

STAAR Evidence Digest

Curated by the **STAAR Technical Senior Leadership Team**

Issue 8 | June 2023



Hello and welcome to the STAAR Evidence Digest for June 2023

The STAAR Digest is a collection of articles that our Technical Leadership Team finds interesting – related to both social protection in crises and gender-responsive social protection. We aim to publish the Digest each month. We have curated the content by **themes** which relate closely to our work on STAAR and the content is by no means exhaustive. Any feedback on the content, format, etc is welcome. Email us at STAAR@STAARfacility.org

Edward Archibald - Lead Technical Adviser

Adaptive social protection

- » The recent Global Forum on Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) conference held in Berlin contained a bounty of interesting presentations, speeches and side events. We enjoyed the keynote lecture from Professor Stefan Dercon on Day 1, and particularly his three key challenges for ASP: start with politics (design a system fit for local politics); strengthen digital systems (not analogue); and design with financing in mind. The recording of the opening session and Stefan’s lecture is [here](#).



Change the default: Rethink then what a system could look like



Needs to be resilient as a system:
able to function during crises, whether man-made or natural...

Global Forum on Adaptive Social Protection
Protecting lives and livelihoods in times of crisis

Figure 1: Global Forum opening session, Stefan Dercon's keynote lecture

- » STAAR also organised a parallel session on gender-transformative social protection in crisis at the Global Forum. Thoughtful contributions from the key experts on the panel (representatives from SEWA, UN Women, the World Bank and Jordan) highlighted the ways in which gender inequalities can be tackled through intentional design, implementation and system features, as well as identifying important enabling factors to support a gender-transformative approach in crisis contexts. Whilst this parallel session wasn’t recorded, watch out for our forthcoming blog as well as a practical guidance note which draws on the content of this session. Moreover, the importance of investing in social protection to address gender inequalities was highlighted across the Global Forum discussions, and especially in the closing session which you can find recorded [here](#).



GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION IN CRISIS CONTEXTS: GUIDANCE NOTE

A new guidance note on gender-transformative social protection in crisis contexts is currently with the social protection inter-agency cooperation board (SPIAC-B) gender working group for review and will be published in due course. Gender responsive programmes explicitly address the needs of women and girls and gender diverse persons as contextually relevant. Gender transformative systems or programmes aim to transform unequal gender relations and address the structural and root causes of inequality and discrimination through a social protection intervention. This guidance note links to the parallel session delivered at the Global Forum on Adaptive Social Protection and provides design and implementation considerations for gender responsive and transformative social protection in crisis contexts. It also consolidates existing evidence and short case studies into actionable guidance to address gender inequalities.

- » There is an upcoming Regional Learning Event on insights from social protection responses to crises in Latin America and the Caribbean. There are three events on 6, 13 and 20 July, with panelists from diverse contexts and bringing different voices at national and local level. (The last such event was held in 2021 – a recording of that is [here](#)) English translation will be available and the event is mainly in Spanish. Register [here](#).

Disability inclusive social protection

- » The ILO has produced a [draft guidance note](#) Towards Inclusive Social Protection Systems Enabling Participation and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities which provides a conceptual framework and initial hands-on advice on how to design, implement and monitor social protection systems that maximise inclusion. Consultation is open until 10 August. The first version of the document will be finalised and published in October, and will be revised end of 2024 to incorporate the lessons learned from ongoing and upcoming studies, programs and reforms.
- » Development Pathways has released an updated version of its [disability benefits database](#). The database – which is regularly updated – provides a global overview of social protection schemes for persons with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries, including transfer levels and number of recipients. The diagram (right) shows an example of how the database provides a rapid overview. Files are also downloadable in Excel.
- » UNICEF has published a study which [quantifies the cost of raising a child with disabilities](#) in Georgia. The paper calculates the goods and services required for the equal participation of children with disabilities to help formulate a package of support that would allow for the effective matching of the needs of children with a more individualised support system. Some of the key findings include that “One size does not fit all” (the current state system of relatively uniform support for children with disabilities does not respond to the level and diversity of their needs) and that parents have a tendency to spend the family’s limited expenditure mainly on health and therapies (rehabilitation services)

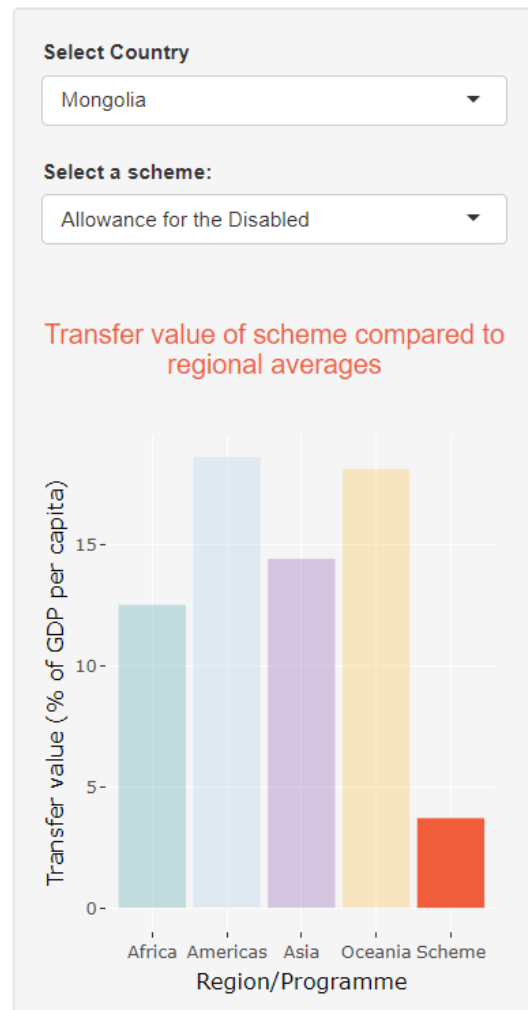


Figure 2: Development Pathways' disability benefits database rapid overview

Linkages between social protection and humanitarian action

- » Colin Welch from the ICRC has an interesting blog asking under what conditions can [principled humanitarian organisations support existing social protection systems](#)? The blog reflects on some of the challenges and opportunities that supporting social protection creates for humanitarian organisations. For humanitarian actors there can be concerns about undermining humanitarian principles, particularly in conflict settings. While acknowledging that linking social protection and humanitarian aid requires reconciling differences in terms of principles and approaches and that this may not always be easy, he highlights that not all conflicts are homogeneous and that actors should always consider the opportunities as well as the risks of engaging. He proposes five related considerations that humanitarians can use to evaluate whether humanitarian organisations might be able to support existing SP systems without compromising humanitarian principles and that such systemic engagement can help to minimise these risks. The blog concludes that such ‘systematic engagement’ with existing social protection systems by humanitarian actors can also strengthen sustainable humanitarian impact. We particularly appreciated this line: *humanitarian organisations should not be asking whether to engage with social protection, but rather how and to what extent.*

Financing

- » There was an interesting recent announcement from the World Bank Group about a “[toolkit for crisis preparedness, response and recovery](#)”. The detail is rather thin in the press release, so it remains to be seen to what extent the toolkit represents a change in approach. The five elements of the “toolkit” are:
 - a. Offering a pause in debt repayments;
 - b. Providing countries with flexibility to quickly redirect a portion of their funds for emergency response;
 - c. Increasingly link investments in prevention and preparedness with financing for catastrophe and crisis response support;
 - d. Backstopping development projects through more effectively supporting private sector clients in crisis preparedness and response; and
 - e. Building enhanced catastrophe insurance without debt.
- » WFP has published a short paper on [linking Disaster Risk Financing \(DRF\) with social protection](#), with an official launch at the ASP conference. We found it to be a helpful primer which provides an overview of the key instruments in DRF: contingency budgets and reserve funds; contingent credit; and insurance-related risk transfer solutions. The reflections in section 3 on operational considerations when matching DRF instruments with social protection systems were particularly interesting. The paper also refers to the useful framework developed by the Centre for Disaster Protection with regard to the four major elements of DRF:
 - a. Context – understanding the specific needs, risks, and factors to be taken into consideration in a specific country-context; and what to prioritise (‘who should be protected and what they should be protected against’)
 - b. Establishing ‘money-out’ systems and processes – including assessing the pre-existing systems and programmes in place, so that funds provided by financing instruments can be effectively used to reduce the impacts of a shock
 - c. Set-up ‘money-in’ instruments – designing/setting up financial tools, so that resources needed to prevent and reduce disaster risk, prepare, and respond to shocks are available in a timely manner
 - d. Project management – processes and practical considerations that should be in place for an effective implementation.
- » The Anticipation Hub is hosting the 6th Africa Dialogue Platform on Anticipatory Humanitarian Action from 4 to 6 July. Online registration is available [here](#).

Digital

- » A recent World Bank paper - [Digital-First Approach to Emergency Cash Transfers: STEP-KIN in the Democratic Republic of Congo](#) - extensively documents the 'non-conventional' approaches (e.g. leveraging non-traditional data sources such as satellite imagery and mobile phones) used to deliver assistance from scratch to 300,000 vulnerable urban populations in Kinshasa during COVID-19 – prioritising speed over accuracy. The paper explores prerequisites, key implementation steps and lessons learned – including a crucial focus on risks of exclusion (e.g. those with no phone) and the irreplaceability of foundational systems and complementary non-digital approaches.
- » In case you had missed this, FAO have documented the [use of digital innovations for social protection](#) at system level (Argentina, Morocco, Turkey, and Uganda) and program level (Cambodia, Jordan, Philippines, and Togo).



STAAR CLIMATE LEAD

STAAR's Climate Lead Anna McCord has been spearheading efforts to integrate climate change considerations into all of STAAR's activities, focusing on the role of social protection in responding to the effects of climate change in crisis settings and the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women. Social protection can support addressing climate change challenges through:

- Reducing underlying vulnerability
- Responding to shocks and disasters
- Compensating for the negative impacts of climate change policies
- Supporting climate change adaptation
- Contributing to GHG emissions reductions or carbon sequestration

The Climate Lead has reviewed STAAR's portfolio and identified challenges and entry points for STAAR and FCDO to contribute towards building a systematic approach to address these challenges through project design and implementation.

This document was developed as part of the STAAR -Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice and Resources facility implemented by DAI Global UK Ltd and funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. The views expressed in this document are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent FCDO's own views or policies.

© 2023

Copyright in the typographical arrangement and design (of this publication) is jointly owned by the Crown in the right of the United Kingdom. This publication (excluding the logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium, provided that it is reproduced accurately (in full or in part) and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright with the title and source of the publication specified.

Published by STAAR, on behalf of FCDO.