

Social Protection: A powerful tool for advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls

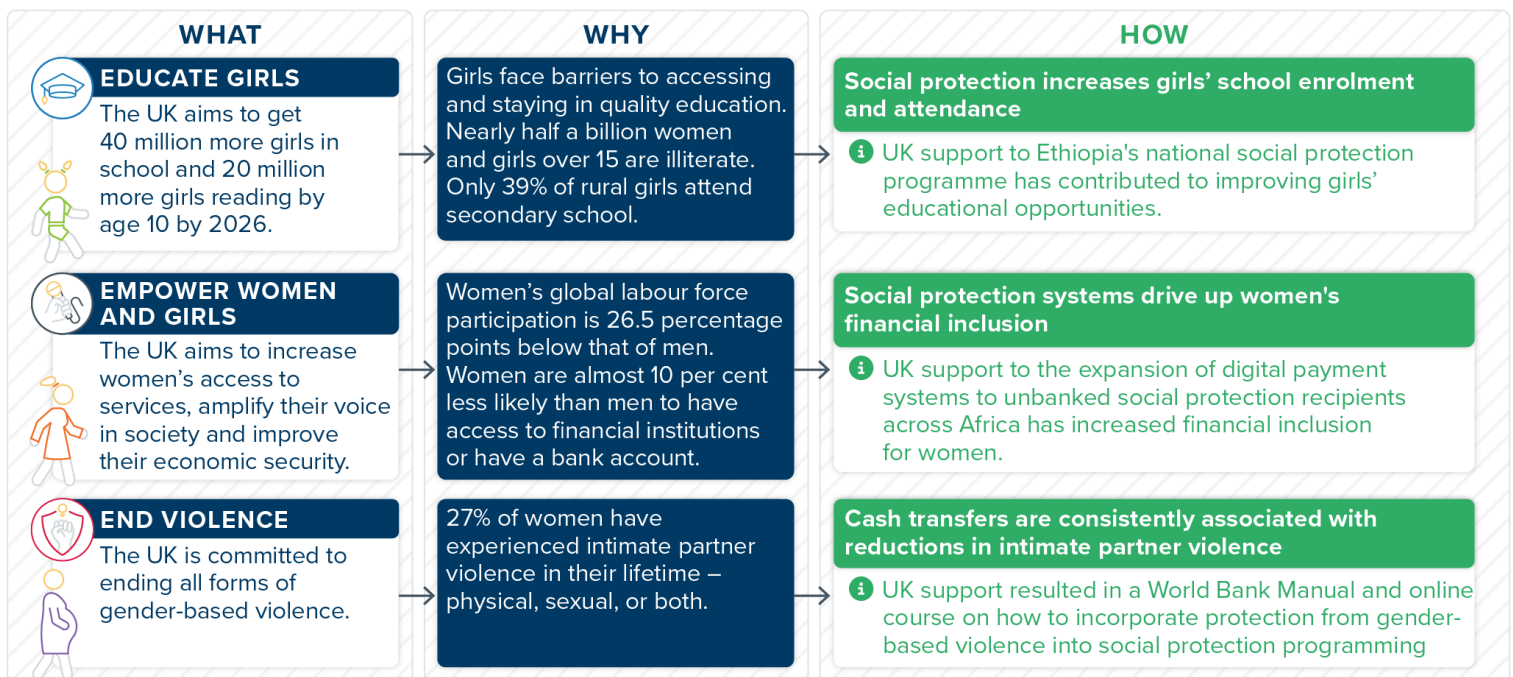
Social protection systems prevent and protect people – especially women and girls – from poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion throughout the course of their lives. Access to social protection is a human right and a powerful tool to empower women and girls and promote gender equality. Strong social protection systems increase women’s income, assets and financial decision-making, support girls to stay in school, delay early marriage and pregnancy, and provide economic and social security in later years.

A strong social protection system incorporates a range of contributory and non-contributory policies and programmes - including cash and in-kind transfers, skills training, maternity/paternity and sickness benefits, social care services and pensions.

However, despite global progress in expanding social protection, systems often fail to consider gender inequalities. To advance gender-responsive social protection, national and international partners can:

- » **Expand social protection systems** to reach more women and girls and close the gender gap.
- » **Strengthen social protection policies and systems** so that they address gender risks and inequalities.
- » **Create opportunities for social protection to empower and transform** the lives of women and girls, including through linkages with complementary services and programmes.

Social Protection supports the delivery of gender equality



Want to know more? Contact the STAAR (Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources) Facility for free independent technical assistance, specialist advice, or bespoke resources on gender-responsive social protection: STAAR@STAARfacility.org.

