



COO

**COORDINATION OF
SOCIAL PROTECTION
SYSTEMS**

SUMMARY DOCUMENT



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SSN	Social Safety Net
SP	Social Protection
SP MIS	Social Protection Management Information System
TOR	Terms of Reference



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1

INTRODUCTION: CHALLENGES & BARRIERS TO COORDINATION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION



The design and implementation of a social protection system will require coordination among all of the different organizations involved in the provision of social protection services and transfers. This includes different line ministries, decentralised structures and civil society organisations. However, most social protection programmes tend to be designed and implemented in silos with little, if any, linkages and complementarities between and among them.

This has contributed to fragmentation of policies and programmes and overlap. There are many factors contributing to poor coordination and the fragmentation of social protection including:¹

- Lack of a national framework or strategy for social protection
- Limited understanding of the most appropriate options to operationalize systems
- Limited awareness and a shortage of shared information
- Lack of coordination and dialogue between national efforts and non-state and informal systems
- Weak vertical coordination between central and local levels
- Weak horizontal coordination among multiple actors involved in managing (and financing) a wide range of policies and programmes
- Under-funding and limited organizational capacity of the lead agencies responsible for social protection²
- Implementation according to different timeframes and planning cycles
- Limited or non-existing links between contributory and non-contributory programmes
- The use of different administrative systems such as selection and identification, delivery, registry and/or monitoring and evaluation systems for each programme
- Complexities related to lines of responsibility
- Poorly coordinated performance systems
- Budget protection
- Issues of 'turf'
- Bureaucratic politics

There are a general advantages and disadvantages of coordination and agencies need to weigh up the costs and benefits of working alone as opposed to coordinating their work, taking into consideration the best interest of the served population. However, coordination is a necessity in the establishment of social protection systems for the following reasons:

- Ensuring the translation of the right to social protection into reality on the ground (vertical coordination)
- Ensuring the efficiency of the system through the avoidance of duplication and synergies across various components of the system (social transfers should complement each other following vertical and horizontal dimensions of social protection extension to ensure universal coverage and benefit adequacy)
- Ensuring the effectiveness of the social protection system by addressing the multi-dimensional nature of poverty
- Ensuring adequacy and consistency of the system, but also to guarantee its financial sustainability and its efficiency.

1. Rawlings, L, Murthy, S. and Winder, N. 2013. *Common Ground: UNICEF and World Bank Approaches to Building Social Protection Systems*. January 2013. UNICEF and The World Bank.

2. The Presidency: Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (2013) *Impact and implementation Evaluation of Government Coordination Systems – International Literature Review*, DPME: Pretoria.



2

THE NEED FOR COORDINATION IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

2.1. DEFINITION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION COORDINATION

Social protection coordination can be defined as the alignment and harmonization of all stakeholder activities (at the programme and administration level) in a coherent and holistic way to reach clearly identified and shared objectives (at the policy level). Obviously, a vertical link (vertical coordination) is also required between the policy and the operational levels.

2.2. THE SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOOR PROPOSES A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Social Protection Floor (SPF) approach, developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) offers an integrated set of social policies with the aim of promoting a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated approach to social protection (SP) to ensure that beneficiaries are protected and empowered throughout the course of their lives.

It is important to note that horizontal and vertical coordination occurs within the social-protection system in the SPF approach; and coordination also occurs between the social-protection system and other areas of public policy in the SPF approach.



2.2.1. Consistency between social protection and decentralisation policies

An increasing number of African countries are gradually devolving decisions around programming and resource allocation to subnational levels. On the one hand, devolution can create opportunities for collaboration across sectors by ensuring that coherent policy and programming responses are closely adapted to local needs and specific contexts, but it can also create challenges. On the other hand, until adequate capacities are in place at local levels the initial steps of devolution (e.g. new laws, rules, organizational structures) are unlikely to make much difference. Moreover, where powers for social protection programmes are held at different levels, devolution can make collaboration across the sectors even more complicated.

2.3. THE CONTINUUM OF RELATIONSHIP

Coordination can range from the less complex or 'looser' arrangements – where two sectors may simply share knowledge and objectives whilst planning policies and programmes separately – to a more complex and integrated arrangement where objectives, activities and resources (human, financial and IT) are shared.

Thus coordination can be seen as part of a **continuum of relationships which require gradually increasing levels of trust and the sharing of resources, risks and rewards**. The continuum may start with networking (no sharing of resources), then move to coordination (minimal sharing of resources), to cooperation (some sharing of risks and rewards), to collaboration (sharing of risks, responsibilities and rewards) and finally to integration in the form of merging programmes and structures into one (see table 1 below).³ There are also different types of approaches to strengthening programme coordination which are explored in further in section 5 of this module.

Table 1. Continuum of relationships

NETWORKING	COORDINATING	COOPERATING	COLLABORATING	INTEGRATING
Exchange of information for mutual benefit	Exchange of information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information	Exchange information	Integrated sharing of information (e.g. one database of beneficiaries)
Informal relationship	Formal relationship	Formal relationship	Formal relationship	Formal relationship reflecting diversity of skills and thinking
Minimal time and trust	Requires moderate time and trust	Substantial time and trust required	Extensive time and trust required	Extensive time and trust required
No sharing of resources	Minimal sharing of resources	Sharing resources to achieve a common purpose	Sharing resources and to enable enhancement capacity of another to achieve common purpose	Merging of resources (human, financial, IT facilities, property etc)
Limited alteration of activities	Alter activities	Alter activities and some sharing of risks and rewards	Alter activities and share risks, responsibilities and rewards	Integrated (joint) planning and delivery of programmes/ agencies/structures

3. The Presidency: Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (2013) Impact and implementation Evaluation of Government Coordination Systems – International Literature Review, DPME: Pretoria.



INTRODUCTION TO LEVELS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION COORDINATION

To be truly effective horizontal coordination needs to take place at three different levels: policy level, programme level, and administration level. In addition, a mechanism to ensure vertical coordination across these different levels has to be part of the coordination efforts. This will ensure a holistic approach from planning to implementation.

3.1. CONCEPT MODEL FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION COORDINATION

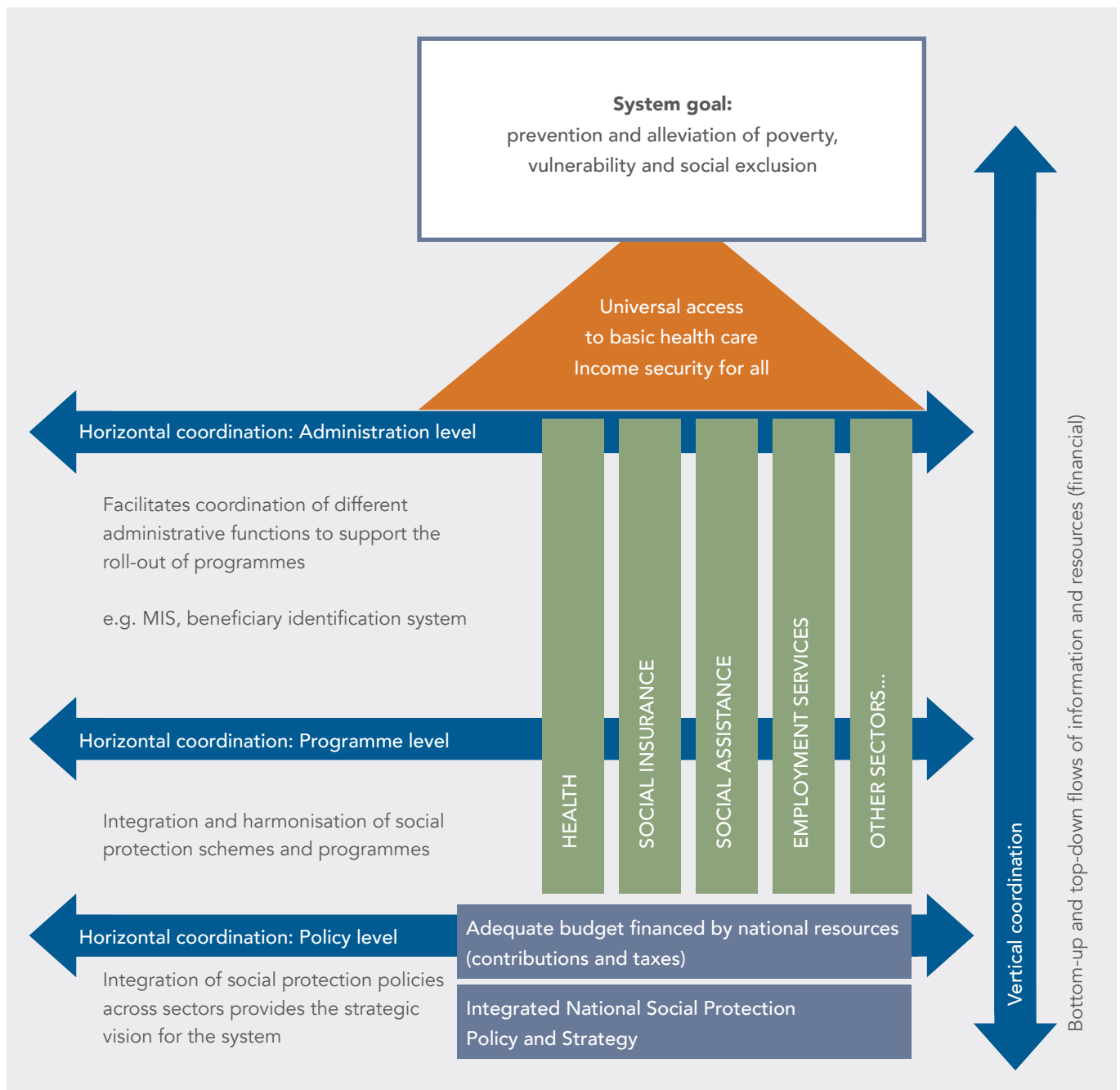
The way in which the different levels of coordination work together to strengthen the overall social protection system is depicted in the following diagram, in the shape of a house.

- **The social protection system** is comprised of a set of components which can operate separately but are inter-linked and complement each other as a system in order to achieve the overall goal of preventing and alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. Together, they ensure universal access to basic health care, and income security for all (child transfers, social protection during working age, and pensions).



- **The foundation** for the system is provided by integrated national social protection legislation, policies and strategies together with an adequate budget dedicated to social protection and financed by national resources (taxes and contributions). This is where horizontal coordination at the policy level is critical because it seeks to ensure overall policy coherence across government (different line ministries being responsible for different components of the system).
- **Horizontal coordination at the programme and administrative levels** cuts across these pillars and facilitates the alignment, integration and harmonization of programmes and the sub-systems that support them.
- **Vertical coordination** ensures the overall consistency between the foundations, and the delivery of social protection programmes. It should include bottom-up and top-down flows of information and resources.

Figure 1. Different levels of coordination of the Social Protection System



4

HORIZONTAL COORDINATION AT THE POLICY LEVEL

Aim: Ensuring overall policy coherence across government bodies

The policy level is the highest level of engagement, where the objectives and functions of the social protection system are defined in the context of national goals and parameters. Major objectives of the coordination effort at the policy level are to define the national SPF and create a road map for its implementation. The following instruments can be utilised to achieve policy coordination.



4.1. CONDUCTING A STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TO IDENTIFY THOSE WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE COORDINATION EFFORT AT THE POLICY LEVEL

An initial step in improving policy coordination is to establish who the relevant stakeholders are with regards to social protection in order to include them in the process of policy development or review. The main stakeholders in social protection should include government staff, development partners and civil society organisations. Some points for consideration in the stakeholder analysis:

- **Early engagement with stakeholders can be both a benefit and a risk.** It takes time to build shared trust and understanding; therefore, it is important to start early in order to build a general sense of ownership and willingness to work together. At the same time, expanding a network too early can make consensus harder to build. As such, the initiators of a joint activity need to think carefully about who to engage and when.
- **It is important to identify who the champions of social protection are.**
- **Senior leader investment of time and energy in supporting and modelling coordinated activity is a key factor for successful coordination.**
- **Civil society's role is often that of watchdog.** As such, its vigorous advocacy for the poor sometimes creates tension with government.
- **The organized business community can exert an important influence on policymakers,** notably to requesting strong government accountability for public service and public finance expressing concern for value for money.

4.2. IMPROVING COORDINATION THROUGH SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICY DEVELOPMENT OR REVIEW

The identification of common goals is crucial to organize the coordination effort at the policy level. The facilitation of a national dialogue and the development/review of a social protection policy can be instrumental to establishing grounds for effective coordination at the policy level.

4.2.1. Setting up a social protection working-group for social protection policy development or review

To ensure that the social protection policy is developed and reviewed in an integrated and comprehensive manner, a coordinating advisory structure could be established. This could be in the form of an inter-ministerial / inter-agency team or working group to provide a platform to share information and knowledge among social protection practitioners. The creation of such a team could also strengthen the impact of policy and technical advisory services provided to governments since this guidance would be collegially discussed.

Key issues to consider when setting up such a team or working group includes:

- **Leadership, mandate and accountability:** The team or working group should be led by a ministry with sufficient leadership capacity.
- **Membership:** The team or working group needs to be representative of various government institutions involved in the field of social protection, as well as representatives of other stakeholders, business and the labour movement, development partners, and relevant civil society organizations.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** Each of the coordinating structure members should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities which could be spelled out in a Terms of Reference or a Memorandum of Understanding.



4.2.2. Developing or reviewing social protection legal framework, policy and strategy, operational plan & monitoring and evaluation framework

The definition of shared priorities for the extension of social protection and the implementation of a SPF should be enshrined in a national social protection policy and strategic framework. The preparation of such a policy and strategy also forces a country to ensure the coherence of social protection development policies with other national policies, notably with respect to available funding (fiscal space allocation). Ideally, the definition of the strategy should be completed using the results of a national dialogue, this would ease the adoption of the strategy and its implementation.

Key components of the social protection framework should be:

- **Policy document**

As social protection covers several different sectors, a national social protection policy needs to be comprehensive. A social protection policy needs to be aligned with the country's national development plan. Coordination should be recognised as a guiding principle of the policy and it should contain details of the institutional arrangements required for both horizontal and vertical coordination of social protection.

- **Detailed operational plan.**

Once a national social protection policy and strategy has been developed, it needs to be operationalized through an operational plan. This plan will determine (i) the specific programmes and activities that need to be undertaken; (ii) the ministries/departments responsible for completing these programmes and activities; and (iii) the resources (both people and financial) to complete each of the programmes/activities.

- **Costing**

A costing of the operational plan should be undertaken as the development of the policy should be based on consideration of available financial resources and allocation of the required resources.

- **Legal framework**

The various policies, strategies and plans can be consolidated into a comprehensive legal framework for social protection. Such a framework can reinforce a common vision of social protection and establish the basis for coordination between the key partner ministries.

- **Monitoring and evaluation framework and system**

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and system is an important tool for effective coordination of social protection management and service delivery. It should contain a set of core indicators to measure the outcomes and impact of coordination and integration of social protection services at all levels of government. Regular evaluations should be conducted to assess the level of coordination of services and programmes at the national, provincial, district and local levels.

4.3. STRENGTHEN COORDINATION IN FINANCING FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION

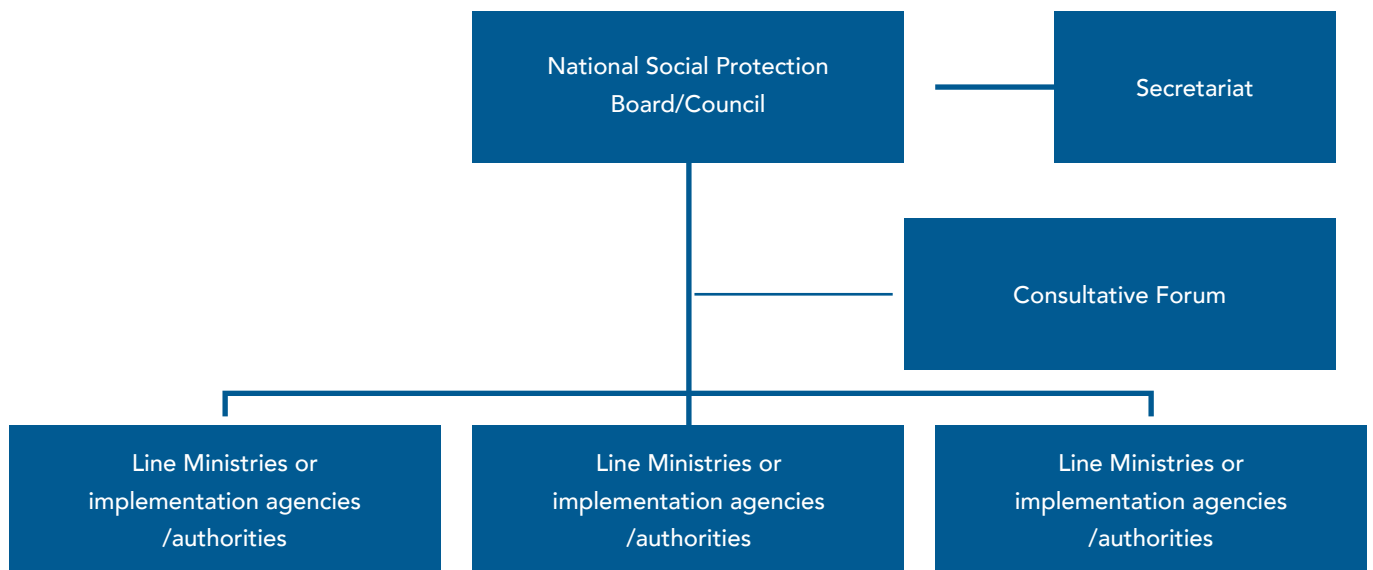
Coordination in financing can be strengthened through cross-sectoral investment frameworks and pooling funds into basket funding.



4.4. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR POLICY COORDINATION

Ultimately, the shared vision of social protection would be embodied in one entity which could be a National Social Protection Board or National Social Protection Council. This entity should be responsible for the provision of policy guidance and coherence; making decisions and recommendations around design and financing of social protection programming and services; and for overseeing coordination of social protection at policy level. It should be held accountable for the successful and efficient implementation of the Social Protection system and should report to the Head of government and the Cabinet. Informed by field experiences and different country cases (including the Kenya, Zambia, but also Philippines, Cambodia and others), figure 3 depicts a structure that should enable the different social protection stakeholders to coordinate their efforts at the policy level. Taken together, the structure presents a possible model against which institutional arrangements for social protection coordination may be measured.

Figure 2 Example of the organizational set-up for coordination at policy level



In the organizational structure depicted above, the National Social Protection Board/Council would be responsible for the development of a national social protection strategy and the review of each line ministry's policy before submission to the prime minister's cabinet or president's office. The Board/Council would also consolidate national statistical and administrative data on the extension of social protection and produce or update national coverage indicators as well as the performance of key social protection schemes/programmes, as it oversees the implementation of the national social protection strategy.

Coordination of contributory and non-contributory social protection

A broader consideration of social protection beyond the non-contributory component is needed when designing institutional arrangements.

The different "components" of social protection systems - contributory non-contributory - have different stakeholder groups and interest groups and often respond to different ministry agendas. This makes it both difficult and critically important to develop a functional institutional structure that includes both of these components.



HORIZONTAL COORDINATION AT THE PROGRAMME/ INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Aim: Improving design of existing programmes and promoting harmonization across the portfolio of programmes

At the programme/institutional level, efforts can be made in the design of programmes to render them better coordinated and linked to other programmes and sectors.

- Issues relating to the integration and harmonization⁴ of similar social protection schemes and programmes are addressed at this level.
- The focus is on identifying and maximizing synergies, and strengthening linkages between programmes in different sectors. For example, linking social assistance beneficiaries to active labour market programmes, such as public works; or linking social assistance and social insurance schemes for workers in the informal economy.
- If a programme functions as part of a coherent system and network of responses, it is more likely to have a greater impact on welfare.⁵
- When social protection programmes are aligned with poverty reduction as well as social inclusion strategies, this results in more multi-sectoral coordination which enables countries to provide solutions in a more holistic and development-oriented manner.⁶

4. Integration might entail the closing down of some programmes and the transferring of beneficiaries to new or consolidated programmes, whereas harmonisation implies improving coordination across programmes (Robalino, Rawlings and Walker 2012: 17).

5. Rawlings et al 2013

6. Rawlings et al 2013



5.1. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR PROGRAMME COORDINATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Social protection programmes cover a range of contributory to non-contributory programmes which are often implemented by various ministries and institutions. Hence it is critical that a coordination structure is in place at the national level in order to lead integrated social protection programme planning, budgeting, harmonisation of programmes as well as integrated and coherent implementation.

This could take the form of different modalities like a National Social Protection Unit as suggested in the Social Protection Bill in Zambia or full integration where an agency is established that integrates programmes under one implementation structure like the model of South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA).

5.1.1. Key success factors for national programme coordinating structure

The following critical factors should be considered when formalizing this type of high-level structure in order to support its successful functioning:

- The structure needs to be representative of all relevant ministries, civil society, labour and business.
- The structure is led by a strong technical ministry with the capacity to lead coordination or by a neutral ministry like the Ministry of Finance. It could be considered to have the unit as a department in the Cabinet Office.
- The coordination structure has clear decision-making power.
- There are guidelines or an operational manual in place to guide cooperation between partners.
- The structure is supported by a secretariat that provides support with administrative issues an in running day-to-day functions.
- There is an agreed, yearly meeting plan for the structure and regular attendance of committee members.
- There is a clear Memorandum of Understanding which includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities and there are clear lines of accountability for all members.

5.2. INTEGRATED PROGRAMME PLANNING FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION

In order to give explicit detail on the operationalization of the policy, improve coordination and reduce the fragmentation of social support programmes across national counterparts as well as, optimize the allocations for social protection interventions **an integrated framework for social protection programme** should be developed. The aims of the integrated framework for social protection programmes are:

- A clear definition of programme targets, the programmes that will be expanded and their roll-out plan, but also the programmes that will be phased-out, introduced, integrated or merged, and the key linkages between social protection programmes and interventions in other policy areas;
- Rationalizing the provision of Social Protection and reducing fragmentation, leading to an increase on the impact of government intervention;
- Ensuring that programme delivery is anchored on a coherent system structure interlinked from the policy, administrative and implementation levels;
- Providing an improved framework to resource mobilization for social protection.



5.3. INTEGRATED MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

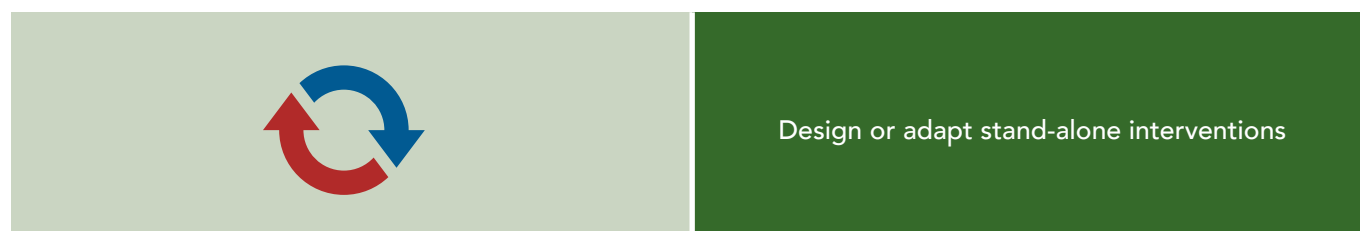
A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system is another tool for effective coordination of social protection management and service delivery. This M&E framework and system would contain a set of core indicators that would be used to measure the outcomes and impact of coordination and integration of social protection services at all levels of government. Regular evaluations should be conducted to assess the level of coordination of services and programmes at the national, provincial, district and local levels.

5.4. LEVEL OF PROGRAMME INTEGRATION, LINKAGES AND HARMONISATION BETWEEN PROGRAMMES OF DIFFERENT SECTORS

To ensure that programmes address the different needs of beneficiaries across their life cycles, there need to be strong linkages between programmes of different sectors, for example cash transfers and nutrition or agriculture interventions. An initial step could be to first determine the degree of integration or coordination that needs to take place. Below is a categorisation of possible degrees of integration or approaches that could be applied and the pros and cons of each approach.

5.4.1. Categorisation and approaches to strengthening coordinated programmes⁷

Design or adapt standalone interventions



This is where freestanding programmes can be designed or adapted to maximise coordination between two sets of objectives. For example, agricultural programmes can be designed to incorporate social protection into their designs; and social protection interventions can be designed to be coordinated with agricultural livelihoods programmes.

Combine multiple interventions into one programme



Two sets of interventions can be combined into **one programme** so that targeted households participate in both interventions. The single programme is **implemented by a single agency**. Different components/programmes can be provided to the same household simultaneously (e.g. including public works and agricultural support components in a food security programme; providing access to health insurance scheme to cash transfer beneficiaries) or sequenced over time depending on what the household needs.



When interventions are sequenced over time, as a household's welfare status improves, the package of interventions could expand from social transfers to include a broader menu of complementary interventions. It is imperative that there is a clear shared vision across different components of the programme regarding how interventions can transition households across different welfare thresholds and interventions.

Coordinate and align multiple programmes and policies



Synergies between many different social protection interventions can be established even when these interventions are not delivered in the same locations or targeted to the same beneficiaries. It could involve interventions being coordinated to reach the same households but through **two independent programmes**. For example, in Lesotho, agricultural livelihood and cash transfer interventions are being coordinated to reach the same households, but through two independent programmes and **implemented by a number of agencies**.

In conclusion, it is important to be mindful of the degree of integration or coordination that needs to take place.

6

HORIZONTAL COORDINATION AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL⁸

Aim: Improve efficiency in delivery, enhance quality of service from the perspective of users, reduce duplications and transaction costs

The aim of coordination of social protection at administrative level is to build basic sub-systems to support one or more programmes. The administrative level focuses on developing the 'nuts-and-bolts tools' that facilitate the core business processes of social protection programmes.⁹

⁸Rawlings et al 2013

⁹The World Bank and UNICEF (2013) *Common Ground: UNICEF and World Bank Approaches to Building Social Protection Systems*.



6.1. TOOLS FOR IMPROVING COORDINATION OF SOCIAL PROTECTION AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL: FRONT AND BACK OFFICE SERVICES

Social protection services at administrative level are usually provided through front and back office services. Activities which afford interaction with the client belong to the front office, while tasks which officials or service providers can carry out without direct contact with the client are back office activities. The following reflects the most common activities of each level.¹⁰

FRONT OFFICE ACTIVITIES	BACK OFFICE ACTIVITIES
Information and advice	Asking for information from responsible entities of different programmes
Support of registration process (provision of registration forms, support to complete forms, submission of registration form, etc.)	Check documents for validity, correctness and completeness
Acquisition and verification of identity and data	Enter data to Integrated System for Information Management and transfer data to entities responsible for different programmes
Notification and hand-out of identification documents (e. g. smart cards)	Follow up of registration process and communication with responsible entities, further processing
Receive complaints and appeals and communicate results	Follow up on complaints and appeals with responsible entities for the respective programme

Administrative integration across programmes could happen at the level of the front or back offices or both. The back and front office do not necessarily have to be in the same place. Service integration between the back and front office can produce positive outcomes for the client as it can create the conditions for services to provide a comprehensive person-centred approach and respond more quickly and effectively to clients' needs. Services integration between front and back offices can avoid the duplication of tasks

10. Ebken, C.(2014) "Single window Services in Social protection: rationale and design Features in Developing Country Contexts".



6.1.1. Back office integration

Shared identification of beneficiaries¹¹

Identification systems are used to identify recipients, ensure identified beneficiaries have access to social protection benefits, and ensure a well-functioning delivery system. However, many countries have weak identification systems that are not conducive to social protection programme delivery. The management of shared identification systems is both the result of coordination efforts and a means to foster collaboration. Shared identification systems have a range of advantages including, it improves transparency of the system, forces various ministries to share information on their recipients, allows for identification of uncovered population, simplifies access to services and create better links between programmes. However, it is important to take into consideration the respect for people's privacy as well as to clearly define the use of the database in order to prevent any misuse.

Shared beneficiary selection systems¹²

In many countries, each programme has developed its own tools and processes to collect data and select recipients. Beneficiary registries are often independent of each other, even within the same ministry or agency. As a result, the social protection landscape is scattered and inconsistent, which results in limited outreach and numerous inclusion and exclusion errors. One possible way to tackle this issue is to develop joint registries to select beneficiaries. Developing a common selection system necessarily aligns stakeholders' understanding of the factors that define poverty and vulnerability (when it comes to social assistance), as well as requires the development of a shared database on the population. It also enables local governments and policy-makers to better understand these populations and develop appropriate and coordinated programmes, while it at the same time can contribute to increase the outreach of social assistance programmes and install transparency in the selection criteria.

Management Information System (MIS)¹³

A database and MIS of a programme can be used to manage registration of beneficiaries, identification and authentication, collection of contributions, payment of benefits and delivery of services, and other key administrative functions. Further, looking at the entire social protection system in a country, information systems and databases can be used to better coordinate among and ensure consistency across different schemes and institutions involved in social protection or employment services.

Integrated Management Information Systems (IMIS)

An Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) is a common software used by several social protection programmes to manage part or all of the administrative functions jointly: registration of beneficiaries, identification and authentication, collection of contribution, payment of benefits and delivery of services, complaints and appeal and so on.

Centralised beneficiary database system or single registry of beneficiaries as an example of integration of front and back offices

A single registry is a shared database of individuals between two or more programmes. Information contained in the single registry can be used to identify and select beneficiaries. In most countries a single registry will contain selection indexes (i.e. ways to select beneficiaries) used by the different programmes. The use of a single registry does not affect the normal administrative functions of the different programmes, which will continue to use their own MISs. The advantages of a single registry of beneficiaries are that it can reduce the ministries' duplication of data collection, it allows for a coordinated approach and fosters transparency in the identification of beneficiaries, and contributes to secure the complementarity of the different programmes; and it serves as a tool for coordinated monitoring and evaluation and coordinated planning.

11. International Labour Organisation and United Nations Development Group (2016), "UNDG Social Protection Coordination Toolkit - Coordinating the Design and Implementation of Nationally Defined Social Protection Floors"
 12. International Labour Organisation and United Nations Development Group (2016), "UNDG Social Protection Coordination Toolkit - Coordinating the Design and Implementation of Nationally Defined Social Protection Floors"
 13. International Labour Organisation and United Nations Development Group (2016), "UNDG Social Protection Coordination Toolkit - Coordinating the Design and Implementation of Nationally Defined Social Protection Floors"



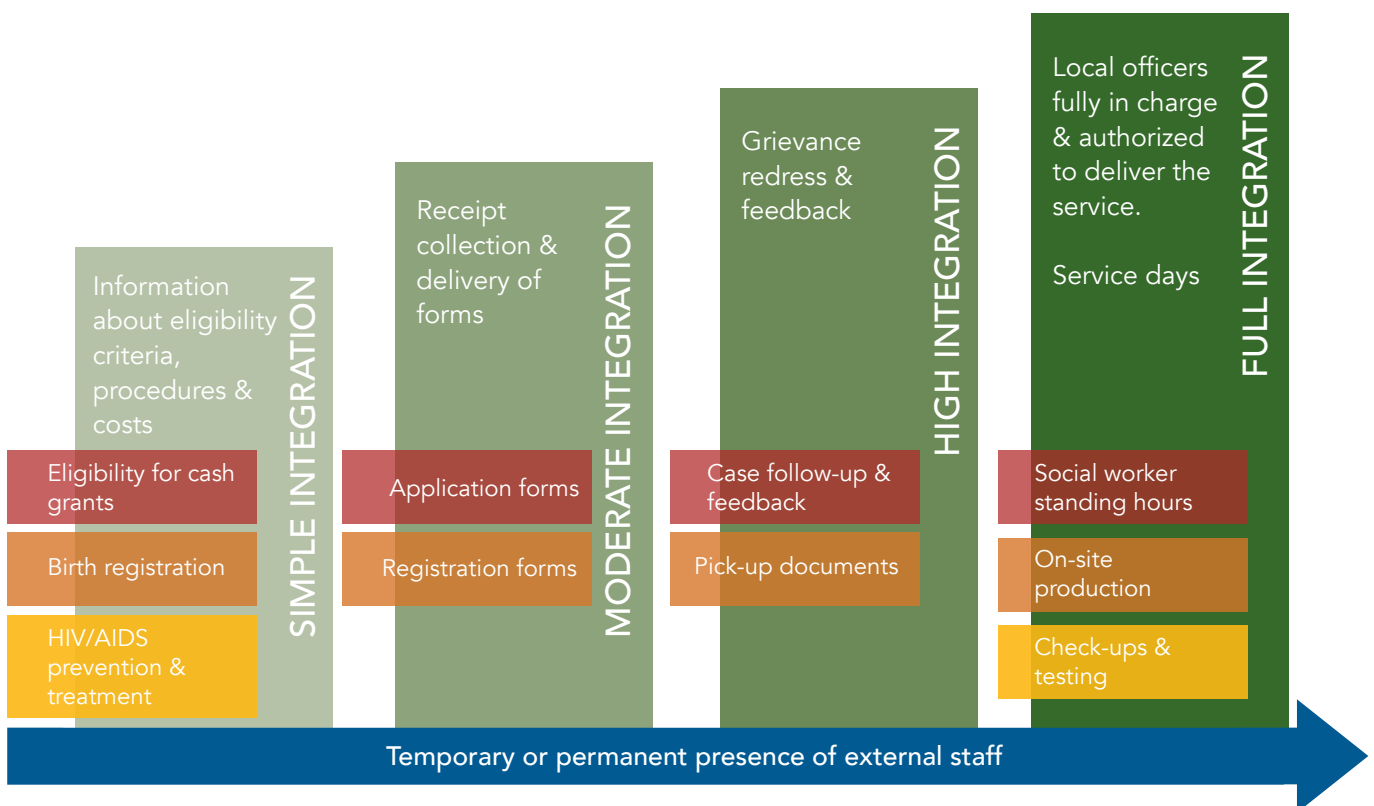
Grievance and redress feedback

A grievance, redress feedback and appeal system is another tool of coordination that furthermore integrates front and back offices. Grievance mechanisms help ensure that citizens and beneficiaries can “voice” complaints regarding programme administration, and seek redress for grievances related to the quality of programme delivery or payment of benefits. An integrated complaints/grievance mechanism across programmes can enable the proper tracking and redress of complaints and the systematic analysis of the nature and type of complaints. This data can be used to improve the overall programme implementation and administration. An integrated grievance mechanism could be established with clear guidelines. This could be part of a Single-Window Service (see below).

6.1.2. Front office integration: Referral and Case management systems

Interaction with clients takes place in the front office. Front office integration does not necessarily require a shared facility by various ministries and service providers but should have as its primary objective to coordinate and provide effective service delivery to its clients. This requires willingness by the various ministries and service providers to come together and map out how they can streamline the services. Front offices’ level of integration can be classified as follows depending on complexity and capacity on the ground.¹⁴

- 1) Simple engagement: Information about eligibility criteria, procedures and costs (knowledge of the officers, announcement boards, leaflets).
- 2) Moderate engagement: Registration/application forms available.
- 3) High engagement: Case management.
- 4) Full engagement: Full processing of service on-site on a permanent or periodical basis



14. Damerau, V. (2015) “Methodological Guidelines to Establish a One Stop Shop (OSS) for Service Delivery in the Kingdom of Lesotho – Proposal”.



Referral system

Critical for the harmonization between social protection programmes is an effective referral system.

- It is recommended that a formal referral mechanism be developed together with a **clear set of guidelines** for referral between the various social protection programmes and between these and other relevant services, such as health or education. As part of the referral system, **standardized forms** should be developed.
- This should be accompanied by a **capacity building strategy** targeting all governmental and non-governmental actors involved in direct service provision at the district and local levels.
- It is also important to have a **counter-referral process or feedback**, where the receiving programme/service provides feedback to the programme/service first accessed by the beneficiary. This completes the referral loop between all programmes and services.

Case management

Good coordination patterns at the local level should result in the empowerment of local social officers/agents, enabling them to develop a case management approach (at individual or family levels) to social protection delivery. However, besides the human resources necessary to run the scheme, there may be resistance to organisational reorganisation as well as technical limitations (e.g. managing an integrated beneficiary registry) which can become barriers to implementing the approach. The development of a case management approach and the empowerment of local social officers not only requires a strong delegation of responsibilities (partial management of the beneficiary list at the local level), but also the development and establishment of shared tools that will allow the local social officers to develop a broad vision of available social protection transfers.

One-stop shops and other integrated front-office solutions

A very simple yet efficient way to foster collaboration is to establish shared facilities where different line services are represented and serve the people. These delivery mechanisms simplify access to services for beneficiaries while at the same time build a basis for collaboration between the service providers/ministries through better understanding each other's activities and mandates. A one-stop shop is an example of this type of collaborative delivery mechanism. The delivery of several services in a single location contributes to increase transparency and efficiency, reducing transactional costs for both government and citizens.

EXAMPLE:

SINGLE WINDOW SERVICE AS AN ADVANCED MODEL OF ADMINISTRATIVE INTEGRATION

The Single Window Service (SWS) is a mechanism for the coordinated development and delivery of social protection programmes and other support services (e.g. employment). Embedded in government institutions and operated by the subnational administration, the SWS is linked to the central level via a formalized reporting system based on an integrated MIS. This reporting system ensures the transparency and traceability of the social protection system. It also facilitates better coordination between the local level (responsible for service delivery) and the central/national level (responsible for policy development, planning, and monitoring and evaluation).

The SWS can provide a coherent framework for the implementation of national social protection strategies in an integrated, effective, and efficient way by establishing a management system and a reporting mechanism that links the central government to provinces, districts, communes, and villages.



In the African context there are serious challenges with decentralizing front-office capacity and there is lack of resources in the rural areas. Government lacks resources at local level and each ministry provides implementation of social protection programmes in silo and with no cooperation with other relevant ministries. As a result of the lack of capacity of government to offer decentralised services, potential beneficiaries face barriers like high transportation costs. Coupled with insufficient awareness amongst community members of procedures and eligibility criteria for social protection programmes and lack of reliable communication channels this can result in low uptake of services.

One possibility to reach clients in smaller villages and more rural settings is through mobile units either through agents or by using specially outfitted trucks and busses. This proves particularly useful for serving populations living in isolated or peripheral areas and for allowing poor and vulnerable groups easier access to services.

A mobile one-stop shop using specially outfitted vehicles has been successfully implemented in South Africa, while in Lesotho One Stop Shops have recently been piloted at Community Council level and by offering special service days, clients are able to reach a number of services at their door steps.

7

VERTICAL COORDINATION

Aim: Ensure consistency, responsiveness to local context and accountability in programme implementation

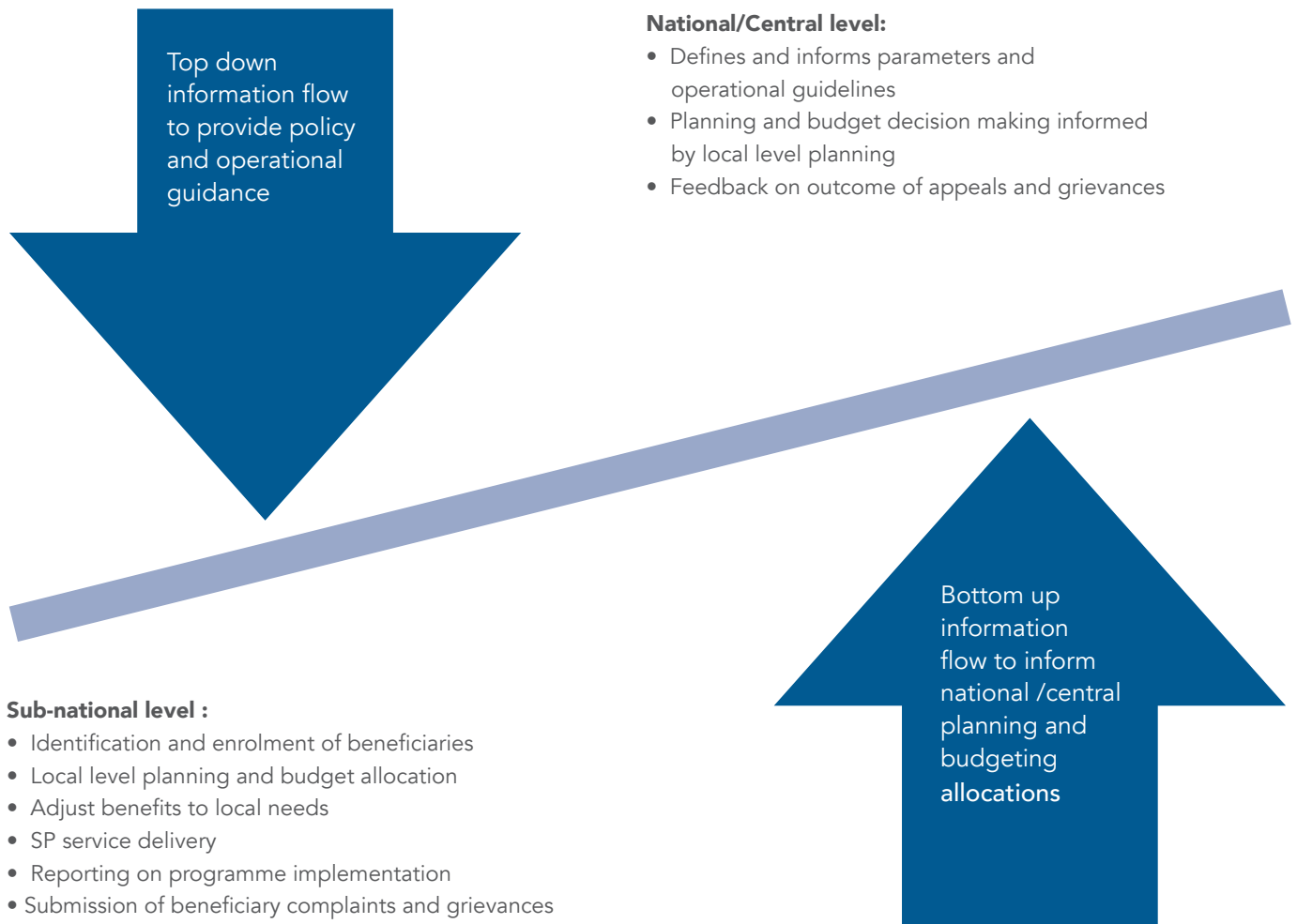
Coordination is considered to be 'vertical' when it takes place between the different levels of government (federal, national, provincial/regional, district, and commune/village) in order to guarantee the implementation of the defined policies, the financial sustainability of the social protection system, and the decentralized delivery of social transfers to beneficiaries. Vertical coordination is based on the recognition that each layer of the social protection system depends on the other layers to perform its own duties. For instance the operational layer needs to respect the parameters of the schemes defined at higher level. Reversely, the planning layer requires certain types of information from the field to be accurately completed.



7.1. VERTICAL FLOWS OF INFORMATION ACROSS THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVELS

Vertical coordination consists of ensuring a flow of information both downwards and upwards.

Figure 3 Vertical flows of information across the administrative levels



7.2. IMPROVING VERTICAL COORDINATION

7.2.1. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the different administrative layers¹⁵

It is generally accepted that the decentralization of certain functions of the social protection system should lead to better services for residents. The process of decentralization can substantially improve the efficiency, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of service provision compared to centralized systems. However social protection systems, as most public service delivery systems, generally require a certain degree of uniformity and standardization in the way in which services are defined and delivered. It is therefore generally a necessity that key parameters and procedures of social protection schemes are established centrally. What is critical is defining the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at different levels.

7.2.2. Streamlining vertical coordination structures

In order to facilitate vertical coordination, the national coordination structure should be mirrored through to the provincial, district and local levels.

The institutional arrangements selected to facilitate vertical coordination will largely depend on how social protection programmes are currently implemented. For example, social protection programmes may be implemented in a centralized (e.g. via a national agency) or decentralized manner (see Governance module). Determining appropriate institutional arrangements is often an evolving process based on lessons learned, changing program needs, stakeholder participation, and government leadership. It may be necessary to harmonise already existing programme based coordination mechanisms as there is often a proliferation of coordination mechanisms resulting in fragmentation of actions. This could be addressed by streamlining district or community level structures to improve programme coordination.

7.2.3. Ensuring that coordination mechanisms have necessary mandates and capacity to coordinate

This includes a combination of political leverage, power to coordinate and adequate technical and functional capacity and incentive systems in place to effectively nudge actors towards multi-sectoral collaboration.

In order to operate effectively and efficiently, the staff on these structures across all levels (national through to community level) require orientation and capacity building on social protection coordination and different ways in which to achieve coordination (e.g. adapting single interventions, combining interventions into a single programme, coordinating and aligning policies and programmes) (for details, see section 5).

7.2.4. Developing guidance/operational manuals to guide vertical coordination of social protection

It can be useful to have a manual of operations to guide vertical and horizontal coordination. This manual should:

- Describe in detail the various structures, functions and capacities of the coordination structures at the different levels of the system (from national through to community level) - an organogram can be used to depict these structures and the development of a national coordination strategy could also assist here.
- Specify and delineate the roles and responsibilities of all actors at all levels of the system
- Provide guidelines on the two-way flow of information between national to community level which should be both top-down and bottom-up - this would include guidance on the communication flows around planning and budget allocations; and appeals and grievance mechanisms.
- Provide guidelines on how different stakeholders coordinate at different levels in implementing the social protection programme, and how it is linked with other types of social protection programmes.



15. UNDP; UNCDF. 2013. *Strengthening the governance of social protection: The role of local government – Regional Analysis* (Bangkok). Available at: http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/democratic_governance/RBAP-DG-2014-Strengthening-Governance-of-Social-Protection.pdf



7.2.5. Creating incentives for coordination

Incremental financing, provided on condition of achieving targets for coordination can be used by ministries of finance to create incentives for working together.

