socialprotection.org presents:
The Gender and Social Protection Webinar Series
commencing with:
Gender and Social Protection: Current Issues and Policy Trends
organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UNDP’s International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (the IPC-IG).

Speaker: Nicola Jones (Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute)
Speaker: Agnes Quisumbing (Senior Research Fellow, The International Food Policy Research Institute)
Discussant: Ana Paula De la O Campos (Gender Policy Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization)
Moderator: Alicia Spengler (Senior Project Analyst, IPC-IG)
Welcome to the

Gender and Social Protection: Current Issues and Policy Trends Webinar

organized by the **Food and Agriculture Organization** (FAO) and the UNDP’s **International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth** (the IPC-IG).
Gender and Social Protection: Current Issues and Policy Trends Webinar

Panellists:

Speaker: Nicola Jones (Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute), 9:00-9:30

Speaker: Agnes Quisumbing (Senior Research Fellow, The International Food Policy Research Institute), 9:30-9:45

Discussant: Ana Paula De la O Campos (Gender Policy Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization), 9:45-9:55

Moderator: Alicia Spengler (Senior Project Analyst, International Policy Centre of Inclusive Growth)
Gender and Social Protection:  
Current Issues and Policy Trends Webinar  

Moderator:  
Alicia Spengler (Senior Project Analyst, IPC-IG)

Alicia is a German national, and holds a Master’s degree in Politics and Economist from the University of Cologne, with focus on the Latin American Region and a post-graduation in HR Management as well as further courses in IT Management and Strategic Sustainable Development. She is an ICT4D specialist with ten years of experience in programming, particularly in research and pilot projects. She has worked with a range of stakeholders including: Government Ministries, the private sector, international and local NGO’s, MFIs and Credit Cooperatives, academic research centres and policy think thanks. Her technical areas of expertise include social protection, financial inclusion, community development and digital payment systems. Alicia has worked in different developing and emerging countries in Latin America. She is fluent in German, English, Portuguese and Spanish. At the IPC-IG Alicia works as a Project Analyst and is mainly responsible for the execution of the Social Protection Knowledge Sharing Gateway project, financed by the Australian Government.
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Dr Nicola Jones is a Senior Research Fellow in the Social Development Programme at the ODI in London and is an expert in gender- and child-sensitive social protection programming and evaluation. She is also the co-Director of the Gender and Adolescence-Global Evidence (GAGE) Programme. She has carried out a range of mixed methods and qualitative and participatory studies on gender-sensitive social protection for a number of donors including AusAID, DFID, FAO, UNICEF, UN Women and the World Bank. She was the lead researcher for a multi-year programme of work for AusAID and DFID on gender-sensitive social protection in Africa and Asia (2009-2012); and the lead qualitative researcher for the DFID-funded Transforming Cash Transfers Programme on citizen perceptions of social transfers in Africa and the Middle East (2011-2013). Recently Nicola was part of the expert group inputting into the FAO SOFA 2014-2015 report on Social Protection and Agriculture. She has published widely for a range of academic, policy and NGO audiences, including a co-authored book with Rebecca Holmes entitled “Gender and Social Protection in the Developing World: Beyond Mothers and Safety Nets” by Zed Books, 2013, and she is a co-editor with Rana Jawad and Mahmood Messkoub of a forthcoming volume entitled Social policy in the Middle East and North Africa: From social assistance to universal social protection. Edward Elgar.

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Rethinking social protection through the lenses of gender and adolescence

Dr. Nicola Jones
Senior Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute
Conceptualising gender and adolescence in social protection
Conceptualising gender in social protection

Evolution of the gender perspective in social protection (SP):

→ In the early stages of its development, SP agenda understood in terms of categories of poor, excluded & vulnerable social groups, differentiated according to age, health status & relationship to formal labour markets.

→ An emphasis on the formal sector at the expense of women in particular — although some measures targeted at female-headed households, gender rarely used as a differentiating lens for understanding exposure to risk & vulnerability and informing design of SP measures.

→ At the same time SP initiatives are rarely gender neutral; poorly designed programmes can exacerbate or contribute to inequalities (Luttrell and Moser, 2004).

→ Interventions have tended to be more preoccupied with addressing the condition of poor women i.e. their material circumstances, than their position i.e. place and power within the home and society — without which poverty cannot be addressed in a sustainable manner (Holmes and Jones 2013).
Gender-related constraints and risks

According to Kabeer“s (2008) typology, the constraints that limit opportunities for women and girls can be:

- **gender-specific** i.e. societal norms and practices that apply to women or men by virtue of their gender;
- **gender-intensified** i.e. inequalities between household members reflecting norms and customs on the distribution of food, health care, access to property etc.;
- **gender-imposed** i.e. forms of gender disadvantage that reflect discrimination in the wider public domain.

Gendered risks and vulnerabilities are experienced at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels.
Dual rationale for promoting gender equality:

- Equality as a **human right** and matter of social justice
- Greater equity between women & men can support economic growth & **development outcomes** (resilience with regard to future poverty)

Twin track approaches to programming for gender equality:

- **Gender mainstreaming** — the integration of a gender perspective into every stage of the policy process – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming is not concerned only with women, but with the relationship between women and men for the benefit of both.
- **Gender-specific actions** — transform the inequalities between women and men that have been identified through gender analysis and mainstreaming (EC 2008).
The full range of social protection interventions comprises the following measures (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004):

- **Protective** — are narrowly targeted safety nets for income and consumption smoothing in periods of crisis or stress e.g. social assistance programmes for the chronically poor.
- **Preventive** — seek to avert deprivation e.g. social insurance such as pensions and maternity benefits.
- **Promotive** — aim to enhance real incomes and capabilities, and provide springboards and opportunity ladders out of poverty.
- **Transformative** — seek to address concerns of social equity and exclusion through social empowerment e.g. collective action for workers’ rights, building voice and authority in decision-making for women.
Applying a gender lens to transformative social protection approaches recognises (Holmes and Jones 2015):

- that *gender inequality is a source of risk and vulnerability embedded in the broader socio-political environment*
- that these *risks & vulnerabilities are mediated through policy interventions, pre-existing political economy dynamics and socio-cultural norms* (all of which have their own context-specific gender dynamics)
- that *economic and social risks and vulnerabilities are inherently influenced by gender relations* — women, men, girls and boys not only experience different types of risks, but cope with the same risks and vulnerabilities differently
Conceptualising adolescence in social protection

In many countries social transitions to adulthood (work, marriage, childbirth) are taking place well into the ‘20s. Neurodevelopmental changes also continue into the early ‘20s. BUT an explicit focus on 10-19 year olds (ILO, n.d.):

- Enables consideration of special *human rights considerations* i.e. the majority of adolescents given special consideration through the CRC
- Recognises that the *gap between biological maturity and social transitions to adulthood is not widening* in many countries / communities — esp. early marriage
- Recognises that adolescents can be *reached through fora / networks specific to their age band* e.g. parents and peers as important sources of influence, school-base interventions.
- Enables consideration of *age-specific health services* — esp. as health-compromising behaviours often begin during adolescence — as well as of *age-specific opportunities for civic participation*. 
Social protection responses to gender- and adolescent-related risks
Social protection measures need to be designed to respond to different gender-specific categories of risk including (Luttrell and Moser, 2004):

- **Health risks** e.g. infant mortality, disease;
- **Life cycle risks** e.g. childbearing, divorce, widowhood;
- **Household economic risks** e.g. increased expenditure for social obligations such as marriage and funerals;
- **Social risks** e.g. exclusion, domestic violence, crime.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social protection intervention</th>
<th>Gender-related risks / vulnerabilities</th>
<th>Gender-related impact analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Cash transfers, conditional and unconditional (mainly targeted at mothers / primary carers)**                                                                                                           |  • Insufficient and/or unequal allocation of resources and opportunities between boy and girl children  
  • Child labour, especially boys.  
  • Female foeticide and child marriage.  
  • Insufficient nutrition and pre- and post-natal care, and risks for working mothers.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  • Improves survival, nutrition, health and education of girl children  
  • Promotes and expands women’s livelihood options.  
  • Increases women’s bargaining power in household and community.  
  • Can bring excluded women into the circle of citizenship.  
  • Improves nutrition and health of newborn and mother.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| **Childcare support for working mothers**                                                                                                                                                |  • Children may be left alone in the house or with an unreliable carer when mothers go out to work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  • Improves access to education for girl children.  
  • Expands women’s employment opportunities.  
  • Increases women’s participation in public life.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
<p>| <strong>School feeding programmes / after school training</strong>                                                                                                                                         |  • Children may not attend school due to domestic chores/home-based work (mainly girls) and child labour (mainly boys).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  • Better nutrition and uninterrupted education promotes employability and productivity of next generation of workers.                                                                                                                                                                                               |</p>
<table>
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| **Secondary school scholarships / stipends for girls** | • Double burden of work/ school leads to low productivity, fewer opportunities in adulthood, more likelihood of entering high-risk employment (e.g. hazardous industries, prostitution).                                                                                                                                                                                      | • Can delay marriage of daughters aged 11-19.   
• Positive impacts for future health and well-being.  
• Overcomes parental indifference/reluctance over girls’ education.                                                                                                             |
| **Public works programmes**            | • Gender-related inequalities in access to employment.  
• Loss of employment/ employment insecurity because of pregnancy or time taken out for childcare.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | • Can help to break inertia of on-going unemployment.  
• Creates infrastructure that may enable women’s mobility or reduce workloads.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| **Social pensions**                    | • Costs of retiring or withdrawing from work in the absence of any work-related provision for retirement.  
• Widow’s loss of assets to late husband’s family; dependence on good will of children/family members.  
• Heavy childcare responsibilities where HIV and AIDS lead to high numbers of absent middle-age adults and vulnerable children.                                                                                                                                                                         | • Can give elderly men and women some bargaining power.  
• Can act as recognition of women’s unpaid work.  
• Improves security, dignity, self worth, status, particularly for elderly widows.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| **Legislation**                        | • Discrimination (e.g. inheritance, land ownership).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | • Gives women tools for advancing their status and empowerment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
Protection responses to adolescent-specific risks

• More than 70 million adolescents do not attend secondary school. Many of those that do, fail to complete their studies or lack sufficient skills to meet labour market demands.

• Esp. for girls, child marriage, discrimination and exclusion diminish their opportunities to access quality education and live productive lives.

• HIV and AIDS represent daunting and life-threatening risks for adolescents in high-prevalence countries.

• In many regions crises have exacerbated risks, poverty and marginalisation among adolescents.
### Sector-related risks / vulnerabilities amongst adolescents

**Health-related risks:**
- Risky behaviour: drug, tobacco & alcohol use; early marriage, early childbearing/pregnancy, sexual abuse and violence increase likelihood of maternal and child mortality
- Higher risk of HIV/AIDS infection & sexual transmitted diseases due to risky practices, sexual violence and rape (inside and outside marriages)
- Injuries as a result of traffic accidents and gang-related violence as leading causes of death among youth, particular in urban areas.
- High incidence of mental health disorders, such as depression.

**E.g. social protection interventions**
- Family & individual support programmes can be critical in providing counselling and information on health-related risks associated with early marriage & childbearing; providing support to those affected by HIV and AIDS. and reducing stigma associated with youth with mental illnesses (i.e. depression).

**Barriers to education:**
- Cost: secondary schooling is usually more expensive than basic primary education.
- Distance and transportation: secondary & vocational training facilities are usually more scarce than primary education or located in urban centres far from rural /geographically remote communities.
- Early marriages & adolescent pregnancy increase likelihood of high drop-out rates.
- In terms of protection, high vulnerability to crime & violence (at home, community, schools).
- High risk of rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, esp. for girls (exacerbated in emergency & violence settings).
- Child labour: adolescents working excessive hours and/or in illegal conditions are less able to complete education.

**Social protection interventions**
- Social transfers can reduce financial barriers to accessing secondary school & vocational training, as well as reduce incentives for early marriage.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Sector-related risks / vulnerabilities amongst adolescents</strong></th>
<th><strong>E.g. social protection interventions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under- &amp; unemployment among adolescents / youth:</strong></td>
<td>Focusing on adolescents can help address employment-related vulnerabilities experienced in transition to youth &amp; adulthood:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the 211 million unemployed people in 2009, nearly 40 percent were between 15 and 24 years of age. Another 152 million are estimated to be underemployed.</td>
<td>• Social transfers can contribute to reducing financial barriers to accessing secondary school &amp; vocational training, as well as reduce incentives for early marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main causes are (i) skills deficit, lack of appropriate skills and low levels of education; (ii) youth population is growing at a faster pace than available employment opportunities.</td>
<td>• The design of public works &amp; cash for work programmes can be adjusted to integrate labour &amp; skill training schemes for adolescents &amp; youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender discrimination...</strong></td>
<td>Legislation &amp; policy reform can contribute to removing barriers to access based on exclusion &amp; gender discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...further exacerbates lack of access to basic services &amp; fulfilment of adolescent rights – e.g. where families are unable to afford education services for all their children, the boy child is often the one in whom they invest; when schools are located far from home, boys are more likely to be sent because they tend to have more mobility.</td>
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Social protection programming for (rural) women and adolescent girls — what works?
a. Cash transfers / economic empowerment

Malawi: cash transfers

Aim: Tackle adolescent girls’ low school attendance and their risk of engaging in unsafe practices, including transactional sex, in response to income insecurity

Intervention: Two year cash transfer programme (08/09) involving 3,805 girls & young women aged 13 to 22 in 176 urban and rural areas in Zomba, a district with high drop-out rates and low educational attainment. Stipends ranged from $1-5 a month for adolescent girls while parallel payments to parents ranged from $4-10.

Results: Receiving the cash transfer led to a decline in self-reported sexual activity and a 40 and 30% drop in marriage and pregnancy, respectively. The transfer also reduced school drop-out rates by approximately 40% relative to the comparison group (UNICEF 2015).

Mexico: adjusting benefit size

Aim: Address gender discrimination in access to education

Intervention: Under conditional cash transfer programme ‘Oportunidades’, receipt of cash is conditional on school attendance for all children, but beginning at the secondary level grants are slightly higher for girls than for boys.

Results: Between 2002 and 2003 enrolment in rural secondary schools of beneficiary children increased by 24% relative to that of non-beneficiaries with similar socio-economic characteristics. Enrolment among boys increased by 17.1% and among girls 32.2% relative to the comparison group (UNICEF 2015).
a. Cash transfers / economic empowerment

_Uganda: family asset building_

**Aim:** Improve access to education and reduce engagement in risky sexual practices amongst adolescents

**Intervention:** The Suubi economic empowerment programme focused on increasing assets for families, providing workshops on asset building, monthly meetings with mentors on life planning, and a Child Development Account with a 2:1 match of contributions that could be used for education/training or a small business. The average monthly net deposit was $6.33, which accumulated to $228 per year, enough to cover almost two years of secondary education.

**Results:** An RCT found that adolescents who participated were found to have significantly better self-esteem and self-rated health measures than the control group. Girls reported greater increases in self-esteem than boys. Adolescents with increased self-esteem were found less likely to intend to engage in risky sexual behaviours (Ssewamala et al. 2009).
b. Education subsidies / stipends

**Bangladesh: education grants**

**Aim:** Tackle large gender disparities in secondary school enrolment

**Intervention:** The Female Secondary School Stipend Programme launched by the Government of Bangladesh in 1982, provided girls with tuition stipends.

**Results:** Girls’ net primary enrolment had risen to nearly 86% by 2002/3 compared to 48% in 1996. In 2002/3 secondary gross enrolment rates were 45% for boys and 47% for girls. Bangladesh has succeeded in providing equal access to girls at both primary and secondary level (Raynor and Wesson 2006).

**Zimbabwe: education grants and supplies**

**Aim:** Combat factors associated with increased HIV risk amongst adolescent girls

**Intervention:** Students received educational support in the form of fees, books, uniforms and other school supplies. Female teachers were selected to act as helpers in monitoring school absences.

**Results:** Retention rates were significantly higher in the intervention cohort; an RCT found that the control group was 6 times more likely to drop out of school and 3 times more likely to get married. Additionally, the intervention group participants were significantly less likely to be absent from school and more likely to report delayed sexual debut and endorse gender equality (Hallfors et al. 2011).
b. Education subsidies / stipends

Kenya: education grants and school / household supplies

Aim: Decrease school dropout and delay sexual debut

Intervention: Participating households received school fees and uniforms, as well as mosquito nets and blankets, and food supplements every two weeks for a cost of $100 per year per adolescent. Community visitors monitored school attendance, bought sanitary napkins for girls during menses and arranged clinic visits for malaria or parasites.

Results: After one year, those in the control group were significantly more likely to drop out of school (14% compared to 4%) and begin sexual intercourse (33% compared to 19%). Girls in the experimental group were less likely to express acceptance of violence against women and increased acceptance of gender equity (Cho et al. 2011).
c. Public works programmes

**Ethiopia: Productive Safety Net Programme (PNSP)**

**Aim:** Smooth consumption, prevent depletion of household assets and create community assets

**Intervention:** Shift towards longer-term solutions rather than emergency-based appeals. Households unable to work receive transfers of cash and/or food. Second component provides extension, fertiliser, credit and other services to help households graduate from the PNSP. Gender-sensitive approach to type of community assets created e.g. water points to reduce women & girls’ time poverty.

**Result:**

→ At the individual level, women’s participation has been high and supported their practical needs, inc. increased household consumption and providing for children’s needs. Women are provided with income-earning opportunities that are scarce in many rural areas (avoiding migration for work as domestic employees).

→ However, at the intra-household level, impacts have been more mixed. The programme has reinforced gendered notions of agricultural work and had a limited impact on unequal gender relations. It has failed to take into account women’s time poverty by e.g. offering flexible hours. Its payment modality — to the head of household — does not challenge unequal decision-making within the home.

→ At the community level, gender impacts have been minimal. Women’s involvement in community decision-making linked to the programme has been limited. Because of the narrow focus on physical infrastructure development, women’s contributions are perceived to be inferior (Holmes and Jones 2015).
India: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)

**Aim:** Reduce rural vulnerabilities and increase employment and agricultural productivity

**Intervention:** Poor rural households are entitled to 100 days of employment every year. A quota stipulates that 1/3 of all workers who request work in each state should be women. Women are given preference to work on sites close to their home. Equal wages must be paid to men and women. Women should also be adequately represented amongst worksite facilitators, as well as on local level, state and central committees and social audit processes.

**Result:** → MGNREGS has increased women’s labour market participation, and improved access to credit and equal wages. However, the programme fails to address socio-cultural constraints e.g. disproportionate illiteracy rates amongst women and cultural norms in some areas which prevent women from working outside the home or with men. Entrenched ideas about gendered labour divisions affect the type of work that it is seen to be acceptable for women to do, meaning that they may be restricted to ‘soft’ work and receive fewer days as a result. They also still face wage discrimination owing to high productivity norms based on men’s average outputs.

→ Failure to address women’s life cycle vulnerabilities and dual domestic/care & productive roles means that impacts at the intra-household level remain mixed.

→ Likewise at the community level proponents of gender equality have called for a refocusing of the type of work offered e.g. activities linked to healthcare, skills/literacy programmes, nutrition and sanitation. There is no real evidence of women’s participation in social audit of the programme or of spillover effects in terms of improvements in access to other government services (Holmes and Jones 2015).
Research gaps

*Disentangling the effects of bundled interventions*

→ More needs to be understood about the relative contribution of different components in bundled social protection initiatives – increasingly we are seeing cash plus other interventions. What is the relative value added of the additional components compared to just cash?

→ What role can cash play in shifting discriminatory social norms? E.g. is behavioural change accompanied by attitudinal change and under what conditions?

→ What would a gender-sensitive and lifecycle package of social protection interventions look like - too often isolated programmes only dealing with one age cohort rather than seeing it as part of broader need for support and vulnerability reductions across the life-course?

→ Links between social protection and tackling gender-based violence – evidence is decidedly mixed – can we invest in a design that seeks to unpack programmes that have indirect effects (through cash and a focus on economic empowerment or on education) versus the effects of those that seek to tackle GBV explicit
Why politics matters
Defining political economy

The interdisciplinary study of how the state and the market, or political and economic institutions, interact with and shape each other.

Rosendorff’s (2005) ‘three I’s’:

1. **Institutions or institutional arenas** (e.g. elections and party politics, the legislature, the judiciary, community level structures, informal politics) and the opportunities or constraints that they present in addressing VAWG.

2. **Interests of key actors** who are likely to gain or lose from shifts in policy, practice or behaviour (e.g. political elites, community leaders, civil society champions, heads of household) and the relative balance of power between them.

3. **Ideas held by elites and the public** regarding gender roles and the acceptability of different forms of VAWG.

These material relationships shape the institutional and ideological formation of society where gender identities and status are constructed (True, 2012).
Conceptualising gendered political economy

A gendered political economy approach explores how ‘households, markets and states as gendered institutions are created and regulated in part by socially constructed norms at local, national and international levels’ (Roberts and Waylen, 1998).

Pomares’ (2011) three distinct but overlapping levels:

- **micro** (an individual’s socially constructed preferences);
- **meso** (household and community microeconomics); and
- **macro** (state and international gender orders whereby gender relations underpin state formation, maintenance and reproduction).
The gendered political economy of SP

**Institutions**
Include electoral, legislative and judicial arenas, informal politics and social protection systems

| E.g. The legislative arena — the MGNREGs is part of a broader set of right-based laws that mark a shift from ‘development as a welfare activities…to a policy that recognises basic development needs as rights of the citizens’ (UNDP 2010). The one third quota and equal wages for women and men were secured in part because civil society networks that called for a demand-based approach included women’s empowerment organisations. |

**Interests**
Include those of political elites, officials / ministries, civil society actor, bilateral and multilateral donors. Note that these different categories are not themselves homogeneous.

| E.g. Political elites often initiate social protection programmes to further institutional aims — such as demonstrating commitment to a strengthened social contract between state and citizenry (as with India’s MGNREGS) or harnessing public works labour to promote environmental rehabilitation (as in Ethiopia’s PSPN). |

**Ideas**
Including those relating to social protection, citizenship and social inclusion.

| E.g. MGNREGS as an example of official recognition of citizens’ rights to state-guaranteed social protection. By contrast, the absence of a rights-based approach to social protection in Ethiopia and dominance of the ruling party in rural areas mean that many PSPN participants view interventions as a ‘gift’ from the government, resulting in reluctance to jeopardise their inclusion by demanding social inclusion provisions. |
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Gender and Social Protection:
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Discussant:
Agnes Quisumbing (Senior Research Fellow, The International Food Policy Research Institute)

Dr. Agnes Quisumbing is a senior research fellow in the Poverty, Health, and Nutrition Division of the International Food Policy Research Institute, and leads the Gender Cross-Cutting research theme at IFPRI. She co-leads a research program examining how reducing gender asset inequality may help achieve better development outcomes. She has led multi-country research programs on gender and intrahousehold issues and on individual and household pathways from poverty. She has worked on women's land rights in Ethiopia, Ghana, the Philippines, and Sumatra and is currently engaged in impact evaluations of agricultural development programs, focusing on their impacts on gender asset inequality and women’s empowerment. Quisumbing received her Ph.D. and M.A. in economics from the University of the Philippines, Quezon City, and her A.B. in economics from De La Salle University in Manila. She was a Fulbright-Hays Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Visiting Fellow at the Economic Growth Center, Yale University. Before joining IFPRI in 1995, Quisumbing worked at the University of the Philippines, Diliman and Los Baños; and the World Bank.

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Social Protection and Women’s Empowerment

Agnes R. Quisumbing
Senior Research Fellow
International Food Policy Research Institute
Research gaps in research on gender and social protection

• Gender of recipient
  • Should women/FHHs be targeted? What is the counterfactual? Are FHHs all alike?
  • Does targeting to women reinforce gender stereotypes?
  • Is there any evidence of increased domestic violence if transfers are targeted to women?

• Empowerment impacts
  • How do we define empowerment?
  • If economic empowerment is an objective, what design and implementation features can help empower women?
Gender of recipient: what is the counterfactual?

- Not much empirical evidence on targeting transfers to women vs. men; most transfers targeting women do so on basis of early evidence (observational) on effects of increasing women’s resources.

- That said, a systematic review (Yoong et al. 2012) suggests that the most robust impacts have been found on children’s health and nutrition.

- New generation of studies now trying to randomize programs to men and women—stay tuned!

Photo: (c) Patricia Poppe, JHU/CCP
Gender of recipient: Do transfers to women reinforce gender stereotypes?

• *Bolsa Família* program in Brazil had **significant impacts** in several areas of women’s decision making, but there is considerable **heterogeneity in impacts across different types of households** (de Brauw et al. 2014)

• In aggregate, *Bolsa Família* significantly increases women’s decision-making power regarding contraception. Urban households: BF significantly increases women’s decision-making power in spheres related to children’s school attendance and health expenses, household durable goods purchases, and contraceptive use. No increases, and even possible decreases among rural households

• Where increases occur, the effects occur in spheres related to child-rearing and in spheres related to women’s own welfare and protection of the household. These impacts may be interpreted as greater equity in the household rather than greater burdening of women with gender-stereotyped roles as argued by Molyneux (2007)
Gender of recipient: Do transfers to women reinforce increase IPV?

• Early studies have suggested that in Bangladesh domestic violence may increase with transfers to women (Luttrell and Moser 2004, also work by Schuyler et al).

• However, work in Ecuador suggests otherwise.
  - RCT in Ecuador finds that cash, vouchers, and food transfers targeted to women reduce controlling behaviors and physical or sexual violence by 6 to 7 percentage points. Impacts do not vary by transfer modality (Hidrobo et al. 2016)
  - Follow up study using mixed methods found that the intervention led to reductions in IPV by: i) reducing day-to-day conflict and stress in the couple; ii) improving household well-being and happiness; and iii) increasing women’s decision making, self-confidence and freedom of movement. Little evidence found that any type of IPV increased as a result of the transfers (Buller et al. 2016)

• Is this result context-specific? New study on transfers and IPV in Bangladesh by Roy et al. just funded. Keep posted!
Gender of recipient: Do intrahousehold dynamics change?

• Looking within the household reveals more subtle impacts of asset transfers to women (Roy et al. 2015)
  
  • BRAC’s CFPR-TUP increased household assets, and increased women’s ownership and control of transferred assets (livestock), but increased men’s ownership of other assets
  
  • Labor requirements of livestock also increased women’s working inside the home (which they preferred, given unfavorable labor market conditions)
  
  • Decreased women’s control over income and market purchases
  
  • But increased women’s self-esteem and social capital

Similar nuances emerge in evidence from cash transfer programs (see evidence on cash transfer programs in FAO 2015). Context matters.
SP and women’s empowerment: What is economic empowerment?

- Kabeer (2001): empowerment defined as “expanding people’s ability to make strategic life choices, particularly in contexts where this ability had been denied to them”

- Empowerment is very personal; difficult to define and measure

- May be different from decisionmaking in reproductive sphere (what is commonly measured in DHS’s); very few internationally used measures of economic empowerment

- One relatively new measure: Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), which focuses on empowerment in a productive sphere (Alkire et al. 2013)
Five Domains of Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture

Focus on assets and empowerment—both physical and human capital
Assets: the wealth of families
Quick snapshot of men’s and women’s assets and how these respond to shocks

• Men tend to hold (control and own) more assets than women

• Men and women hold different types of assets; women’s assets more likely to be drawn down during times of shocks (Quisumbing, Kumar, Behrman 2016)

• Women more likely to be disadvantaged in terms of access to formal credit; may tend to use informal coping mechanisms

• Women also more likely to invest additional resources in human capital of the next generation (child education, health, nutrition)
Given what we know about approaches to social protection, can they be used to empower women? (FAO SOFA 2015; de La O Campos 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Linkages to women</th>
<th>Economically empowering?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protective</strong></td>
<td>Provide means to access food, mitigate impact of shocks</td>
<td>Food or cash for work, emergency assistance</td>
<td>Possibly, if access to SP viewed as an entitlement, and if women control it</td>
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<td>Protect health and nutrition; increase literacy, basic education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Preventive</strong></td>
<td>Prevent decline into poverty by increasing resilience, prevent loss of assets</td>
<td>Social insurance, food or cash for work, other transfer programs</td>
<td>May prevent disposal of women’s assets</td>
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<td>Access to financial services and social insurance</td>
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<td><strong>Promotive</strong></td>
<td>Support investment in human capital, ease liquidity constraints and support investment</td>
<td>CTs, credit programs, asset transfer programs (targeting to women important)</td>
<td>Design of program, women’s control of proceeds important</td>
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<td>Increase women’s access to productive assets, infrastructure</td>
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<td><strong>Transformative</strong></td>
<td>Reorient toward investment in future, change gender relations in household</td>
<td>CCTs and UCTs, assets transfers targeted to women</td>
<td>Possibly empowering next generation. Intrahousehold impacts depend on design and implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Still a lot of unanswered questions!

• We still don’t have measures of women’s empowerment that are designed for social protection programs—most efforts have used existing measures (DHS) that focus on decisionmaking, but mostly in domestic sphere.

• Let’s talk about how to adopt the WEAI to include social protection!

• We need to understand better how reducing gender-related risks and vulnerabilities empower women, and how these can be incorporated into both design and implementation of programs.

• We also need to know about unintended consequences of programs, and tradeoffs that may occur within the household, that would not otherwise be revealed if we only look at household-level measures.
Gender and Social Protection:
Current Issues and Policy Trends Webinar

Discussant:
Ana Paula De la O Campos (Gender Policy Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization)

Ana Paula is an economist and policy analyst in the areas of gender and agriculture and social protection. She started her career with FAO in 2007 as an econometrician specializing in rural labour and household income strategies. Her work has contributed to the creation of the Rural Income Generating Activities database (RIGA) as well as the design of household surveys for conducting impact evaluation of cash transfers in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ana Paula also managed the overall functioning of the Gender and Land Rights Database (GLRD) and collaborated with FAO's Statistics Division with the production of gender and land-related statistics. She currently works as Program Advisor for FAO's strategic programme on Rural Poverty Reduction.
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