulnerable populations, and that there will be spillovers into local economic contexts through multiplier effects. Second, IFAD investments assume that engaging in work through entrepreneurship will offer dignity, self-respect and independence. Third, IFAD investments aim to build

¹¹ The Dasgupta Review (2021).

¹² See for example IFAD's investments in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

household and community liquidity and resilience and offer protection through stronger social networks.¹³

Table 2

IFAD11 investments (2019-2021) and their linkages with rural social protection

(Millions of United States dollars)

| <i>Social protection components</i> | <i>IFAD</i> | <i>Cofinancing</i> | <i>Total approved</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Social assistance | 209.1 | 828.9 | 1 038.1 |
| Social insurance | 249.3 | 288.2 | 537.5 |
| Labour market interventions | 300.2 | 866.7 | 1 166.9 |
| Productive / other investments | 1 602.3 | 2 364.9 | 3 967.3 |
| Grand total | 2 361.0 | 4 348.8 | 6 709.8 |

Notes: Amounts are costs tagged at design and include cofinancing. Numbers do not reflect Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) financing. Social protection components are categorized according to the description in paragraph 3. Data available on request.

14. **In terms of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), social protection is most closely linked to SDG 1.3**, although clearly there are indirect linkages with other SDGs. SDG 1.3 states that countries should "implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable".¹⁴ IFAD investments illustrate the linkages with other SDG outcomes. For example in Rwanda, they aim to reduce poverty, vulnerability and inequality; in South Sudan, they support social cohesion and rebuilding efforts after conflict and disasters; and in Moldova they aim to promote gender equality and empowerment (see table 3).

¹³ Correa et al. (2021) and Gilligan et al. (2009). Gilligan et al. (2009) examine complementarities between safety net programmes and those that enhance agricultural productivity. Beneficiaries of productive safety net programmes and other food security programmes borrow for productive purposes, use improved agricultural technologies and operate non-farm businesses. However, they find that social safety net programmes do not increase assets or wage labour supply.

¹⁴ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-01-03-01a.pdf>.

Table 3
Linkages between SDGs and social protection and examples from the IFAD11 portfolio

| <i>SDG</i> | <i>Related macro areas of IFAD's portfolio</i> | <i>Component</i> | <i>Example of projects</i> | <i>Social protection component</i> |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere | 1. Production sector 2. Policy and institutions 3. Social services 4. Inclusive rural finance 5. Environment and natural resources | Climate-smart intensification of small production systems | Partnership for Resilient and Inclusive Small Livestock Markets Programme (Rwanda) | Social assistance: Mobilization and graduation from ultra-poverty of vulnerable households |
| 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages | 1. Social services 2. Inclusive rural finance 3. Environment and natural resources | Promotion of well-performing resilient production systems in value chains | Commercialization, Agricultural Productivity and Nutrition Project (Sao Tome and Principe) | Social assistance: Nutrition education and social inclusion |
| 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls | 1. Production sector 2. Policy and institutions 3. Social services 4. Inclusive rural finance 5. Access to markets | Inclusive entrepreneurship finance | Talent Retention for Rural Transformation Project (Moldova) | Social insurance: Affordable credit for youth and women |
| 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all | 1. Access to markets 2. Environment and natural resources | Value chain and enterprise development | Rural Economic Growth and Employment Project (Jordan) | Labour market intervention: Value chain and enterprise development |
| 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries | 1. Access to market 2. Policy and institutions | Economic integration | Joint Programme for the Sahel in Response to the Challenges of COVID-19, Conflict and Climate Change (Niger) | Productive: Securitization of transactions at borders |
| 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts | 1. Environment and natural resources | Protection from climate change | Char Development and Settlement Project IV (Bangladesh) | Social protection |

IV. Rural social protection and support during crises

15. In the context of climate, health and other shocks, the need for social protection is even more critical. Annex II describes how IFAD's key mainstreaming activities address social protection issues, for example through nutrition awareness-raising initiatives, and support for gender-, youth- and climate-related themes. IFAD's efforts to provide rapid support in the context of increasing fragility are summarized below.

A. Crises and fragile contexts

16. In fragile and conflict-affected areas, social protection support plays the additional role of promoting political stability and increasing social cohesion. Of the 68 countries in which IFAD invested between 2019-2021, 22 have fragile situations or are affected by conflict, according to the World Bank's definition. Governments and agencies are increasingly using social protection tools to address urgent and acute needs while building long-term resilience through human capital investments and poverty reduction. In the humanitarian sphere, these tools are used for reducing the impact of shocks, fostering recovery and rebuilding. Put another way, social protection programmes are used to respond to immediate needs, and also to address the medium-term effects of crises and provide long-term investment. For example, cash transfers currently constitute approximately 18 per cent (or US\$5.6 billion) of global humanitarian assistance, having doubled since 2016. These transfers are used to defend against or reduce the impact of crises on

households (including on children).¹⁵ Most IFAD investments in fragile and conflict-affected areas are a mix of social protection and productive investments.

17. **The distinction between social protection and humanitarian assistance is rapidly disappearing.** In the past, the term social protection was used in non-crisis situations while humanitarian assistance referred to short-term, one-off responses to save lives and respond to the needs of crisis-affected populations.¹⁶ Humanitarian assistance was provided using external financing and was disconnected from national social protection systems.¹⁷ However, social protection should not be viewed as separate from humanitarian aid for several reasons.¹⁸ First, most humanitarian agencies provide relief in areas that have been experiencing protracted crises, therefore that assistance is now targeting the acute rather than urgent needs of long-term recipients (for eight years or more.) Second, social protection systems work faster than humanitarian responses and therefore are preferred by governments. In Kenya, for example, the Hunger Safety Net Programme is able to deliver emergency assistance within 10 days of an emergency being declared, compared to the nine months needed for a United Nations response.¹⁹

B. COVID-19 and the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility

18. As a result of the pandemic, approximately 150 million people will fall or have fallen into extreme poverty – a 24 per cent increase on the 700 million people living in extreme poverty before the COVID-19 crisis. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have been the hardest hit.²⁰ The pandemic's most severe impact has been on food security (food availability and access, and the use and dependability of food systems), mainly as a result of income reduction. Social safety net policies are particularly well suited for dealing with reduced incomes. By June 2020, 195 countries had either planned or already introduced additional social protection policies as a response, most of them favouring cash transfer programmes.²¹ Although the pandemic has led to an increase in social protection coverage, in many countries (and especially in Africa), these programmes are short-term and small.
19. The COVID-19 crisis will negatively affect progress made in rural poverty reduction (SDG 1) and increased food security (SDG 2). Rural people living in fragile contexts are the most exposed to the risks associated with the crisis, in terms of both the spread of the virus and its economic and social consequences.^{22,23} There is evidence of businesses "pivoting" as a result of COVID-19: downstream agribusinesses and operations are moving towards different innovations in food supply chain operations, becoming more vertically integrated and increasingly adopting online and digital modalities.
20. IFAD has responded to the immediate impact of COVID-19 by launching the multi-donor RPSF.²⁴ The RPSF aims to improve the resilience of rural livelihoods by ensuring timely access to inputs, information, markets and liquidity. It also promotes social protection measures. The ultimate goal of the RPSF is to accelerate the recovery of poor and vulnerable rural women and men – IFAD's target group –

¹⁵ Ulrichs and Sabates-Wheeler (2018); Aurino and Giunti (2021).

¹⁶ Buttenheim (2009) distinguishes between rescue, recovery and rehabilitation in humanitarian contexts. In this paper, it is argued that these divisions from a social protection perspective disappear. Humanitarian and development agencies alike are recognizing that defining stages of crises and defining contexts as emergency, humanitarian or other is in practice used interchangeably. Conflicts, famines, disasters or displaced populations are used to define different policy responses but the words themselves are used interchangeably.

¹⁷ Pega et al. (2014); Justino (2016).

¹⁸ Aurino and Giunitti (2021).

¹⁹ Ulrich and Sabates-Wheeler (2018).

²⁰ Laborde et al. (2020).

²¹ Gentilini et al. (2020).

²² Reardon et al. (2021).

²³ <https://ebrary.ifpri.org/digital/collection/p15738coll2/id/133836>.

²⁴ IFAD initiated the RPSF with US\$40 million of seed funding from grant resources. It has since mobilized a further US\$53 million from Member States to scale up support. The RPSF is a short-term strategy (all funds will be disbursed by June 2022 as an immediate COVID-19 response) that feeds into IFAD's longer-term development objectives.

from the COVID-19 crisis. This will be achieved by building capacity, assets and overall resilience to cope with shocks through lessons learned from the ongoing implementation of RPSF and its innovations, and through strengthened capacity to deliver digital support.

V. Rural social protection and targeting

21. IFAD recognizes value chain approaches as effective instruments to generate sustainable rural growth. Almost 70 per cent of its investments are directed at building and sustaining value chains in rural areas. Value chains generate direct and indirect benefits for different sections of the rural population, including the poorest. The rural poor participate in productive value chains in various ways: as primary producers, wage workers, microentrepreneurs, service providers, processors and consumers. However, as discussed above, pathways from value chain participation to social protection outcomes are not automatic, as many rural people do not benefit from the development of new agricultural markets. Farmers with few assets, people living in more remote and isolated communities, indigenous and tribal peoples, women farmers, young and landless men and women, and persons with disabilities may be considered too costly to reach in value chain projects, or may be simply overlooked. The higher cost of integrating these groups into value chains has to be factored into efficiency calculations. IFAD's planned policy for persons with disabilities,²⁵ and its current gender policy and youth action plans are all efforts to ensure that no one is left behind by its operations. Evidence shows that although disability and poverty are associated, the linkage is not causal and persons with disabilities can significantly contribute to overall economic well-being.
22. **In the context of several rural transformations (climate, green, digital, gender), activities to promote growth and raise incomes through increased productivity must be accompanied by social protection measures because these are able to mitigate potential negative impacts and can ensure equal benefits for rural households.** Frequently, productive activities do not benefit poor people because they are unable to provide the required contribution or lack the assets to operate at a commercial level. Even when projects are effective in supporting the rural poor, targeting the poorest and most socially marginalized among them or reaching young people can be challenging. Indeed, several IFAD projects use poverty scorecards to target the poorest and most vulnerable (e.g. in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Mexico, Pakistan, Tunisia and Uganda).
23. However, overreliance on targeting mechanisms such as scorecards, self-identification or community-based mechanisms can lead to mismatches: the poorest and the most vulnerable are unlikely to be able to benefit from financial inclusion interventions or unsubsidized insurance schemes. In this respect, there is an opportunity for IFAD to clarify its policy and operational guidelines on whom and how to target in the context of different income and social groups, while specifically catering to the needs of vulnerable rural groups. This will require a multipronged strategy that acknowledges the heterogeneity of the rural poor and the existence of different pathways out of poverty and also the fact that some IFAD interventions will not be able to directly target the poorest of the poor.

VI. Conclusions

24. Few people in low- and middle-income countries have access to adequate social protection. The difficulty of improving the livelihoods of the large numbers of marginalized and vulnerable rural people through productive investments alone is now widely acknowledged. In particular, people living in conflict-affected or fragile areas, or in remote locations with scant resources and poor infrastructure, require support to meet basic needs, as do other excluded and disadvantaged minorities, ethnic groups, indigenous peoples and those living with disabilities. These people

²⁵ Planned for 2022.

are part of IFAD's target group, and they require special attention in the development of policies, programmes and financial instruments.

25. The literature shows that there is a thin line between protective and productive investments. Although most of IFAD's investments focus on the productivity dimension, they are underpinned by the assumption that benefits will trickle down and/or spillover. IFAD could gather evidence on the extent to which specific measures are necessary to protect the poorest rural people from deprivation and reduce their vulnerability.
26. In rural areas, where levels of public investments are typically low, productivity-enhancing interventions are not sufficient to lift IFAD's target groups out of poverty or reduce inequality. However, social protection measures require grant funding and financing modalities that may not be sustainable for institutions such as IFAD. Programming and targeting strategies should carefully consider the importance of these groups, and the use of financing modalities that do not always guarantee an exit strategy or sustainability. Guidance is also needed on trade-offs and implications for indicators such as value for money that are often key in making investment decisions.
27. There is scope for further discussion of packages that help ultra-poor households to graduate from extreme poverty. Such packages are expensive primarily because they need to be multifaceted, i.e. they involve asset/cash transfers, skills training, financial literacy support, banking support, support for enterprise development and job placement services. One option would be for IFAD to increase its focus on social protection and spend greater effort in its theories of change to differentiate among its target groups. This is especially important in conflict-affected and fragile areas where IFAD investments are increasingly likely to be located in the coming years.

VII. Questions for the Board

28. The Board may wish to consider the following questions:
 - (i) Given the importance of social protection and that predominantly national resources/grants are used in developing countries to support social protection, to what extent should IFAD be more explicit about supporting social protection?
 - (ii) Since most social protection interventions are supported either through domestic means or through grants, is this an area that IFAD should explore more with national governments? While IFAD continues to focus on productive investments where concessional lending modalities are used, is it possible to increase the grant component and/or use other instruments within them?
 - (iii) Since IFAD is expanding its work in fragile and conflict-affected areas, to what extent should it focus on social protection in these contexts?
 - (iv) Which aspects of rural social protection fall within IFAD's mandate and comparative advantage? What additional considerations/last-mile interventions should be employed in IFAD's programmes, other than targeting and minimum percentage goals for marginalized/vulnerable groups?

Definitions of social protection

| Source | |
|---|--|
| Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) (formerly the Department for International Development) | <p>Definition: "A sub-set of public actions that help address risk, vulnerability and chronic poverty. These comprise three sets of instruments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social insurance refers to the pooling of contributions by individuals in state or private organisations so that, if they suffer a shock or change in circumstances, they receive financial support; • Social assistance comprises non-contributory transfers that are given to those deemed vulnerable by society on the basis of their vulnerability or poverty; and, • The setting and enforcing of minimum standards to protect citizens within the workplace." |
| | <p>Key areas and areas of work</p> <p>Interventions support the "third way" – where social protection is considered both a basic right and a social investment. FCDO focuses on public actions (social insurance, social assistance and the setting and enforcing of minimum standards to protect citizens in the workplace) to help address risk, vulnerability and chronic poverty.</p> |
| ILO | <p>Definition: "Social protection, or social security, is a human right and is defined as the set of policies and programmes designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle. Social protection includes benefits for children and families, maternity, unemployment, employment injury, sickness, old age, disability, survivors, as well as health protection. Social protection systems address all these policy areas by a mix of contributory schemes (social insurance) and non-contributory tax-financed benefits, including social assistance."</p> |
| | <p>Key areas and areas of work</p> <p>Through a three-step approach, ILO supports countries in the adoption of a national social protection strategy, delivers in-country specialized technical advisory services on the design of individual social protection schemes, in line with ILO standards, and strengthens administrative national capacities through hands-on training. The approach also promotes the involvement of social partners in the design, implementation and monitoring of social protection systems.</p> |
| Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) | <p>Definition: "Social protection comprises a set of policies and programmes that addresses economic, environmental and social vulnerabilities to food insecurity and poverty by protecting and promoting livelihoods."</p> |
| | <p>Key areas and areas of work</p> <p>FAO supports national governments in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanding their social protection programmes coverage to all poor rural households, in all agricultural subsectors, including fishery and forest-dependent communities; 2. Strengthening the linkages and improving the coordination between the social protection, agriculture and natural resource management sectors; 3. Designing and implementing social protection measures aimed at improving nutrition; 4. Designing and implementing social protection measures that enhance families' capacity to prevent, manage, cope and withstand crises and natural disasters. <p>Other two key areas of work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social protection and decent rural employment; 2. Social protection and gender-sensitive programmes. <p>FAO has also provided similar support in emergency and disaster risk reduction.</p> |
| World Bank | <p>Definition: "Social protection and labor systems, policies, and programs help individuals and societies manage risk and volatility and protect them from poverty and destitution – through instruments that improve resilience, equity, and opportunity."</p> |
| | <p>Key areas and areas of work</p> <p>The World Bank Group supports universal access to social protection, which is central to its goals of ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Universal social protection coverage includes: providing social assistance through cash transfers to those who need them, especially children; benefits and support for people of working age in case of maternity, disability, work injury or for those without jobs; and pension coverage for the elderly. Assistance is provided through social insurance, tax-funded social benefits, social assistance services, public works programmes and other schemes guaranteeing basic income security. Its social protection and jobs portfolio totalled US\$18.63 billion as of September 2019, with US\$11.68 billion in lending to International Development Association countries, targeting the world's poorest. These resources support safety net programmes, including cash transfers, public works and school feeding programmes.</p> |

Key mainstreaming IFAD interventions and their relationship to rural social protection

| Mainstreaming theme | Key IFAD interventions | Outcomes | Social protection / productive / both |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Nutrition | Targeted risk-based (including climate-related) insurance for crops | Food security safeguarded | Protection |
| | Skill development | Improved production | Productive and protection |
| | Productive asset transfer | Improved production and value chains | Productive and protection |
| | Cash for work | Improved income | Productive and protection |
| | Food for work | Improved food security and nutrition | Productive and protection |
| | School gardens linked to school meals | Improved nutrition and local value chains | Protection |
| | Time-saving and energy-saving technologies | Improved production and decreased labour and expenditure | Policy and productive |
| | Support access to potable water | Improved sanitation and health | Protection |
| | Nutrition education, behaviour change and communication activities | Positive changes in social behaviours and nutrition awareness | Protection |
| Climate and resilience | Climate or seasonal information | Long-range adaptations or near-term responses supported | Productive |
| | ICT service providing advice on the best planting dates | Yields stabilized | Productive |
| | Nature-based solutions | Enhanced agrobiodiversity | Policy and productive |
| | Climate-proofed infrastructure | Increased resilience to climate-related hazards/shocks and reduction of losses | Productive |
| | Access to credit and participation in group savings and credit schemes, such as crop insurance | Security of finance and assets and resilience to shocks | Productive and safety |
| | Crop diversification | Heat/drought-tolerant crops to improve income during the lean season | Productive |
| | New techniques to adapt irrigation schemes | Resilience to water shortages and floods | Productive |
| | Engaging women in economic activities (e.g. cash for work and cash for assets activities) | Women's empowerment, and increased livelihoods, income, assets, resilience and agency | (Voice / agency) protection |
| | Communities' and local governments' participatory approaches to take decision on the location and nature of climate-resilient infrastructures to raise awareness on climate change | Community empowerment, climate awareness and resilience | (Policy, voice / agency) protective and productive |
| Youth | Inclusion of rural youth in policy dialogue and programme design | Social inclusion, empowerment and social cohesion | (Voice / agency) protective |
| | Investments in complementary infrastructure | Social inclusion, empowerment, improved economic opportunities | Productive |
| | Provide inputs, input subsidies, training and skills | Increased yields, income, food security and resilience | Productive |
| | Subsidies and incentives for high-value agriculture and value addition | Increased and diversified incomes and market opportunities | Productive |

| <i>Mainstreaming theme</i> | <i>Key IFAD interventions</i> | <i>Outcomes</i> | <i>Social protection / productive / both</i> |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Incentives for rural businesses | Improved value chain opportunities, market stability and income security | Policy |
| | Policies and incentives for competition and private sector investments | Increased rural investment for resilience, income and livelihoods | Policy and productive |
| | Distribute market opportunities | Secondary towns development promoted | Policy |
| | Promote farm mechanization | Lower labour requirements and increased efficiency | Productive |
| | Training programmes and capacity-building | Skills development, rural youth matched to jobs | Productive |
| | Support capacity and awareness for land tenure security | Facilitated access to land | Productive |
| | Financial security, business growth opportunities and resilience | Improved access to affordable finance | Productive |
| | Transfers of productive assets, promote entrepreneurship, incentives and interventions for income, livelihood and security | Development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises promoted | Productive |
| | Support social protection and safety net programmes, and access to social services | Safeguards against poverty and food insecurity. Increased resilience and food security | Protection |