Measuring coverage of social protection programmes: Lessons from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Belize and Vietnam
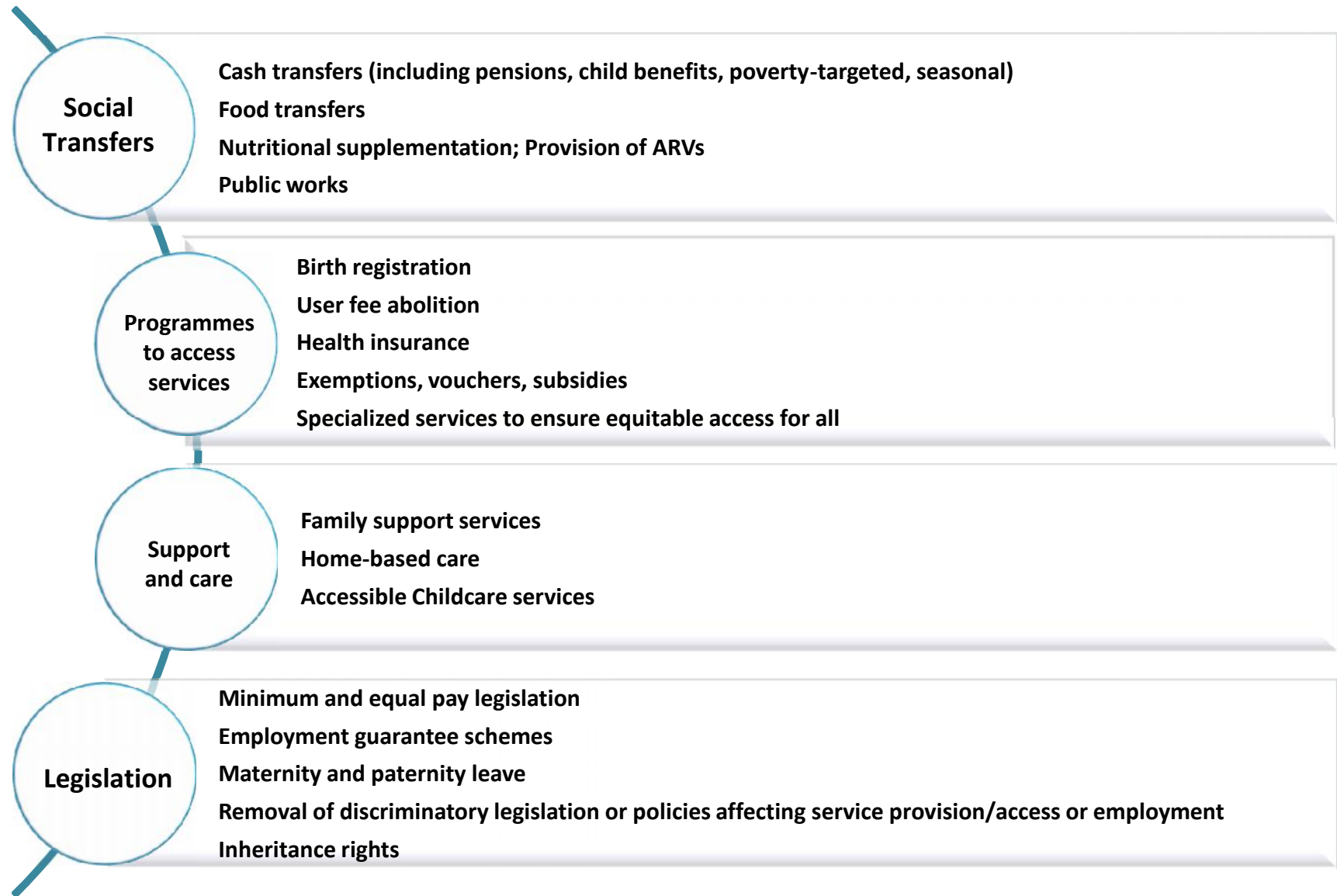
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UNICEF's Work on Social Protection

- Within UNICEF's equity focused approach to development, social protection is a crucial policy tool for achieving equity and social justice

- UNICEF support 232 social protection programmes in 104 countries

- Of these, 71 are cash transfers in 52 countries

- Reaching over 12 million households

Social protection components & examples

Social Transfers

Cash transfers (including pensions, child benefits, poverty-targeted, seasonal)

Food transfers

Nutritional supplementation; Provision of ARVs

Public works

Programmes to access services

Birth registration

User fee abolition

Health insurance

Exemptions, vouchers, subsidies

Specialized services to ensure equitable access for all

Support and care

Family support services

Home-based care

Accessible Childcare services

Legislation

Minimum and equal pay legislation

Employment guarantee schemes

Maternity and paternity leave

Removal of discriminatory legislation or policies affecting service provision/access or employment

Inheritance rights

UNICEF **Social Protection Strategic Framework**: www.unicef.org/socialprotection/framework

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1

- Contribute to monitoring of SDG 1, target 3
  - *Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable*

- Indicator 1.3.1 on social protection:
  - *Percentage of population covered by social protection floors/systems, disaggregated by sex and distinguishing children, the unemployed, old-age persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women/newborns, work injury victims, the poor and the vulnerable*

Importance of social protection survey questionnaire

- Critical that global and national resources for social protection are reaching those in greatest need.

- Monitoring at the global and national levels is needed using household surveys to assess the extent to which various social protection interventions are reaching the disadvantaged and vulnerable populations

- Household surveys minimize double counting errors, provide statistically sound data, and can be disaggregated by various stratifiers, e.g. age, sex, residence, wealth, sub-national areas, etc.

- Contribute to availability of robust data for assessing progress towards achieving SDG 1, target 3.

UNICEF's support to robust data collection: Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)

20 Years

108 Countries

275 Surveys

*As of June 2015

Objective of the Pilot Test

- Pilot test questionnaire module for data collection of Social Protection indicators using household surveys

- Assess adequacy, clarity, and relevance of questions:
  - the extent to which the draft set of questions are understood by the intended respondents;
  - whether the questions flow, and the structure/skip-patterns work well; and
  - the level of customization needed for each country.

Countries & partnerships

- **Kenya, April – May 2014**
  - Two Counties - Kakamega & Kisumu
  - Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)
  - Department of Social Welfare

- **Zimbabwe, March 2015**
  - Epworth, St Mary's, Bindura, Goromonzi
  - ZIMSTAT (Zimbabwe national statistical agency)
  - Department of Social Welfare

- **Vietnam, Quang Nam Province, Nui Thanh District, December, 2015**
  - Tam Hiep (peri-rural-24 clusters); Tam Tra (mountainous-8 clusters); Nui Thanh (town-23 clusters)
  - General Statistics Office and Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs

- **Belize, Stann Creek District), November - December 2015**
  - Statistical Institute of Belize, Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation, Ministry of Health

- **UNICEF HQ, regional and country offices**

- **Survey specialist consultant**

Approach & General Observations

Approach

- Stand-alone pilots in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Vietnam and integrated into standard Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) process in Belize

- In Kenya and Zimbabwe, a list of recipient households obtained from Departments of Social Welfare (areas with high concentration of cash transfer recipients) and interviewed

- In Vietnam and Belize, a standard survey sampling approach was used - randomly selected households were interviewed

- Non-recipient households also interviewed to assess their knowledge of existing social protection schemes and understanding of the questions

- Questionnaire customized to incorporate social protection programmes in each country, taking into account targeting approach for some benefits

- Validation of survey vs administrative data was done in Vietnam to assess their consistency

Sample Questions included

- Knowledge of social protection programmes/benefits (customized for each country)

- Household/member has ever received any type of benefit (cash or in kind and customized for each country)

- Time since receiving the last benefit

- If anyone in household has health insurance

- If children aged 5-24 years and attending school are receiving any type of school support (fees, food, materials e.g. uniform, books, etc.)

General observations

- Questions were well understood, except in rural areas in Zimbabwe 'Cash transfer' is not commonly used (rather money for welfare or elderly or disabled or orphans or the poor, etc)

- Non-recipients of cash transfers are also aware of these programmes

- Multiple types of benefits/support exist across countries and tend to be targeted in certain geographical regions, areas, clusters (in response to high numbers of socially and economically disadvantaged or vulnerable households and individuals)

- Main types of support
  - **Predictable cash transfers to households of any type - e.g.** conditional/unconditional); child benefits/grants; disability grants; pension, social grants for food, electricity, etc.
  - **School support in terms of fees or material support e.g. uniform, shoes, books**

- Other less predictable, infrequent or one-time types of support – e.g. start up cash for income generation, public works, health vouchers, shelter, agricultural inputs, and food.

General Observations

- Support provided by various organizations in the same locality/households– government, NGOs, Foundations, Churches, family, etc.

- Support provided on the basis of certain household characteristics (e.g. cash transfers) as well as on individual characteristics (e.g. school support)

- High likelihood of double counting if only programme data are used to count recipients

- In some countries, some services are free e.g. education up to a certain level (policy) - school support may be low or none (interpretation needs to account for country context)

- Challenge is many players with many interests: children, seniors, disability, HIV, maternity, etc.

- **Customisation** concerns- getting the precise protection systems defined and captured

- Small number of cases, **sampling** concerns esp. in Belize where such schemes are not very widespread

Recommendations & Next Steps

Recommendations

- Social protection module to be included in the household survey questionnaire to cover:
  - Cash transfers of any type
  - School support - fees and material support – for each child of school going age (5-24 years)
  - Other support - income generation, public works, health vouchers, shelter, agricultural inputs, food to be included according to country context and specific needs

- Question on health insurance to be included in individual survey questionnaire (male and female questionnaires)

- Question on knowledge of social protection to be asked of all respondents

- Question on timing of support to be asked of recipient households only

Proposed indicators for global monitoring

- Percentage of the poorest households (lowest 2 wealth quintiles) that received any type of cash transfers in the last 3 months*

- Percentage of children under age 18 years in the households that received any type of cash transfers in the last 3 months

- Percentage of children in the households that received any type of school-related support in the past/current academic year**

- Percentage of women/men age 15-49 that are covered by health insurance

***Cash transfers**: conditional/unconditional cash transfers; child benefits/grants; disability grants; pension and other predictable forms of cash transfers

****School-related support includes support for school fees (**scholarships, bursaries) and **for school materials (u**niforms, books, etc)

Next steps

- Develop sampling considerations, taking into account national geographic coverage or targeting strategies

- Final pilot test in a standard MICS survey process (part of MICS 6)

- Produce and disseminate a synthesis report of pilot test experiences, lessons learnt and recommendations

- Collaborate with partners to integrate the Social Protection questionnaire in other existing survey programmes, e.g. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Living Standards Measurement Studies (LSMS)

Thank You