

Social protection in Asia and the Pacific: inventory of non-contributory programmes

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Social protection programmes are now widely recognised as key policy instruments used to combat poverty in developing countries. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has explicitly recognised the importance of implementing “nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors” as an explicit target under Sustainable Development Goal 1: “End poverty in all its forms everywhere.”¹ However, information about specific programmes being implemented in developing countries can be fragmented or inaccessible. The study ‘Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific: Inventory of Non-Contributory Programmes’ (IPC-IG and UNICEF 2018) intends to contribute in addressing these gaps, providing an overview of non-contributory social protection programmes in selected regions of Asia and the Pacific. Moreover, the programme profiles presented will also be made available online, through the socialprotection.org platform.

The report was supported by Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and the research was led by teams from the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) and UNICEF, with the former focusing on low- and middle-income countries in South and East Asia, and the latter on 11 Pacific Island countries. The research was based on a comprehensive literature review, complemented by consultations with local focal points, including UNICEF Country Offices and government representatives, who provided substantial inputs into the review of the programmes. Programme selection included those fully or partially financed, designed or implemented by governments, and about which there was sufficient available information. In total, 215 programmes from 30 countries were mapped, of which 141 have been profiled.

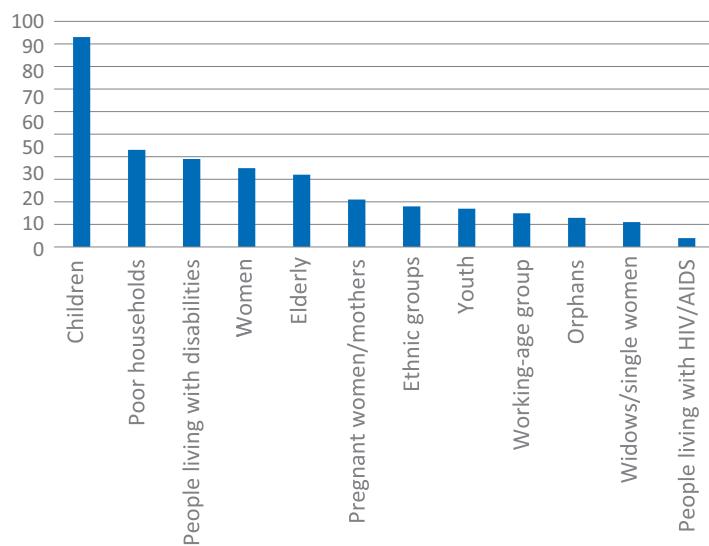
Some of the main trends among the programmes are as follows:

- Most profiled programmes started being implemented after the mid-1990s.
- Most of the mapped programmes are unconditional and conditional cash transfers. Among the 10 most prevalent programmes we also find educational fee waivers, school feeding programmes, unconditional in-kind transfers, fuel and electricity subsidies, training programmes,

food subsidies, non-contributory health insurance and social support services.

- Overall, 135 programmes were found to provide cash benefits, while 37 provide food, and 66 offer other types of benefits, which may consist of services or other in-kind goods.
- Finally, children figure prominently among the target groups.

FIGURE 1
Population groups targeted in the mapped programmes



Source: Author's elaboration based on the mapped programmes.

Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive: some overlap, and some programmes may target more than one group.

Reference:

IPC-IG and UNICEF. 2019. *Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific: Inventory of Non-Contributory Programmes*. Brasilia: International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth. See: <<https://bit.ly/2Tn0bWO>>.

Note:

1. See: <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1>>.