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**Social Protection  
and Climate Change**

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### Abstract

Climate change has already resulted in climate-related extreme events of greater frequency and/or intensity. This, along with long-term changes in average conditions (whether in temperature or rainfall), is likely to continue to have a major impact on livelihoods. Developing countries will be especially affected by such events – and more specifically, the poor people in developing countries – because of their geographical exposure and their greater reliance on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture. Social protection offers a wide range of instruments (e.g. cash transfers, insurance products, pension schemes and employment guarantee schemes) that can be used to support households that are particularly vulnerable to both the ongoing and acute impacts of climate changes. Although the evidence base showing how these measures can help those affected prevent and cope with climate challenges is still limited, this paper aims to provide a condensed review of the current knowledge and evidence about the role of social protection in reducing the impact of climate change on the poorest populations and provides a series of recommendations for both social protection and climate change practitioners and for strengthening the evidence base.

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## Table of Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. What are the latest developments since the latest OECD DAC review? .....	3
3. Socio-economic consequences of climate change .....	6
4. International policy initiatives and finance opportunities.....	8
5. Social protection tools and their links to climate change .....	9
5.1. Social cash transfers .....	11
5.2. Pension schemes .....	12
5.3. Micro-insurance/weather index .....	13
5.4. Public works.....	15
5.5. Asset transfers.....	17
6. Integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.....	18
6.1. Social protection, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction.....	18
6.2. Social dimensions of climate change .....	18
6.3. Adaptive Social Protection (ASP).....	19
6.4. The African Climate Change Resilience Alliance.....	19
6.5. Social protection tools for livelihood diversification.....	20
6.6. The emergence of “resilience” as an integrating discourse for SP, CCA and DRR .....	21
6.7. Potential negative impact of social protection on climate change adaptation .....	21
6.8. Next steps for an integrative agenda .....	21
7. Key points and recommendations.....	22
Bibliography .....	23
Appendix 1. Table A. International initiatives that explore social protection and social protection links .....	28

### Boxes

Box 1. Definitions of social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.....	4
Box 2. Making social protection “climate smart”- the experience of Tanzania .....	4
Box 3. The Mongolian Index-based Livestock Insurance (IBLI) .....	15

### Tables

Table 1. Outline of impact of changes in climate trends (blue) and extreme events (yellow) at primary and secondary levels.....	7
Table 2. Regional distribution of the number of prominent NSAGs, 2001-2008.....	10
Table 3. ASP Messages from policy makers and practitioners.....	20

## 1. Introduction

Climate change has already resulted in climate-related extreme events of greater frequency and/or intensity. This, along with changes in average conditions (whether in temperature or rainfall), is likely to continue to have a major impact on livelihoods strongly dependent on climatic conditions, with further direct and indirect consequences for the lives of hundreds of millions of people. Developing countries will be especially affected by such events, because of their geographical exposure and their greater reliance on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture. Poor people in these countries will be the most seriously affected, due to their higher exposure and their limited adaptive capacities.

The potential role of social protection as a response to these multiple risks is gaining increasing recognition. Social protection offers a wide range of instruments (e.g. cash transfers, insurance products, pension schemes and employment guarantee schemes) that can be used to support households that are exposed to climate changes. But the evidence base showing how these measures can help those affected prevent and cope with climate challenges is still limited. Little attention has been paid to designing such instruments to enable “graduation” out of poverty, ultimately removing the need for support, and it is not yet clear whether they can be transformative in the context of climate change, a moving target for which static interventions are not always the ideal response.

This paper aims to provide a condensed review of the current knowledge and evidence about the role of social protection in reducing the impact of climate change on the poorest populations, as a basis for a series of recommendations.

## 2. What are the latest developments since the latest OECD DAC review?

The Davies report (Davies et al., 2009) set the scene for debates on the issue. That report mapped out how social protection can help people adapt to climate change, and how social protection policies and programmes need to consider climate change to effectively address the multiple risks and vulnerabilities faced by the poor and excluded. The report identified important requirements for implementing what it called “Adaptive Social Protection” (ASP).<sup>1</sup> These included a request for further evidence to help measure the impact of the ASP approach, and a number of recommendations for developing policies and programmes. What progress has been made on these recommendations since the 2009 report? What gaps remain?

At the time of the 2009 report, efforts to bring together the disciplines of social protection (SP), climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) (see Box 1 for definitions) were in their inception. A small but growing number of practitioners and organisations were interested in Adaptive Social Protection. The situation today is different. More ASP-style programmes are being put in place, and others being planned, and new thinking and evidence is emerging. Increasing numbers of people are engaging in the issues or are interested and willing to learn more.

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<sup>1</sup> ASP aims to reduce the vulnerability of poor people to a range of shocks and ongoing stress by integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

### Box 1. Definitions of social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

**Social protection:** Social protection involves all initiatives that transfer income or assets to the poor, protect the vulnerable against risks to their livelihood, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2006).

**Disaster risk reduction:** This term describes the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters. It embraces such objectives as reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events (UN-ISDR, 2009).

**Climate change adaptation:** This term covers adjustments in individual, group and institutional behaviour intended to reduce a population's vulnerability to climate risks (Pielke, 1998).

In *practice*, more programmes are incorporating the goal of becoming “climate smart”.<sup>2</sup> Tanzania, for instance, recently examined how issues relating to climate change can be incorporated into the third phase of the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF III) (Davies et al., 2012, see Box 2). In Ethiopia, a Climate Smart Initiative is planned for the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and Household Asset Building Programme (HABP), to help people covered by these programmes manage risks relating to climate change.

### Box 2. Making social protection “climate smart”- the experience of Tanzania

In Tanzania, although evidence is increasing that longer-term climate trends are affecting livelihoods, climate change has not been considered a high priority. However, the onset of a new phase of the Social Action Fund has provided the opportunity to learn from experience and to look more closely at the specifics of how SP, CCA and DRR communities of practice can work more closely together. In particular, external support and a local champion have helped to facilitate dialogue around the potential for TASAF III to become more “climate and disaster smart”. A series of recommendations emerged from this process:

- **Recognise the need for more flexible targeting mechanisms.** Broadening the set of indicators to include metrics that identify and respond to climate risk could help social protection programmes contribute to improving resilience. Indicators should relate to various types of shocks as well as different levels of vulnerability.
- **Deliver climate-proofed social protection as part of a wider package of support** that strengthens and protects assets and livelihoods and invests in the institutional structures and systems that enable sustainable growth. This means greater dialogue and complementarity between SP, DRR and CCA programming and policy.
- **Build an evidence base through monitoring and evaluation (M&E).** If climate-related risk information from the local level were to be included in M&E systems from the outset, standard impact evaluation processes could generate critical feedback on how much SP programmes are contributing to building resilience to different kinds of shocks.
- **Prioritise building institutional relationships across sectors** to foster integration and ensure political buy-in. One of the critical obstacles for integration is the “silo syndrome” that often prevails at the national level, isolating different sectors, while at the local level, decision-making processes are often more trans-sectoral and integrated in character.

Source: Seballos (2012) and Davies et al. (2012).

New *evidence* provides us with a better understanding of the impact of combining the three disciplines. In Asia, research examining over 124 agricultural programmes suggests that the more programmes integrate SP, DRR and CCA, the more likely they are to improve the livelihoods of poor people - focusing less on short-term reactive relief and more on the underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability (Davies et al., 2013). Integrating programmes, then, can help give them a more lasting impact. In Ethiopia, evidence shows that the PSNP can help people to build resilience

<sup>2</sup> “Climate smart” is a term increasingly used to indicate that a project, programme or policy takes account of the additional factors needed to make an investment ready for climate change, and that the effects of climate change have been taken into account in the design and expected outcome of the programme.

against shocks, many of which are climate-related (Béné et al., 2012). In the face of drought, flood, illness, loss of livestock or loss of crops, analysis shows that in most instances, households receiving PSNP transfers are able to manage the shocks better than those that do not receive the transfer. The emerging evidence, therefore, demonstrates that by combining SP, DRR and CC, it is possible to help people find longer-term solutions to the impact of disasters and prepare for the impact of climate change.

Our *understanding* of the issues related to ASP is also improving. The emergence of ASP has led to a new understanding of resilience (discussed later in this report), and also of migration and SP, as well as the implications for long-term adaptation in the context of rapid climate change (Deshingkar et al., 2012).

Finally, there is evidence that *interest* in ASP has increased. In addition to references to the need to combine the three fields in programmes and in policies, a number of development agencies have developed programmes on the topic. In addition to those of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank, which were in place at the time of the initial 2009 report, other international development organisations, such as the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), or donors (e.g. Irish Aid), have all recently developed linkages between the fields of practice. This list is not exhaustive, and an increasing number of other international agencies, academic institutions and NGOs are now examining ASP.

This *interest* among a wide range of stakeholders was also evident during the international workshop on "Social Protection and Climate Resilience" organised in 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which brought together over 120 practitioners, policy makers and academics from a wide range of communities of practice, including SP, DRR and CCA (World Bank, 2011). The event highlighted the growing commitment amongst donors and practitioners to adopt ASP principles. Further evidence of this interest has been documented by the DFID/IDS Adaptive Social Protection Programme.<sup>3</sup>

Significant progress has thus been made. But many challenges persist that were identified in the original report, and gaps remain in knowledge, programming and institutional arrangements. This report will examine the new evidence and also the main issues still pending, including: the challenge of collecting evidence that goes beyond the case-specific nature of most of the analyses; the fact that the present effects of climate change are still poorly documented and understood; and the methodological difficulty of measuring concepts such as adaptive capacity or resilience.

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<sup>3</sup> "Adaptive Social Protection in the Context of Agriculture and Food Security", <http://www.ids.ac.uk/project/adaptive-social-protection>.

### 3. Socio-economic consequences of climate change

Although in some places, agricultural conditions may improve (for instance, in some hilly areas of Nepal, rising average temperatures have made possible the cultivation of new fruits and vegetables), for the vast majority of people in developing countries, it is expected that climate change will have negative effects on production assets and livelihood activities where these are directly affected by climate (see Table 1). Similarly, effects on social factors like health, nutrition and education (mainly through the reduction of income), as well as social relations, are expected to be adverse. As a consequence, the increasing levels of poverty will create larger numbers of people vulnerable to all types of natural hazards, including non-climate-related risks such as earthquakes and tsunamis, and to other shocks and negative trends. Livelihoods that are not climate-dependent (such as those in urban centres) will be less directly affected, but may nevertheless experience negative effects from declining food output and rising prices linked to climate issues (e.g. drought in grain surplus areas, or diversion of crops to biofuels). These situations could lead to social unrest in some poor countries.

Other factors may disrupt urban livelihoods, including heatwaves, diseases and problems of water supply. These will especially affect poor and more vulnerable groups. In some countries, reduced availability of hydroelectric power may be a significant factor (Urban, 2011). Other secondary effects on the income and welfare of poor people may arise from reductions in profits (and therefore employment), lower state revenues (e.g. from a smaller tax base), depressed exports of agricultural commodities, reduced tourism (e.g. arising from a harsher climate, loss of wildlife or social conflict).

Some analysts consider that increased conflict could be a potential consequence of climate change, but this remains contested (as does the notion of “climate refugees” and migration specifically linked to climate change as a causal factor). However, climate change will amplify existing social and economic problems.

Specific extreme events (e.g. tropical cyclones, floods and droughts) that cause people to leave affected areas may not be immediately attributable to climate change, but are expected to be a growing factor in such disasters (IPCC SREX, 2012). For problems of slower onset (e.g. inundation of coastal zones, salinisation of water supplies in deltas), evacuation may be the only option in the long run. However, climate change is unlikely to be the only factor affecting such processes, and other policy measures may help to reduce the scale of the problem.

Alternative economic activities that may be initiated in response to climate change (e.g. renewable energy industries, water-harvesting schemes) may generate employment. These are potentially applicable at local level and could be developed as alternative rural livelihoods supported by measures that provide targeted training and investments for MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises).

Finally, human responses to poverty and climate change will themselves have adverse effects. These include cases where people resort to action that is damaging to the environment in order to cope with and survive the effects of climate change (e.g. deforestation, mangrove destruction, poaching, unsustainable farming or grazing for short-term survival).



**Table 1. Outline of impact of changes in climate trends (blue) and extreme events (yellow) at primary and secondary levels.**

<b>Climate trends and shocks</b>	<b>Primary livelihood impacts</b>	<b>Possible social protection responses to primary livelihood impacts</b>	<b>Secondary impacts</b>
<b>Precipitation regimes</b> Variability/unseasonality Spatial extent Intensity	Crop yields, income and subsistence Crop range – shifts in agro-economic zones Land use changes Land cover changes Forest changes Irrigation impacts: changes in amount, extent, seasonality, quality Food crops and nutrition	Insurance systems, especially those that promote adaptive behaviour Public works that promote resilience, e.g. for water supply and sustainable irrigation, but which include repair and maintenance Education and training that supports livelihood diversification Support for renewable energy systems through vouchers for training, to support mitigation and diversify livelihoods	Changes in crops, pasture, income, etc., have effects on security, crime Migration Changes in government revenue and foreign exchange lead to changes in welfare spending, foreign trade, food imports Effects on debt repayments Tourism-related livelihoods National parks and game reserves Coast and island holiday destinations impact on employment of changes in hydroelectric power output Impact on revenue and balance of payments of hydroelectric power output
Floods Droughts	Food and cash crops and food supply and cash income		
<b>Temperature regimes</b> Variability Spatial extent Extremes Humidity Desiccation Wildfires and set fires	Impacts on traded crops, livestock, fodder, grazing Human needs Drinking water Conflicts		
<b>Storms</b> Frequency Precipitation Wind-speed extremes Extended cyclone range	Crop yields, income and subsistence Loss of employment Loss of homes, tools, livestock	Public works for hazard preparedness (including repair and maintenance components)	
<b>Landslides, etc.</b> GLOFs (Glacial Lake Outburst Floods)	Crop yields, income and subsistence Loss of employment, homes, tools, livestock	Public works for landslide prevention measures and for emptying or reducing glacial lakes	
<b>Sea-level rise</b> Inundation Salinity intrusion Greater impact of cyclones	Crop yields, income and subsistence Loss of assets, homes, employment	Public works for sea walls, mangrove restoration Support for managed relocation, through vouchers for training and education	
<b>Diseases and pests</b> Extent and range of vectors and infectious agents Seasonal variability Intensity	Human diseases: infectious, parasitic Crop and post-harvest – pests; infectious viral and bacterial, fungal Livestock diseases: infectious, parasitic Forest diseases and pests	Vouchers for training in pest and disease recognition and management (see CABI projects for crop clinics, using farmers trained as “plant doctors”) Public works for mosquito-breeding site controls	

## 4. International policy initiatives and finance opportunities

Several policy initiatives and frameworks have been set out to link thinking on social protection and climate change adaptation. Table A in Appendix 1 summarises some of these. Common threads that run through these initiatives are:

- A concern that climate change will increase poor people's vulnerability to a range of shocks and stresses, placing a strain on current social protection and attempts to mitigate the risk of environmental hazards;
- The idea that social protection tools can contribute to climate change adaptation (and disaster-risk reduction) objectives;
- Framing the issue in terms of vulnerability, resilience or both.

The most coherent and systematic of these initiatives - particularly those by the World Bank, the Adaptive Social Protection Programme, and the African Climate Change Resilience Alliance - are studied further in Section 6 of this report.

At country level and in support for local institutions, there are both opportunities and challenges for introducing SP through the various climate change funds. These funds support mitigation (of greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation, and potentially "Loss and Damage"<sup>4</sup>, which includes support for losses anticipated in cases where adaptation is not sufficient to reduce damage, especially in extreme events. To date, no climate change funding mechanisms have specifically included SP measures, but there is scope, especially where the funds are relatively new, for donors to encourage national governments and sectors to include innovative SP approaches to achieve adaptation and mitigation.

Unlike climate change funds delivered through Official Development Assistance (ODA) channels, those under the UN climate change convention (UNFCCC) are mandated to provide finance for the additional needs attributable to climate change. For adaptation, it is difficult to calculate the "additionality" that can be attributed to effects of climate change, as distinct from regular development needs and the effects of the existing variability of the climate. This is further complicated because support for "good development" can also be good in general for building broader capacity to adapt to climate change.

Climate change funds that relate to adaptation are probably most likely lend themselves to incorporating SP, although there may be relevance to social protection in some aspects of mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions (including through the Clean Development Mechanism or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, or REDD-plus, approaches in forestry and agriculture). One unexplored area is therefore the potential for supporting SP instruments through grassroots initiatives in renewable energy (wind, solar, biogas or micro-hydro), all of which could be supported through capacity-building or investment grants or carbon sequestration.

The largest climate funds at present are the World Bank-led Climate Investment Funds (CIFs), which include the Clean Technology Fund and Pilot Programme on Climate Resilience, the largest single adaptation funding source. Although funding has not currently engaged SP instruments, there may be scope for supporting resilience-building or local initiatives for renewable energy, for example through capacity-building on green technologies (e.g. training and start-up grants or loans for small-scale wind and hydroelectric power). The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has a long

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<sup>4</sup> Funding for loss and damage is the subject of ongoing negotiation in the UNFCCC. Agreed UNFCCC language is "loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather events and slow onset events"

track record of energy and forestry-related funding. The GEF also operates the UNFCCC Least Developed Countries Fund, which is linked to support for the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and the Special Climate Change Fund. The NAPAs have operated on the basis of identifying priority projects for the poorest countries, including donor support for ministerial and sector-related projects. Although some of these include the development of weather related insurance, it is considered unlikely that these funds can be revised to explicitly include SP instruments more generally.

Currently being designed by the UNFCCC, the Green Climate Fund is intended to be the largest and most comprehensive climate fund, available for a balance of both adaptation and mitigation. This fund is expected to enable donor engagement with ministries and sectors in relevant countries, and in theory, it should be possible to promote, or even designate funding windows for, social protection measures outlined in this briefing paper. These might target, for instance, support for diversifying livelihoods so that they are less climate sensitive, or public works for agricultural resilience and preparedness for extreme hazards.

Much climate change funding remains channelled through existing ODA channels, but as climate-specific funds grow, especially through the Green Climate Fund, there will be an opportunity for donors to lobby climate change focal points in both their own and in partner governments, and to advocate regarding the potential of SP instruments to deliver on mitigation and adaptation objectives.


## 5. Social protection tools and their links to climate change

Building on Section 3 above, a series of different risks related to climate change can be identified. Their effect on the life and livelihoods of various groups of vulnerable people will be experienced differently depending on where they are in the life cycle. From unborn children to elderly people, school-age children, youth, working-age adults, pregnant and lactating women or disabled persons, each group will be affected by climate change in a different way. Their adaptive capacities in relation to their vulnerability to climate change will also be different. In this context, different social protection tools can be used to strengthen their resilience - where resilience is understood as a process leading to a reduction of vulnerability and improved adaptive capacity. Table 2 summarises these elements and provides the basis for a comprehensive analytical framework to explore the links between vulnerability, adaptive capacity and social protection in the context of climate change.

In the rest of this section, we review the current evidence available in the literature showing the contribution of social protection to strengthening the resilience of vulnerable groups. In particular, we assess the role of:

- Cash transfers
- Pension schemes
- Micro-insurance/weather index
- Public works
- Asset transfers

**Table 2. Regional distribution of the number of prominent NSAGs, 2001-2008**

Life-course stage	Resilience (process) = reducing (1) + strengthening (2) 			Resilience mechanisms employed in response to adverse climate events such as drought, heatwaves, flooding
	(1) Source of vulnerability to climate change <sup>5</sup>	(2) Adaptive capacity in the context of climate change	Social protection instruments	
Unborn children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heatwaves</li> <li>Erosion of food and nutritional security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for access to health facilities for mother</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditional cash transfers for parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditional cash transfers used to protect food consumption and facilitate (or enforce) pregnant mothers' visits to health facilities</li> </ul>
Children under 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heat wave</li> <li>Erosion of food and nutritional security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for access to health facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplementary feeding</li> <li>Therapeutic feeding</li> <li>Conditional cash transfers for parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplementary and therapeutic feeding used to boost children's nutritional intake</li> <li>Conditional cash transfers used to protect food consumption and facilitate (or enforce) visits to health facilities for children and lactating women</li> </ul>
School-age children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erosion of food and nutritional security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for/facilitating school enrolment</li> <li>Support for access to health facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School meals</li> <li>School fee waiver</li> <li>Conditional cash transfers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School meals and school fee waiver used to protect/enhance child food and nutritional intake</li> <li>Conditional cash transfers used to protect food consumption and facilitate (or enforce) visit to health facilities for children</li> </ul>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erosion of food security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for well-planned migration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public works for youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash from public work used to protect food consumption and support well-planned migration</li> </ul>
Working-age adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erosion of food security (see also "All groups" below)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for well-planned migration</li> <li>Support for non-climate-sensitive alternative economic activities</li> <li>Support for adoption of climate-resistant agriculture inputs</li> <li>Reduction of harmful coping strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public works</li> <li>Cash transfers</li> <li>Agricultural insurance</li> <li>Input subsidies (for farmers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash from public works used to reduce the risk of maladaptive coping strategies (i.e. protecting food consumption) and that supports well-planned migration</li> <li>Insurance that alters perception of risk and promotes technical innovation</li> <li>Insurance and input subsidies that facilitate technical innovation, including adoption of climate-resistant agricultural inputs</li> </ul>
Pregnant and lactating women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erosion of food and nutritional security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for access to health facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditional cash transfers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conditional cash transfers used to protect food consumption and facilitate (or enforce) visit to health facilities for children and lactating women</li> </ul>
Older persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heatwaves</li> <li>Erosion of food and nutritional security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for access to health facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social pensions</li> <li>Contributory pensions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfers from social and contributory pensions used to facilitate access to health centres and to protect food and nutritional security</li> </ul>
Disabled persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heatwaves</li> <li>Erosion of food and nutritional security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for access to health facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disability grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfers from disability grants used to facilitate access to health centres and protect food and nutritional security</li> </ul>
All groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sea-level rise</li> <li>Higher frequency and intensity of extreme events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for well-planned migration</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As above</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> Following direct and indirect climate change effects, such as decrease in agricultural yields and increase in frequency and intensity of drought.

## 5.1. Social cash transfers

### Relevance for climate change objectives

A series of recent documents review the extent to which cash transfer (CTs) programmes can help reduce household vulnerability (see e.g. Farrington et al., 2007; Niehaus & Shapiro, 2010; Arnold et al., 2011). Although none of these reviews look specifically at the role of CTs in the specific context of climate change, they do provide useful information regarding the ways (both unconditional and conditional) in which CT programmes could work in the near future in relation to climate change.

### Key issues

One of the key elements that can help build or reinforce the relevance of cash-transfer programmes for adaptation to climate change is the role that cash transfers can have in strengthening adaptive capacity and the resilience of individuals and households. Godfrey-Wood (2011) reviews the different mechanisms through which cash transfers contribute to adaptive capacity and resilience.

*i) Meeting the basic needs of the poor.* At the most basic level, cash transfers can help meet basic needs. In particular, their role in bringing about better nutritional outcomes, which in turn allow for better long-term educational, health and labour productivity, is confirmed by significant evidence (see e.g. Awuor, 2009; Barrientos & Niño Zarazúa, 2010).

*ii) Helping the poor respond to climate-related shocks.* There is already wide consensus that cash transfers are a cost-effective means of rapidly distributing resources to people affected by natural disasters, giving recipients a degree of flexibility in deciding how to use the funds and stimulating local economies (e.g. Oxfam GB and Concern Worldwide, 2007; Harvey, 2007). Using cash transfers for relief is insufficient, however, as many of the effects of climate change are not immediate or dramatic enough to attract the attention of relief agencies. Cash transfers can be used to support long-term transformation in relation to risk perception and innovation (see below). There is also increasing evidence that the greatest benefits of cash transfers accrue to those who are able to participate for sustained periods (see Barrientos & Niño-Zarazua on Mexico, 2010).

*iii) Reducing the pressure to engage in maladaptive coping strategies.* Both climate- and non-climate-related shocks can force households to engage in asset-depleting coping strategies. Because this negatively affects indicators of adaptive capacity, it can be argued that it reduces long-term adaptive capacity. Cash transfers have a strong impact in reducing the pressure for such strategies; see Devereux and Mhlanga (2008) on begging in Lesotho; Slater et al. (2006) on selling productive assets, taking out loans for consumption and distress migration in Ethiopia; Chiwele on begging in Zambia (2010), or the ILO (2008) on child labour in Latin America.

Increased threat of shocks can also force people into coping strategies that are low risk, provide low returns and slow innovation. Difficulty in managing risk has itself been identified as a cause of long-term poverty, and can inhibit the ability of the poor to build up their adaptive capacity over time. Effective adaptation at the household level requires striking a balance between diversification and asset building, and the extent to which each approach will be the most appropriate is likely to vary significantly in different contexts. Cash transfers could give households the financial space to make those decisions and innovate (Levy, 2006), rather than being forced into either diversification or intensification by circumstances.

*iv) Giving the poor money to invest and increase their asset base.* Not only can cash transfers help protect whatever adaptive capacity the poor already have, by providing them with the resources to withstand shocks, they also have a long-term impact by transferring to the poor resources that can be invested productively, allowing for sustained improvements in generic adaptive capacity indicators. Cash transfers have been shown to encourage a diverse array of profitable investments that have allowed households to increase their asset base. These include investments in high-yield seed varieties in Ethiopia and India (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2008; Gilligan et al., 2009), in micro-enterprise activities (Gertler et al., 2005; Neves et al., 2009), livestock (Schuring, 2009; Chiwele, 2010) and general agricultural investment (Martinez 2004; Soares et al., 2008).

*v) Facilitating mobility and livelihood transitions.* Climate change could gradually make livelihoods less viable. One response to this could be temporary or permanent migration, and there is already evidence that mobility is a crucial strategy for reducing vulnerability to a wide range of climate- and non-climate-related risks (Tacoli, 2009). Ability to migrate is not identified in discussions of adaptive capacity, but there is significant evidence that it is an important household strategy in achieving long-term improvements in livelihood (Deshingkar, 2006; Deshingkar et al., 2008). Although outcomes from migration are by no means uniformly positive, there is strong evidence that migrant households generally show better levels of child nutrition and have more ability to cope with food price shocks (Zezza et al., 2011).

### **Potential for donor support**

While the general understanding of the ways cash transfers can protect households against shock is progressing (see above), the specific case of climate change effects is still poorly documented and understood. Donors therefore need to continue to support and encourage the type of evidence-based analysis that has been highlighted in the sections above, especially those that propose to include, more systematically, the growing instances of climate change shocks, and also better assessment of the ways cash-transfer programmes and their operational specificities (e.g. conditional versus unconditional transfers) can strengthen the resilience of households to climate change without raising the risk of maladaptation. Evidence-based analysis like this could be seen to follow donors' principles of value for money.

## **5.2. Pension schemes**

### **Relevance for climate change objectives**

A rich and growing literature is available on the links between old age and climate change. This literature highlights in particular the various potential sources of vulnerability of older people to climate change (see, e.g., Ipraliev & Mikkonen-Jeanneret 2009; Nelson 2011, or HelpAge India work on climate change). Far less has been done on the specific relevance of pension schemes in relation to climate change. What is often implicitly assumed is that cash received through pension schemes can help the recipients cope with climatic shocks and stresses in a number of ways, including: by responding directly to climate impacts (e.g. using money to experiment with new agricultural techniques); or more indirectly by investing, for example, in children's education in the hope that this will lead to livelihoods less sensitive to climate risks. Pension schemes seem therefore relevant to climate change adaptation.

Outside the climate change context, it is well established that social pensions provide an additional stream of income that is often redistributed to the recipients' extended family and used in wider contexts (Barrientos, 2004). Devereux, for instance, presents evidence on the wider development impacts of social pensions, including contributions to the development of trade and marketing infrastructure. He also demonstrates their uses in productive purposes such as education, business and agricultural assets, and as a vital source of household food security by stabilising income and consumption in the face of shocks



(Devereux, 2001). In fact, the regular monthly income transforms elderly relatives from being “economic burdens” in their old age into net contributors to household income (Devereux, 2001). To this extent, social pensions can be seen as transformative social protection measures that could play an important role in relation to climate change adaptation.

### ***Key issues***

However, as mentioned above, the more specific role that these pension schemes actually play in helping people adapt to climate change is not well documented. The only work that this review has found in relation to this issue was a recent study in Tanzania that aimed to analyse the potential role of TASAF transfers to people over the age of 60 in the context of climate change (Deshingkar et al., 2012). The study found no clear evidence that the pension scheme actually contributes to (or prevents) migration. Furthermore, when instances of migration were reported (irrespective of the role of TASAF), there was little evidence that these migrations were due to climate change.

While the absence of clear evidence on pensions is a limitation, we can use evidence on the impact of cash transfers more generally to suggest how pension schemes can strengthen the adaptive capacity of households to climate change. This is reviewed in detail in Section 5.1. These findings, however, can only be of indicative relevance, and there is an urgent need for a more rigorous and systematic understanding of the specific ways pension schemes link to, and strengthen, adaptive capacity. This could include the specific role that the use of these long-term, predictable and reasonably large cash grants have in contexts of vulnerability to climatic shocks and stresses, and whether such grants help vulnerable people move into less climate-sensitive livelihoods. Cases where schemes are used in ways that are “maladaptive”, (for example when they increase vulnerability to climate change by providing the incentive to stay in a disaster-prone areas) should also be more systematically investigated (Barnett & O’Neill, 2010).

### ***Potential for donor support***

Pension schemes have received significant support in recent years. In Southern Africa, for example, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland all run national social pension schemes. This support for pensions should be seized upon, to help us answer important questions on the role that pension schemes can play in relation to adaptation to climate change. Donors could in particular intensify their current effort in supporting the M&E of these programmes (which is not always conducted in a systematic way by the governments of the countries where these programmes are being established), to include documenting the vulnerability and response to climate change impacts.

### ***5.3. Micro-insurance/weather index***

International climate change and disaster policy is placing increasing emphasis on insurance-based approaches designed to promote or create a virtuous cycle that improves ability to access credit, encourages investment in productive assets and higher risk/higher yield returns, and incentivises risk-reduction (Linnerooth-Bayer & Mechler, 2006; Arnold, 2008).

### ***Relevance for climate change objectives***

Conventional indemnity-based crop insurance, where claims are based on crop losses reported by claim adjusters, have been adapted in places for small farmers, for example, in the nation-wide crop insurance programme in the Philippines (Roberts, 2005). However, there is growing experience with

weather-indexed crop insurance schemes.<sup>6</sup> These attempt to break cycles of impoverishment following weather-related shocks and overcome the problems of traditional indemnity-based insurance, including *i*) the high costs of verifying losses, *ii*) moral hazard that inhibits risk-taking, and *iii*) adverse selection of crops based on an expectation of payouts for poor harvests (Hess & Syroka, 2005; Hellmuth et al., 2007).

### **Key issues**

Assessing the success of index-based schemes remains difficult, as the existing examples are still in the pilot stage, and none has experienced a major and widespread catastrophic event (Suarez & Linnerooth-Bayer, 2011). Pilot schemes have themselves suffered from significant challenges. Co-variate climate risks affecting the majority of populations make risk-spreading difficult, marginal and subsistence farmers are difficult to target, an increasing burden of climate hazards may affect financial sustainability, and capital costs for start-up and operation are significant (Mechler et al., 2006; Holmes et al., 2007; Hochrainer et al., 2007; Meze-Hausken et al., 2009).

The importance of external technical and financial assistance for micro-insurance schemes remains much debated (Banerjee & Duflo 2011). On the one hand, it is a necessity for implementation, but on the other, it has the potential for creating market distortion. Most studies and pilots suggest the need for blending private-sector finance with some form of public subsidy, either from donors or national governments. In Mongolia, the Index-Based Livestock Insurance Project helps herders cope with significant herd losses and transfer some of the risks of raising livestock, relying on external assistance to create high-quality data on livestock mortality, outreach efforts to educate herders on the insurance products, and capacity-building by government officials and insurance companies (Box 3). Similarly, evidence from the packaged loan and index-based insurance products in Malawi suggests potential exists for smoothing disaster shocks among low-income and low-asset households (Hochrainer et al., 2007; Osgood & Warren 2007; Suarez & Linnerooth-Bayer, 2010). However, this and other schemes would not be possible without external assistance, due to the lack of an insurance tradition and market, and the need for start-up and monitoring costs and technical assistance (Hochrainer et al., 2007).

A final question arises for payment of premiums for crop or other damage arising from climate change: Is it ethical to expect poor people to pay such premiums, given that the risks they face are not of their making? This question refers to the potential role that the main carbon emitters could play in contributing to it, with adaptation funding as a source of insurance underwriting or of subsidies for premiums (see Pierro & Desai, 2008, on these issues). Insurance that relates to climate change is being extended from existing schemes (primarily for disaster and crop damage risks), and in some cases, donors have subsidised premium payments, for example the US Agency for International Development (USAID) in Ethiopia. Alternatively, governments have subsidised premium costs, for example, in the case of the central and provincial government in China (Balzer & Hess, 2010). Oxfam America has also experimented with “work for insurance” in the Horn of Africa (Oxfam, 2010). Although innovative, this approach still expects the victims of climate change to pay the costs of their insurance, through labour.

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<sup>6</sup> These schemes develop a contract written against a weather index, ideally based on historical records of the relationship between weather events and crop failure. Farmers collect immediate insurance compensation if the index reaches a certain weather-related trigger, regardless of actual losses.



### **Box 5. The Mongolian Index-based Livestock Insurance (IBLI)**

In Mongolia, livestock provides rural households with an important but vulnerable source of income and food security, since Mongolian herders are subject to weather-related shocks, such as droughts, and severe winter-spring colds known as *dzuds*. For instance, between 1999 and 2002, a series of *dzuds* led to the loss of one-third of the national herd, with serious consequences for farmers' livelihoods and the national economy.

The idea of using mortality index insurance to insure against livestock losses from natural disasters was first proposed in 2001, as part of a World Bank project. The Index-based Livestock Insurance (IBLI) was then designed, basing the insurance payments on estimates of aggregate livestock mortality rates by species at the county level. The IBLI policy couples a commercial product for moderate to large livestock losses and a social safety net (the Disaster Response Product, DRP) for catastrophic losses, through a public-private partnership between private-sector insurance companies and the government of Mongolia.

The IBLI Project has been successfully piloted since 2005 and has been scaled up to achieve nationwide coverage since 2012. Insurance payouts are based not on actual losses at the level of individual households, but on aggregate losses at the district level, exceeding predetermined risk thresholds. Reaching smaller, more vulnerable herders remains a challenge. This can be tackled by facilitating marketing through herder groups, keeping premium rates low and linking insurance with credit to make it more affordable to herders.

*Source:* Mahul & Skees 2007; Luxbacher & Goodland 2010.

### **Potential for donor support**

As the effects of climate change develop, it will become increasingly important to find ethical ways to support insurance cover for poor people without expecting them to pay the price of damage caused by others. Donors can therefore support wider programmes of weather-related insurance by contributing premiums to poor households. Such support should be consistent with promoting "good behaviour" through insurance (e.g. in taking risk-reduction measures rather than encouraging complacency), and this may be challenging if premiums are not being paid by the insured parties themselves. In such contexts subsidising insurance premiums risks incentivising maladaptation. Donors can also invest in the significant start-up and monitoring costs for weather-related insurance schemes, in areas where private sector investment would otherwise be deterred from participating.

### **5.4. Public works**

Public works programmes (PWPs) are widespread across Africa, Latin America and Asia, and are one of the main social protection instruments used in support of the unemployed and working-age poor (McCord, 2012). The PSNP in Ethiopia employs approximately 7 million beneficiaries each year, and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREGA) in India provides 100 days of assured employment to about 45 million households annually.

### **Relevance for climate change objectives**

Support for PWPs is based on the programmes' being perceived as what McCord (2012) calls a "win-win" policy option. The first win is through the provision of employment to the chronically poor and vulnerable, which provides income to help people adapt to climate change. The second is in the provision of infrastructure (e.g. roads, irrigation canals), much needed by the community, which can build resilience to effects of climate change. There is potential for a third such benefit for adaptation when PWPs are aimed at environmental rehabilitation or conservation of natural resources. Examples include: *i*) environmental rehabilitation, such as soil and water conservation through tree planting, bunds, area catchments and fenced enclosures; *ii*) building or reinforcing water access or de-silting irrigation, especially in drought-prone areas; *iii*) climate-proofing physical infrastructure (strengthening embankments, buildings,

roads, bridges or gullies that resist flash flooding); and *iv*) building community-based DRR assets, including storm shelters (Kuriakose et al., 2012).

## **Key issues**

The potential of PWPs to support adaptation to climate change has been recognised in recent reports, including that of Kuriakose et al. (2012), who, in their report “Climate-Responsive Social Protection”, describe labour-intensive PWPs as a way of enhancing adaptive capacity and helping to build resilience to climate shocks. Davies et al. (IDS, 2012) also consider the role of public works in adaptation in the context of the TASAF III in Tanzania. But how, specifically, can the potential of PWPs be realised, if at all, and what is the available evidence indicating how they can help adaptation to climate change?

*Firstly, can PWPs reduce poverty and vulnerability and enhance productivity?* An important consideration here is the regularity, predictability and adequacy of the support. In order to help poor people manage the risks they face, PWPs need to be administered on a regular basis, so that people can rely on them in times of need, or as what McCord (2012) refers to as a form of income insurance to protect consumption. PWPs, however, are often provided on a one-off or irregular basis, limiting their impact on poverty and vulnerability. The size of the transfer also needs to be large enough to enable beneficiaries to invest or speculate and take risks to increase their livelihood. Typically, however, PWPs transfers are modest and are set below minimum-wage levels, as a way of “self-targeting” only the most needy. In the PSNP, for example, the average wage is ETB 8 (8 birr) per day per worker. As a result, in the case of most PWPs, benefits are used primarily for consumption, not investment (McCord, 2012). In India, there is a belief that the employment guarantee may reduce the need for many rural poor to migrate seasonally to towns and cities, potentially reducing social and family disruption.

*Secondly, how useful will the assets be that are created for adaptation to climate change?* Public works that support environmental rehabilitation or conservation of natural resources can in theory offer significant potential, and are therefore attracting interest. A number of factors will affect the quality, appropriateness and sustainability of these assets in supporting adaptation. This includes the amount of money set aside to invest in public works, and the capacity and skills required. TASAF III provides an example of the challenges faced. In this example, the ratio of resources allocated for labour vs. infrastructure is 3:1. In addition, public works that can support environmental rehabilitation or preservation of natural resources are generally new, requiring significant investment in new skills and capacity.

## **Potential for donor support**

To maximise the effectiveness of PWPs in dealing with climate change, two options for donors are put forward. Firstly, donors need to consider carefully the quality and relevance of the type of public works. This is particularly important in the case of PWPs aimed at environmental rehabilitation or natural resource conservation, in cases where they represent a novel type of public works, and where experience in implementing them is limited. In this instance, donors should engage in the design process with planners and invest in developing a better understanding of how to implement them effectively, and in the capacity required to implement them.

Secondly, it is increasingly being recognised that PWPs alone cannot help people graduate out of poverty, a key aim of many PWPs. To achieve sustainable resilience, enabling people to withstand and respond to shocks in the future, donors need to ensure that any support they provide to PWPs is complemented by a wider package of support that enables recipients to make the most of the social protection they receive.

## 5.5. Asset transfers

### *Relevance for climate change objectives*

At the heart of the asset transfer approach lies the belief that assets (and asset transfers) are central to increasing the adaptive capacity of households to climate change. For instance, the objective of the Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change (RVCC) project in Bangladesh has explicitly considered climate change throughout its design and implementation. The project encouraged alternative livelihoods and asset transfers, such as promoting livestock and birds that are better suited to the changing environmental conditions (WeADAPT, nd). Another example of these “climate-smart” asset transfers is the “nucleus herds” for Maasai pastoralists in northern Kenya, supported by Practical Action in the face of the increasing incidence of drought. In this case, the most healthy and resilient females in the herds, and one or two males, are selected for “seed stock”, then isolated and provided with veterinary services and access to water and fodder. These nuclear herds are expected to permit households to rebuild asset stocks following prolonged drought.

This asset-based approach, initially used in a rural context where climate change impact on resource-dependent households’ livelihoods is already evident, as in the Bangladesh Chars Livelihood Programme (Hodson, 2009; Conroy et al., 2010), has been recently extended to urban dwellers. The urban asset adaptation framework, for instance (Moser et al., 2010), is based on conceptual work on assets and poverty (Moser, 1998; 2007; Siegel, 2005; Zimmerman & Carter, 2003).

### *Key issues*

While useful in helping us to understand what resources people have or need to adapt, these asset-oriented analyses tend to mask the role of processes and functions (Adger et al., 2009). Levine et al. (2011), for instance, argue that adaptive capacity cannot be built up simply through assets. Indeed, adaptive capacity is more than just assets or asset transfers. Strengthening adaptive capacity also requires supporting intangible processes such as decision-making and governance, the fostering of innovation and experimentation, and the exploitation of new opportunities and the structure of institutions and entitlements. This means moving away from simply looking at what households have that enables them to adapt, and instead recognising what households do that enables them to adapt (WRI, 2009).

### *Potential for donor support*

Lessons from existing asset transfer programmes suggest that donors should not support asset transfers in isolation and should instead, support holistic approaches that combine livelihood protection interventions (e.g. consumption support, savings services) with livelihood promotion interventions (e.g. skills training, asset transfers, access to credit) (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux 2011). This should help to ensure assets are both retained and used effectively in dealing with climate change (see also Section 6 on livelihood diversification). Donors’ support of this approach should go further, to develop a better understanding, and include the intangible processes described above. New partnerships will need to be formed to support this. For example, civil society can help comment on decision-making and governance and encourage participation, and the private sector can help foster innovation and experimentation.

## 6. Integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction

This section examines the potential for specific initiatives that relate to social protection and climate adaptation. In addition, it includes a section on the existing literature on rural livelihood diversification, which offers considerable value as a basis for adaptation and for which a number of social protection measures could be mobilised.

### 6.1. Social protection, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction

Whilst the potential benefits of social protection for climate change adaptation have gained increasing attention, other research has meanwhile studied the contribution social protection is already making in the context of disaster risk reduction.

The potential for climate change to increase the frequency and/or severity of climate-related hazards, and the role social protection can have in disaster prevention and preparedness, intersect with the question of vulnerability. This has given rise to the idea that a co-ordinated and concerted effort by people working in SP, DRR and CCA could make a longstanding contribution to reducing vulnerability to a variety of risks and shocks, through recognising that they are all part of a bigger problem relating to vulnerability (World Bank, 2011). This emphasis on the underlying social, political and economic causes of vulnerability (Wisner et al., 2004; Cannon & Muller-Mann, 2010) allows for social protection, in the context of DRR, to increase efforts to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards through *ex ante* intervention (Pelham et al., 2011). Conversely, a lack of collaboration between CCA, DRR and SP can undermine the gains in each area if they are carried out separately. For this reason, there has been increasing discussion not just about what SP can contribute to CCA or DRR, but whether all three can be better integrated.

Three initiatives (see also Table A in Appendix 1) have started to look more specifically at the prospects for integration and to build an evidence base. They are:

1. The World Bank's work around the social dimensions of climate change;
2. The Adaptive Social Protection Programme, a DFID-sponsored research initiative managed by the UK-based Institute of Development Studies (IDS);
3. The African Climate Change Resilience Alliance, a consortium of international NGOs and a research organisation also based in the United Kingdom, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

These initiatives were instrumental in initiating the debate around how to use social protection for adaptation purposes, the focus of this paper. Since the Davies 2009 report, they have studied the next steps for integration, begun to build the evidence base and demonstrated that whilst there may be synergies from bringing SP, DRR and CCA to work together, challenges and potential trade-offs remain (World Bank, 2011).

### 6.2. Social dimensions of climate change

The World Bank has reviewed the role of major cash transfers in *ex post* disasters (Heltberg, 2007), and also explored the contributions that social policy interventions - in particular social protection - can make to adaptation, and to reducing vulnerability to the consequences of extreme climate at the household level (Heltberg et al., 2009). Mearns and Norton (2010) argue that these efforts help address the challenges of equity and social justice. Arguing that reducing vulnerability to disasters must be a central part of adaptation, Heltberg et al. (2009) suggest that SP has a key role to play in this respect. They add another critical consideration to the central role of social protection in adaptation, namely that of adapting at many

different levels, so that household adaptations are supported by international action that endorses a social justice agenda. Much of this agenda was discussed at an international conference organised by the World Bank, IDS and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, UNECA (World Bank, 2011). This meeting moved forward the “integration” argument by gathering adaptation, social protection and disaster risk reduction practitioners together in an unprecedented way, broadly endorsing efforts to integrate these three silos. It also recognised that this would not be an easy task, since it required essentially different ways of working, could potentially encourage competition over the same resources and might be seen by practitioners as yet another unwarranted burden on their time.

### **6.3. Adaptive Social Protection (ASP)**

The ASP research programme started by suggesting the advantages to be gained from bringing together the agendas of social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, both conceptually and in policy and practice (Davies et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2013). The underlying assumption was that combining elements of these three fields could improve the efficiency of interventions, helping to address the unsafe living conditions of the poor, counter the underlying causes of vulnerability and promote people’s ability to adapt to a changing climate. The approach is rooted in the “3Ps and T” framework (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler 2004)<sup>7</sup>, which adopts a broad understanding of the underlying causes of vulnerability.

However, more recent ASP research presents a mixed picture as to how much integration has been achieved in practice (Arnall et al., 2010; Davies et al., 2013). It also raises the question of the extent to which social protection reduces vulnerability. For example, in the case of the PSNP in Ethiopia, the programme may not be robust enough to protect the poorest from severe climate shocks (Béné et al., 2012). This suggests that integrating DRR, SP and CCA is not only difficult in practice but may not always generate the desired reduction in vulnerability, at least as currently attempted. Most recently, respondents from the fields of SP, CCA and DRR were asked about their experience and awareness of each other’s community of practice (Table 3). The sentiment expressed seems to be that, worthwhile as the idea is, there is some way to go before it is fully taken on board.

### **6.4. The African Climate Change Resilience Alliance**

The research findings of the African Climate Resilience Alliance also raise the question of how feasible and effective integration can be. This initiative explored the extent to which a range of development actions – SP, DRR and programmes focused on livelihoods – have contributed to building adaptive capacity, deploying a “Local Adaptive Capacity” framework (Jones et al., 2010) in Ethiopia (Ludi et al., 2011), Mozambique (Arnall, 2011) and Uganda (Jones et al., 2011). The synthesis report argues that the development programmes in these countries did little to contribute to adaptive capacity (Levine et al., 2011). Designed primarily to provide technical inputs for asset building, they tended to neglect broader elements of adaptive capacity. They did provide short-term benefits, but ran the risk of encouraging maladaptation in the long term. Perhaps this is an example of the “wrong” kind of integration, and may indicate a need for further clarification about what integration entails, and what needs to be done, and by whom, to bring it about.

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<sup>7</sup> The “3Ps and T” stand for “protection, prevention, promotion and transformation”. Taken together, they form a classification of the objectives and types of social protection intervention, which range from helping people cope (protection) to addressing deep-rooted issues of social justice (transformation) (Davies et al., 2013).



**Table 3. ASP Messages from policy makers and practitioners**

Key reflections from SP, CCA and DRR practitioners

**Climate change is increasing uncertainty in programme planning:** There are different levels of awareness of the impact of climate change and disasters between the three communities of practice, leaving many practitioners feeling poorly informed.

**Climate change is expected to have serious impact on the lives of social protection beneficiaries:** Climate is expected to increase the vulnerability of those who are already ill equipped to cope.

**Social protection is a key instrument for building disaster- or climate-resilient livelihoods:** Social protection policies, however, are less likely to be combined with either disaster risk reduction or climate change adaptation.

**Integrating SP, DRR and CCA policy and interventions should be a key priority for increasing resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable people:** Integration is not a matter of choice if poor people are to be effectively supported.

**A lack of information is one of the main challenges and constraints in combining SP, CCA and DRR:** Many practitioners recognise that they are poorly informed and lack access to the relevant information, which limits their ability to effectively seek and develop integrated action.

Source: Leavy and Gorman, 2012.

### **6.5. Social protection tools for livelihood diversification**

Another entry point for integration is to reduce levels of exposure to climate risks by using social protection to diversify rural livelihoods. One of the key problems relating to poverty and climate change is the high percentage of rural and poor people whose livelihoods are “climate sensitive”, in farming, pastoralism, fishing or forestry, and are most likely to be affected by climate change (see Section 3). Given that adaptation within agriculture and other livelihoods based on natural resources is difficult, there may be significant benefits from using earlier work on diversification and the Rural Non-Farm Economy (RNFE) in the area of adaptation.

A number of social protection tools might help to support diversification. One way to assist could be by trying to stimulate the RNFE through cash and/or asset transfers on a relatively large scale. Research shows that the RNFE is likely to take off significantly through rural industrialisation and commercialisation (also stimulating the growth of villages into towns, and towns into cities), where significant cash inputs have been put into the hands of farmers (Cannon, 2013). A similar initial financial stimulus could be derived from adaptation funding in boosting effective demand (through cash transfers) and targeted instruments (e.g. through education, and training in non-farm activities).<sup>8</sup>

There are at least two ways that other social protection instruments can assist in the process of diversifying livelihoods. First would be through conditional grants for education or training in non-farm activities. Such training seems to be popular in parts of Bangladesh, where it is provided free through a few NGOs (with the participants investing their time). Second would be through conditional grants for the purchase of equipment that enabled people to take up non-farm livelihoods (for example, developing water-harvesting or renewable energy technologies, construction or garment making). For some of these, adaptation funding could be considered a source of investment.

Nevertheless, for many people vulnerable to climate change, diversification away from farm or natural resource based livelihoods is not a viable option. Adaptation of current livelihood systems to ones that use

<sup>8</sup> As part of the DFID Chars Livelihoods Programme in Bangladesh, women have received training in making garments, to increase their financial independence and range of livelihood options.

the same natural asset base but are more climate resilient must also be a central part of any diversification agenda.

## **6.6. The emergence of “resilience” as an integrating discourse for SP, CCA and DRR**

The concept of resilience has recently risen to prominence amongst donors and practitioners, in particular in relation to vulnerability-reduction interventions. It first surfaced in DRR thinking (Klein, 1998; WCDR, 2005), was adopted by the CCA community (Allison & Hobbes, 2004; IPCC, 2012) and more recently by SP practitioners, for instance in the World Strategy on Social Protection and Labour (World Bank 2011). Other donor users include WFP, DFID and USAID). A definition of resilience that has achieved some degree of consensus is “the ability of a system and its component parts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner” (IPCC, 2012, p.5).

As a result, the idea of “strengthening resilience” is now becoming an integrating discourse that may serve to bring together different people (practitioners, policy makers), organisations, sectors and communities of practice. This brokering capacity is a great advantage and has already been used by agencies and donors to create multi-sectoral collaboration, for instance through the recently launched “Resilience Project” (Sustainable Development Commission and WFP, 2011) where the concept of resilience is used as a platform to “share knowledge, foster policy dialogue and field level collaboration” between food security, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. This integrating narrative may complement the concept of Adaptive Social Protection, as it is of central interest to all three communities of practice.

Concern remains, however, that resilience is less helpful in understanding social dynamics, since it is not conceptually suited to dealing with issues of agency and power (see Leach, 2008; Hornborg, 2009; Davidson, 2010). Béné et al. (2012b) also warn against assuming resilience to be inherently “pro-poor”.

## **6.7. Potential negative impact of social protection on climate change adaptation**

Finally, it cannot be assumed that social protection interventions will systematically improve individuals’ and communities’ capacity to adapt to climate change. A “targeting trap” is one instance in which social protection could lead to maladaptation. In such a scenario, SP could help increase households’ resilience in a location prone to long-term climatic degradation, while a more appropriate adaptation strategy would in fact be an alternative option, such as resettlement in a less environmentally marginal area. For example, SP interventions targeting pastoralist communities in drought-prone areas could reduce households’ short-term or seasonal vulnerability. However, creating an incentive to stay in areas with poor long-term prospects might instead constitute such a “trap”.

## **6.8. Next steps for an integrative agenda**

The need to integrate social protection, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction efforts is well established, but the evidence on how to achieve this integration is still taking shape. Examples of integration between two of these sectors, however, do exist. For instance, it is possible to use a typology of risks and natural hazards to help determine when social safety net interventions can contribute to both *ex post* and *ex ante* DRR. Ethiopia and Bangladesh have both taken this approach (Pelham et al., 2011). In this way, dealing with hazards can be part of, not separate from, the development process.

Experience of integration of SP, CCA and DRR in projects and programmes is more advanced than at the policy and institutional level. Policy integration, while desirable, is not a precondition for integration at programmatic level. Identifying and learning from integration in projects and programmes remains important for research and policy agendas alike. A next step for donors seeking to enhance learning might be to commission work to examine examples where progress on programmatic integration has influenced

policy and institutional change, and how this has come about. For instance, in Latin America, the use of conditional cash transfers has often made it necessary to house health and education within ministries of social welfare, so that they can work together more effectively. Similarly, in Bangladesh, the shift from disaster response to preparedness programmes on the ground preceded the merger of government ministries that created the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management.

## 7. Key points and recommendations

- *Cash transfers* – Donors need to continue supporting the types of evidence-based analyses that have been undertaken in recent years in relation to cash transfers. However, particular encouragement should be given to those that explore systematically the ways transfer programmes can strengthen the resilience of households to climate change impacts through modalities and mechanisms that increase their scalability and flexibility. The Climate Smart Initiative in Ethiopia is one example in this vein.
- *Pension schemes* – Pension schemes have received significant support in recent years. Donors should seize this opportunity to intensify their current efforts in supporting the monitoring and evaluation of these programmes and more systematically explore the link between pension schemes and the impact of climate change.
- *Public works* – In PWPAs aimed at environmental rehabilitation or conservation of natural resources, (particularly if the programmes are the first of this kind), donors should engage in the design process with planners, developing a better understanding of how to implement them effectively.
- *Asset transfers* – Donors should not support asset transfers in isolation, but instead support holistic approaches that combine livelihood protection interventions (e.g. consumption support, savings services) with livelihood promotion interventions (e.g. skills training, asset transfers and access to credit). Current discussion on developing comprehensive social protection systems among donors (for example, in the recent policies of the European Commission, UNICEF and World Bank) that link multiple social protection objectives and instruments, present an opportunity to adopt this holistic approach to asset transfers.
- *Micro-insurance/weather index* – Donors should support wider programmes of weather-related insurance to target poorer households. Two options include subsidising start-up and monitoring costs in areas where the market fails to provide insurance, and contributing to premiums for poor households. Such instruments must, however, promote “good behaviour”, encouraging people to reduce their exposure to extreme events and climate trends. Insurance mechanisms that involve payouts without encouraging changes in behaviour must be avoided.
- *Funding* – The relationship of adaptation funding in particular, and climate change funds more generally, must be examined, in order to assess beneficial links with SP instruments that support adaptation and green growth. The fact that adaptation and climate funds are not being integrated with SP for climate change suggests diseconomies and wastage, since donors will increase as adaptation funding rises in significance.
- *Resilience* – Resilience has recently emerged as a new policy narrative that can help bring different groups together. While it can be used in integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, further understanding is needed of what it is, and what it can and cannot do. In particular, recent analyses suggest that resilience is not a “pro-poor” concept and that strengthening resilience does not systematically mean reducing poverty.
- *Integration between SP, CCA and DRR* – Donors should commission a research programme to examine progress on programmatic integration and how it has influenced policy and institutional change in other fields, and the lessons for SP/CCA/DRR integration.



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	Actors	Main focus	Interest in CCA and social protection	Resources
High-Level Panel of Experts	FAO	Provide better information for the decisions of the Committee on World Food Security	Implications for global food security of climate change and potential of social protection to mitigate this	<a href="#">website</a> Report: ' <a href="#">Food security and climate change</a> ' Report: ' <a href="#">Social protection for food security</a> '
Adaptive Social Protection	IDS, Dfid, World Bank	Understanding how DRR, SP and CCA can be better integrated to reduce vulnerability	Opportunities and constraints for more effective collaboration between CCA and SP communities of practice	<a href="#">website</a> report: <a href="#">resilience and vulnerability reduction programmes</a> blog: <a href="#">making social protection climate-smart</a> article: ' <a href="#">ASP for poverty reduction</a> '
African Climate Change Resilience Alliance	ODI, CDKN, CARE, Dfid, OXFAM, SAVE, World Vision	Improving poor and vulnerable communities' ability to adapt to change	The potential of social protection tools to contribute to climate change adaptation	<a href="#">Website</a> <a href="#">Youtube channel</a> Report: <a href="#">How SP, DRR &amp; livelihoods approaches can enhance adaptive capacity</a>
Social Protection Floor (SPF)	ILO, UN, World Bank, IMF, INGOS	SP floor as a means to extend the minimum level of social security	The potential for the SPF to reduce vulnerability to climate impacts	<a href="#">ILO Social Protection Floor Advisory group website</a> <a href="#">Global Extension of Social Security website</a> Report: <a href="#">SP in the post-2015 development agenda</a>
Social dimensions of climate change	World Bank	Understanding and addressing the distributional, poverty and social consequences of CC	Use SP tools to address issues of equity and social justice underlying vulnerability, in the context of CCA and DRR	<a href="#">Website</a> Book: ' <a href="#">Social Dimensions of Climate Change</a> ' <a href="#">Social dimensions of climate change learning module</a>
WB social protection labour strategy	World Bank	Deepening Work Bank involvement in supporting people to deal with risks	Documenting examples of how social protection has helped people adapt to climate change	<a href="#">Website</a> Strategy paper: ' <a href="#">Resilience, equity and opportunity</a> ' Youtube: <a href="#">Safety Nets Change Lives in Brazil and Ethiopia</a>
International meeting: Making SP work for CCA & DRR	World Bank, IDS, UNECA	Gathering together people working on SP CCA and DR to encouraged collective thinking on integration	What the SP community of practice has to offer the CCA and DRR communities of practice in terms of tools and intervention experience for reducing vulnerability	<a href="#">website</a> <a href="#">Workshop report</a>
OECD	DAC POVNET	Pro-poor growth as a poverty reduction strategy	Contribution that integrating SP, CCA and DRR can make to the pro-poor growth agenda.	<a href="#">Website</a> Report: ' <a href="#">Promoting Pro-poor Growth: Social Protection</a> '
Climate and disaster governance	IDS, Christian Aid	Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction	Implications of climate impacts for SP interventions and its role in DRR	<a href="#">Website</a> <a href="#">Report on climate, SP and DRR</a>
AfriCAN Climate	EU, ENDA & INGOS	Platform for sharing knowledge about climate in Africa	The role of SP in agroforestry for dealing with CC	<a href="#">Website</a> Report: <a href="#">CC and SP in agroforestry systems</a>
Dfid Learning Hub	Dfid, IDS	How to achieve low-carbon, climate-resilient development	Social protection as a means to reducing vulnerability to climate impacts by facilitating livelihoods diversification	<a href="#">Website</a> Report: ' <a href="#">Tackling Poverty in a Changing Climate</a> '
World Food Programme	WFP, FAO,	Hunger reduction	How social protection can support adaptation for vulnerable people	Report: ' <a href="#">Climate Change and Hunger: Responding to the Challenge</a> '
IASC	UN Agencies	More effective co-operation between development agencies	SP as a buffer against food security issues projected to be exacerbated by the impact of CC	<a href="#">Guidance for UNFCCC negotiators on CC, food security &amp; hunger</a>

## Annex 1. Table A. International initiatives that explore social protection and social protection links

