

Overcoming Child Poverty: Progress and Challenges in Child Sensitive Social Protection

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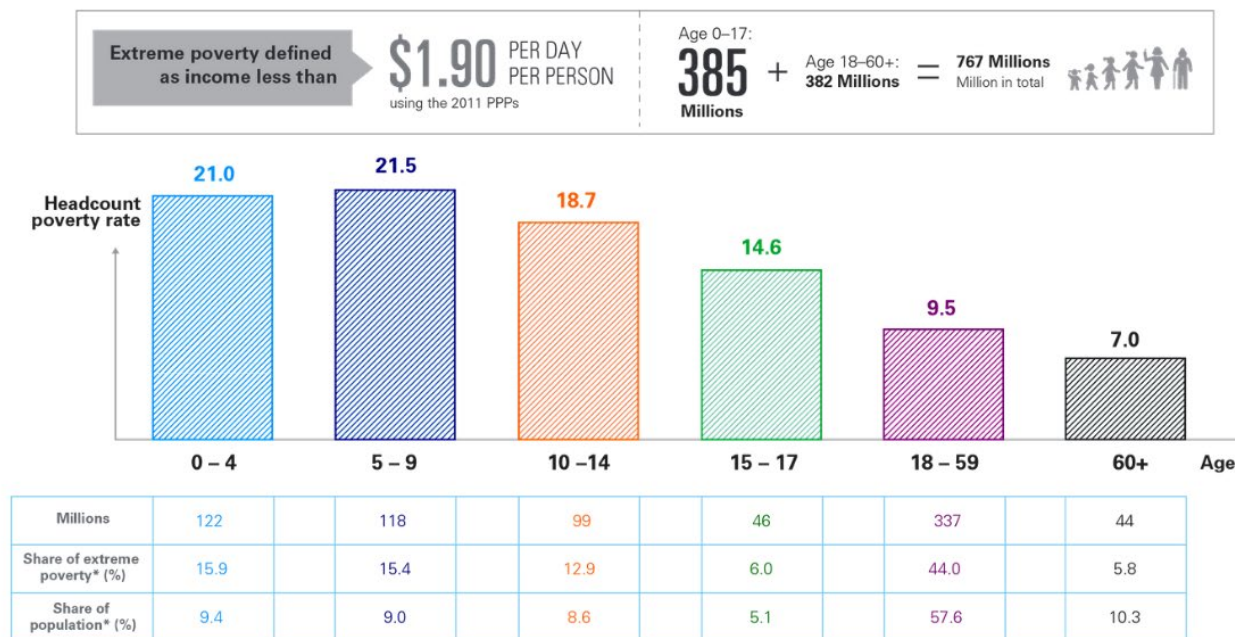
Presentation outline

- 1. Child poverty and the SDGs**
- 2. What works for addressing child poverty?**
- 3. Child sensitive social protection: progress, gaps and challenges**
- 4. Conclusions and recommendations**

Child poverty and the SDGs

Children living in extreme poverty

- *Globally, 385 million children live in extremely poor households:* i.e. in households living on \$1.90 a day or less per person.
- *Children are disproportionately affected:* children make up 1/3 of the global population, but nearly half of those living in extreme poverty.
- *Children are more than twice as likely to be poor as adults:* 19.5% of children in developing countries live on less than \$1.90 a day, compared to 9.2% of adults.



Source: UNICEF and World Bank. (2016). Ending Extreme Poverty: a Focus on Children
https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Ending_Extreme_Poverty_A_Focus_on_Children_Oct_2016.pdf

Child poverty – geographic concentration

Figure 2 Extreme child poverty by country/region



	Children headcount poverty rate	Adults headcount poverty rate (%)	Share of extremely poor children * (%)	Share of children in population* (%)
East Asia/Pacific	5.6	2.9	7.8	27.2
of which China	2.0	1.8	1.8	16.7
South Asia	19.5	12.6	35.7	35.7
of which India	22.1	14.3	30.3	26.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	48.7	37.7	51.7	20.7
Latin America and Caribbean	8.1	4.0	4.4	10.5
Europe and Central Asia	1.4	0.6	0.4	5.6
Total	19.5	9.2	100.0	100.0

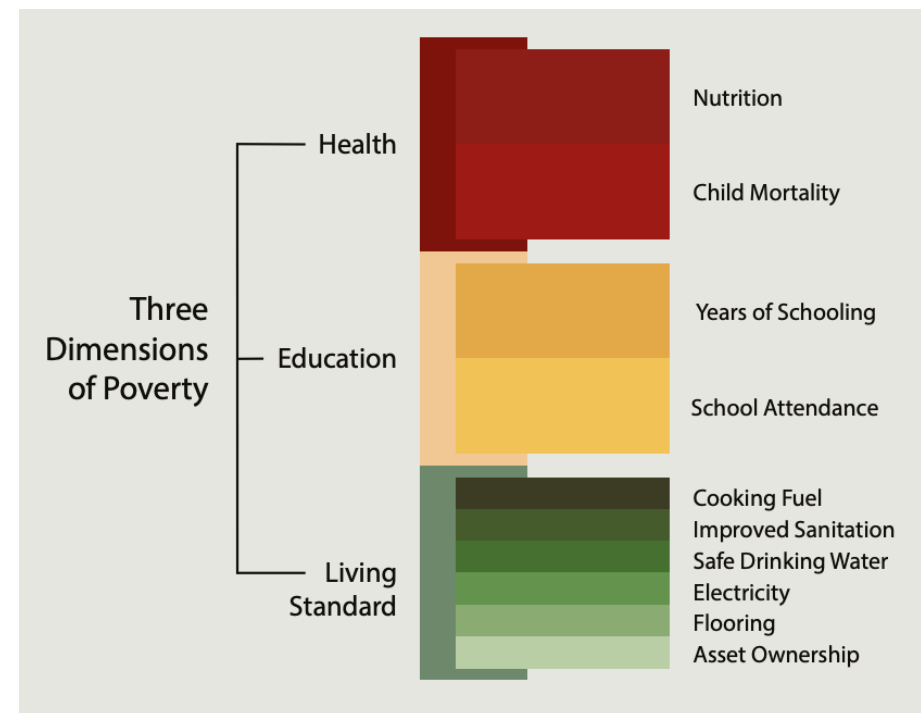
Source: GMD, UNDESA, WDI, PovcalNet

Note: * Reflecting the sample of countries in GMD.

Results for Middle East and North Africa are not reportable due to low representation of country level data in that region

Children living in multidimensional poverty

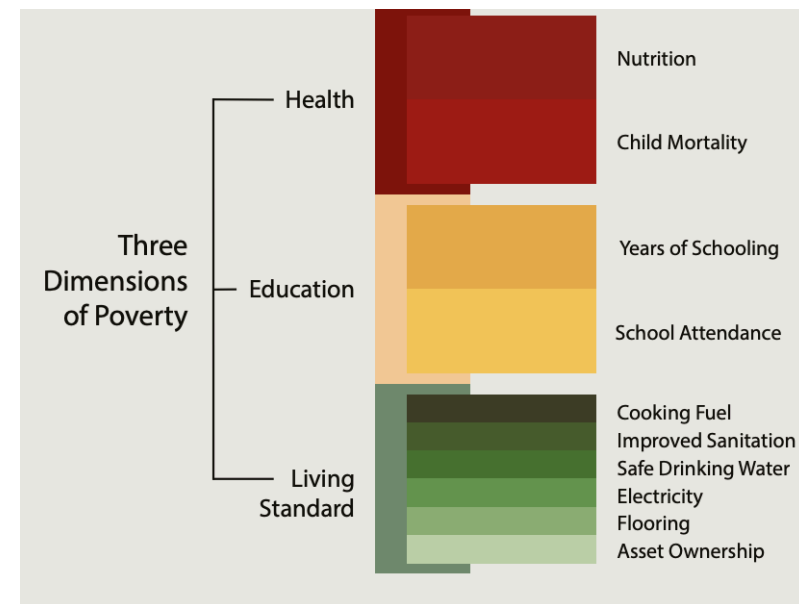
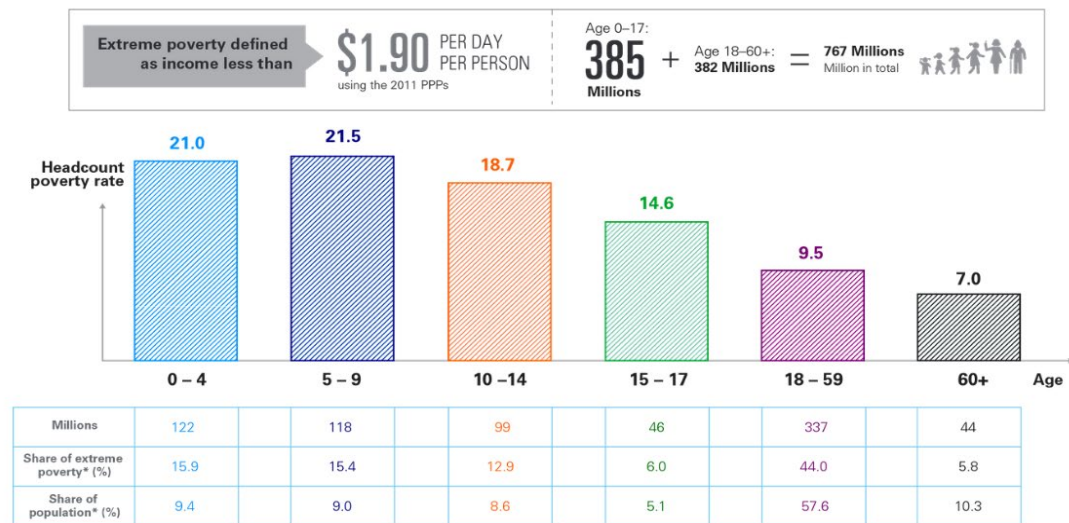
- *An estimated 665 million children worldwide live in multidimensionally poor households.* Globally, 1 out of every 3 children suffer from multiple hardship and deprivations, lacking basic necessities such as adequate nutrition and clean water, whereas it's 18% of adults.
- *Children in MP households are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia:* 85% percent of poor children are growing up in South Asia (37%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (48%).
- *2/3 of all poor children are in middle income countries.*
- *Fragility and conflict exacerbates child poverty:* More than half of the MPI poor children (53%) live in the weakest fragile states with alert, high alert or very high alert warning.



Source: OPHI. (2018). Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2018
<https://ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/global-mpi-2018/>

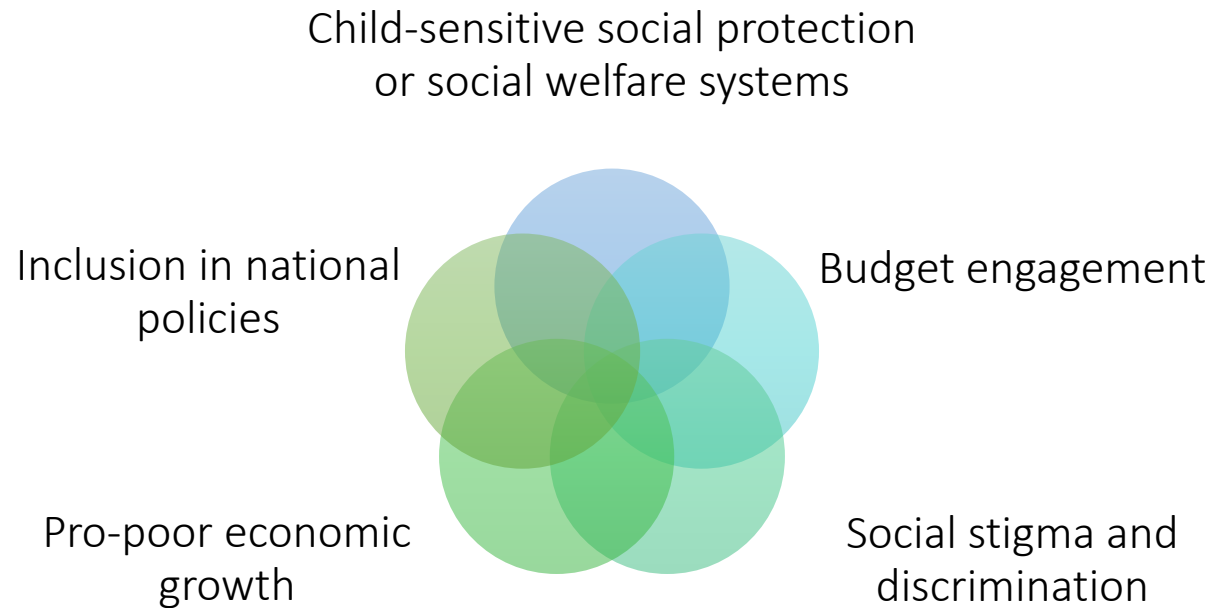
Children poverty matters for the SDGs

- Mathematically evident for SDG 1
- Consider the counterfactual – continued child poverty = intergenerational transmission & continued loss of human capabilities
- Monetary and MD poverty - particularly of kids – at root of achieving many other SDGs – on health, education, hunger, inequality



**What works for
addressing child poverty?**

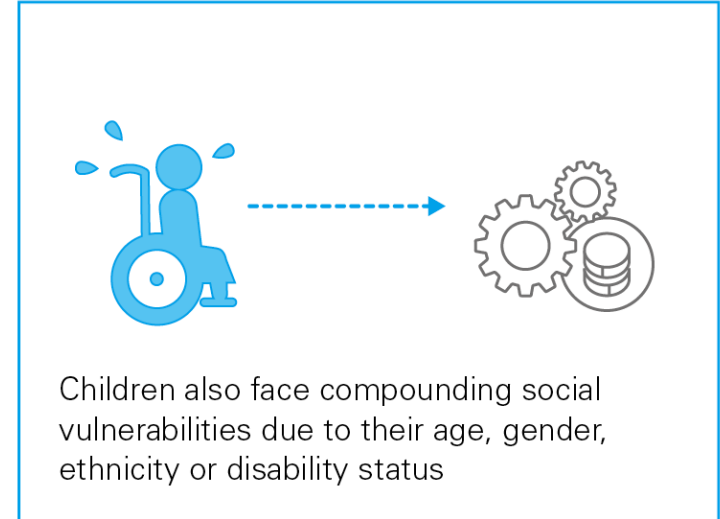
Overarching approaches to address child poverty (monetary and multidimensional)



Source:
A world free from child poverty: A guide to the tasks to achieve the vision
https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Child_Poverty_SDG_Guide-Complete-March_2017.pdf

Social protection: addressing economic and social vulnerability

- **Economic vulnerability:** About 45 per cent of all children – or 1 billion – are living in households subsisting on less than \$3.10 a day.
- **Social vulnerability:** Children and families can also face social vulnerabilities due to how personal characteristics ranging from age to gender to disability status interact with social dynamics and discrimination.

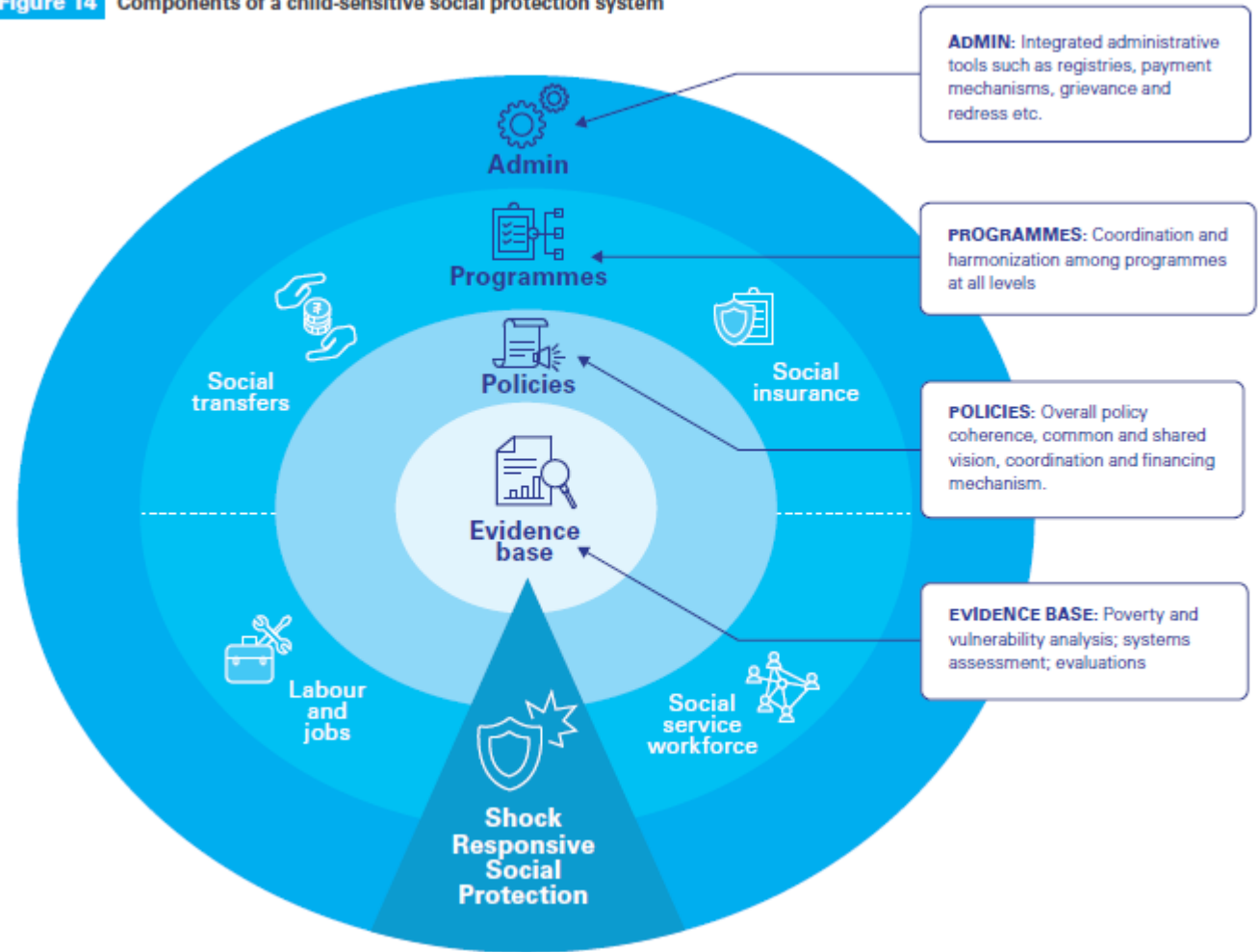


Child-sensitive social protection systems must be designed to address child poverty and deprivation and with a special focus on those that are economically and socially vulnerable

Child Sensitive Social Protection – progress, gaps and challenges

The elements of an integrated child sensitive social protection system

Figure 14 Components of a child-sensitive social protection system



UNICEF's *10 Action Areas* in supporting national social protection systems



A FOUNDATION OF EVIDENCE

Action Area 1:

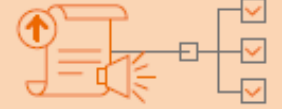
Child poverty analysis, impact evaluations and systems assessments



POLICY, LEGISLATION AND FINANCING FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

Action Area 2:

Policy and strategy development, coordination and financing



PROGRAMME AREAS OF CHILD-SENSITIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

 Social transfers		 Social insurance	 Labour and jobs	 Social service workforce
Action Area 3: Expanding and improving cash transfers for children	Action Area 4: Connecting cash transfers to information, knowledge and services	Action Area 5: Expanding and improving health insurance	Action Area 6: Supporting childcare and adolescent employability	Action Area 7: Strengthening the social welfare workforce and direct outreach to families
				



ADMINISTRATION AND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY

Action Area 8:

Strengthening integrated administrative systems



SOCIAL PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN, FRAGILE AND RISK-PRONE CONTEXTS

Action Area 9:

Strengthening national shock-responsive social protection systems



Action Area 10:

Linking humanitarian cash transfers to social protection systems





The impacts of social protection on children's lives

Social protection is designed to address chronic poverty and respond to shocks.

Evidence shows the significant impacts across sectors.



Social protection is a standalone target under **SDG1**, as well as **accelerator** towards achieving all SDGs.

Impact of social protection across the SDGs



Poverty and productivity

Social protection can address child monetary poverty directly, and also increases household productivity and has positive multiplier effects on local economies.



Nutrition

Social protection programmes, including cash transfers, show significant impacts on food security. Integrated interventions such as 'cash plus' programmes are beginning to demonstrate impacts on children's nutritional outcomes such as stunting.





Health

Social protection has a significant impact both on the usage of health services and in mitigating the financial impacts of a health crisis in a household. In many contexts, there may be opportunities to combine health and social protection programming, such as enrolment into health insurance schemes and strengthening quality of services.



HIV/AIDS

HIV-sensitive social protection measures, have a positive impact on mitigating the risky behaviours associated with HIV, and in supporting the treatment and income of households with HIV-positive members.





Education

Social protection, including cash transfers, has a significant impact on enrolment rates. While evidence on educational outcomes is less clear, some evidence points to significant results, particularly for girls.





Gender equality

Social protection measures can help to prevent the exploitation of women and girls and improve women's access to productive assets. The intention and design of social protection is crucial for its impact on gender equality.



Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

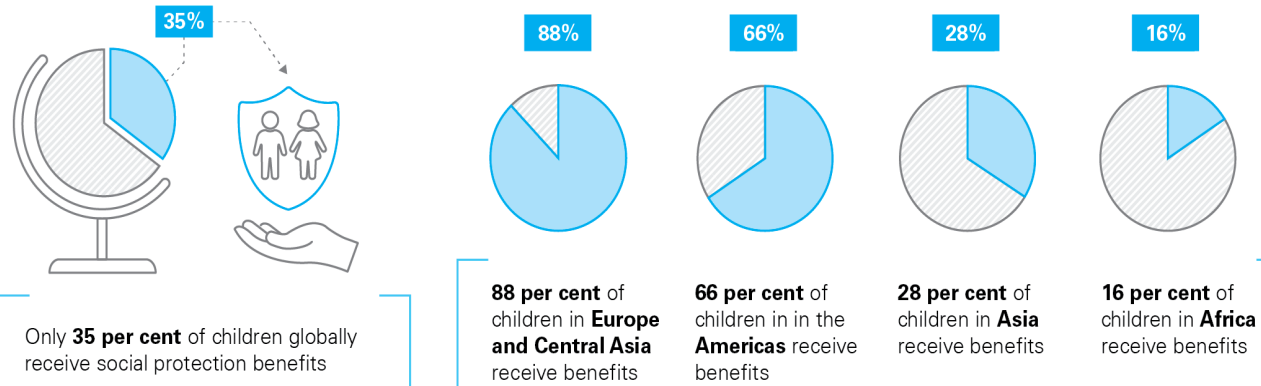
The impact of social protection on WASH is relatively less known as and there is significant scope to increase consideration of WASH outcomes in social protection programming and research. Including WASH components in 'cash plus' may be a particularly effective engagement



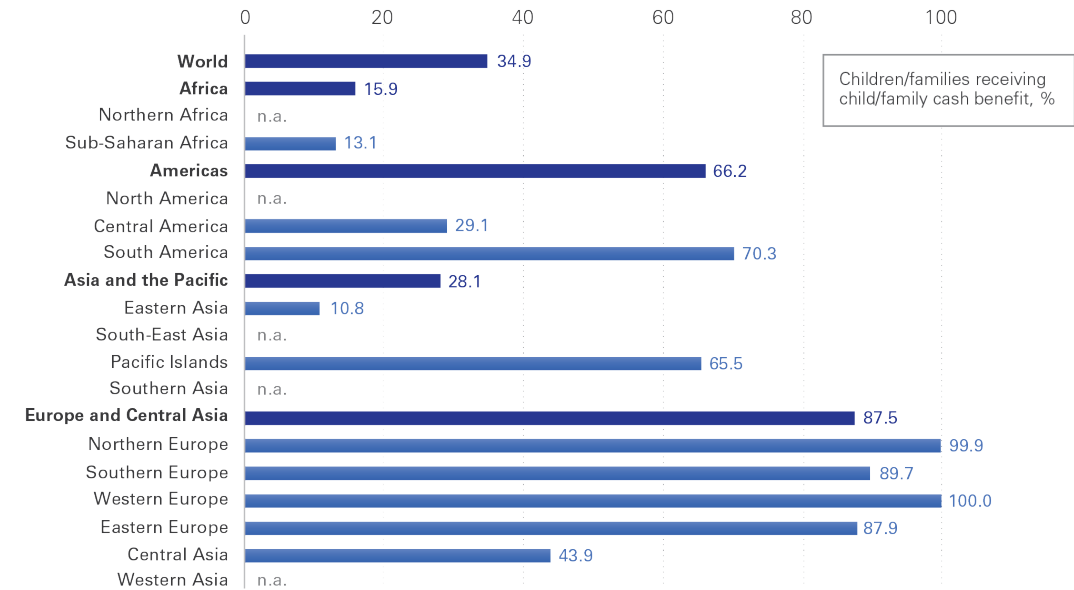
Child Protection

The work of social protection to strengthen families economically and socially may have direct impacts on child protection results. The role of social service workers and family outreach is a crucial connection between social protection and child protection.

Gaps in social protection coverage for children and families



- 2 out of 3 children are not covered by social protection
- coverage is lowest where child poverty is highest.



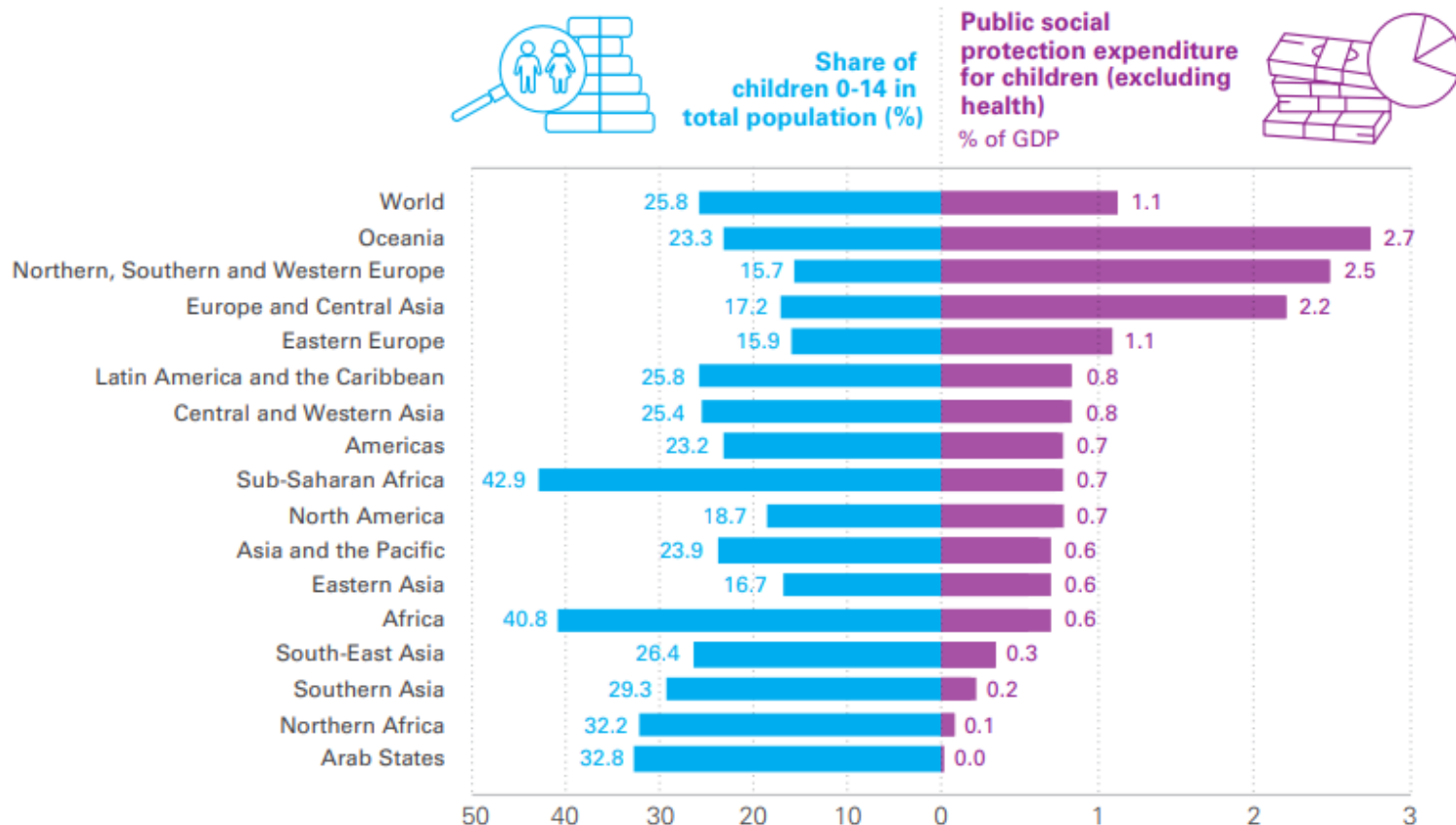
SDG indicator 1.3.1 on effective coverage for children and families:
% of children and households receiving child and family benefits, by region, [ILO, UNICEF](#) (2019)

Social protection financing

On average, countries spend 1.1% of their GDP on child benefits.

More and better financing is needed to ensure coverage, access and quality

Figure 6 Public social protection expenditure (excluding health) on children (% of GDP) and share of children aged 0–14 in total population (%), latest available year

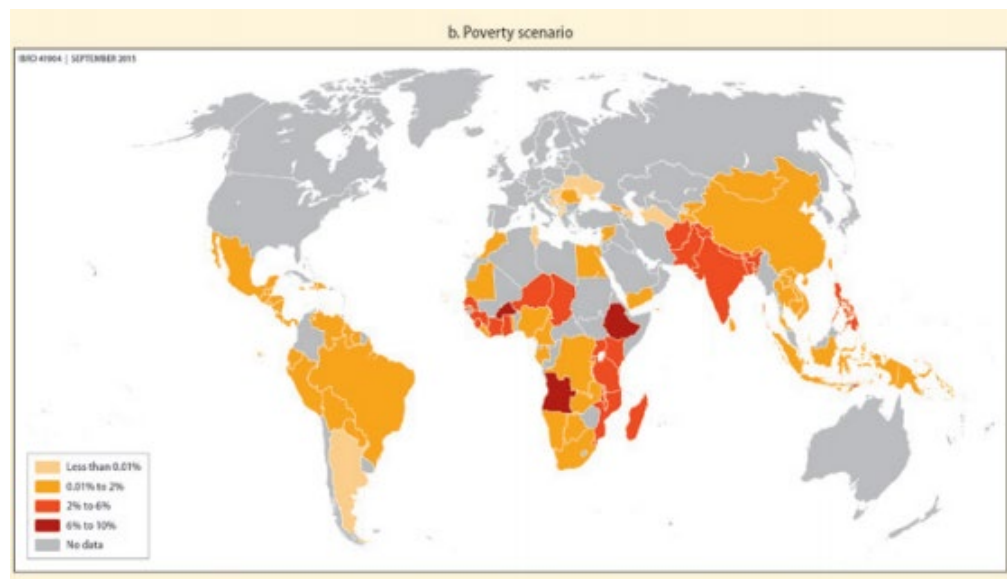


Sources: Based on ILO (2017a).

Link: <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourceDownload.action?ressource.ressourceId=54624>

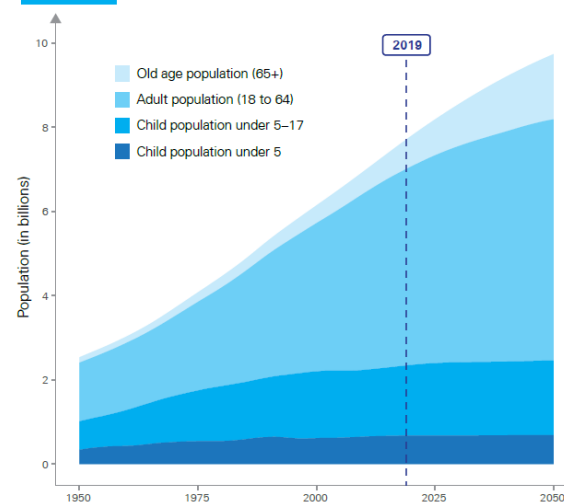
Global trends are bringing growing challenges

Climate breakdown



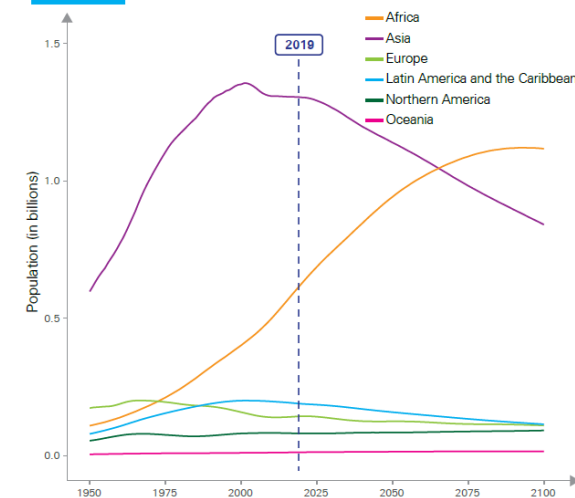
Demographic shifts

Figure 8 Total population by age group, 1950–2050



Sources: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. (medium variant).

Figure 9 Child population under 18 by region, 1950–2050



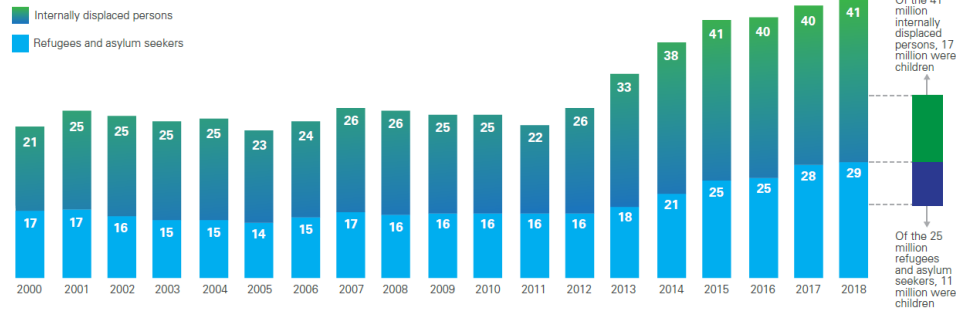
Sources: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. (medium variant).

Global trends are bringing growing challenges

Social protection must be designed to respond to key 'macro' trends that are having, and will continue to have, profound impacts on children and families

Conflict and forced displacement

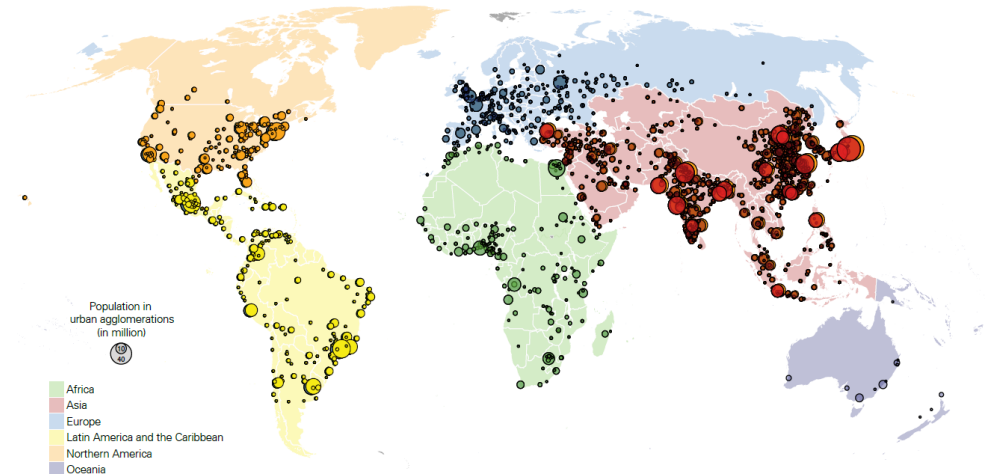
Figure 12 Number of displaced persons due to conflict and violence, 2000–2018 (in millions)



Source: United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018. UNHCR, Geneva, 2019. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), 2019, and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 2019.
Note: The refugee numbers include refugees under UNHCR's mandate, Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and asylum seekers (whose applications has not been decided on yet).

Urbanization

Figure 10 Population in urban agglomerations, 2015

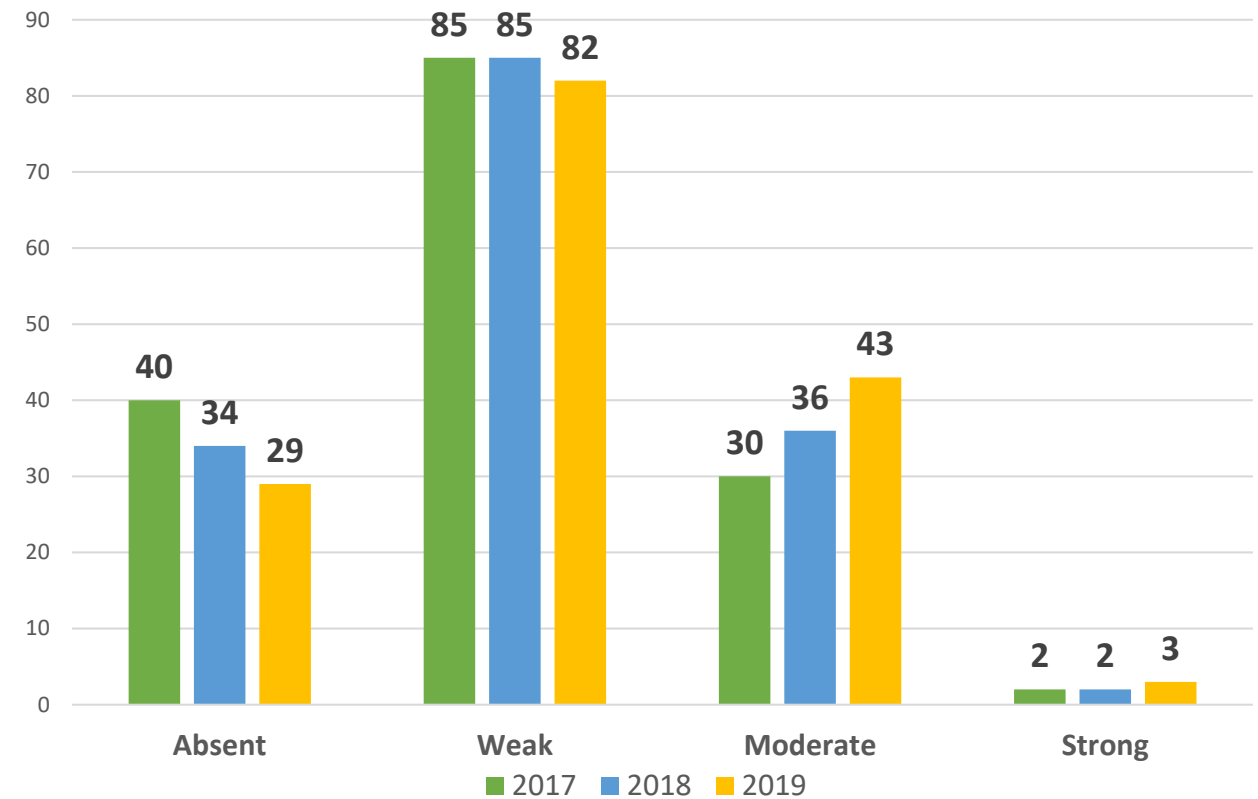


Progress – Strengthened Social Protection Systems

Strength assessed though indicators covering:

- Policy & enabling environment
- Social Protection programmes
- Shock-responsiveness

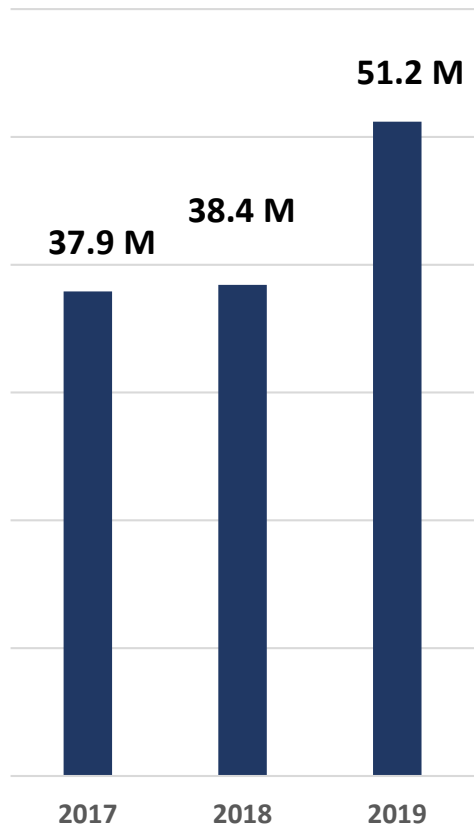
Region	2017	2018	2019	Countries that progressed since 2017
EAP	3	5	6	Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines
ECA	4	4	6	Kazakhstan, Macedonia
ESA	8	9	10	Malawi, Zambia
LAC	7	7	9	Brazil, Guyana
MENA	4	4	5	Jordan, Morocco
ROSA	1	1	2	India
WCA	5	8	8	Gabon, Guinea, Mali
Total	32	38	46	



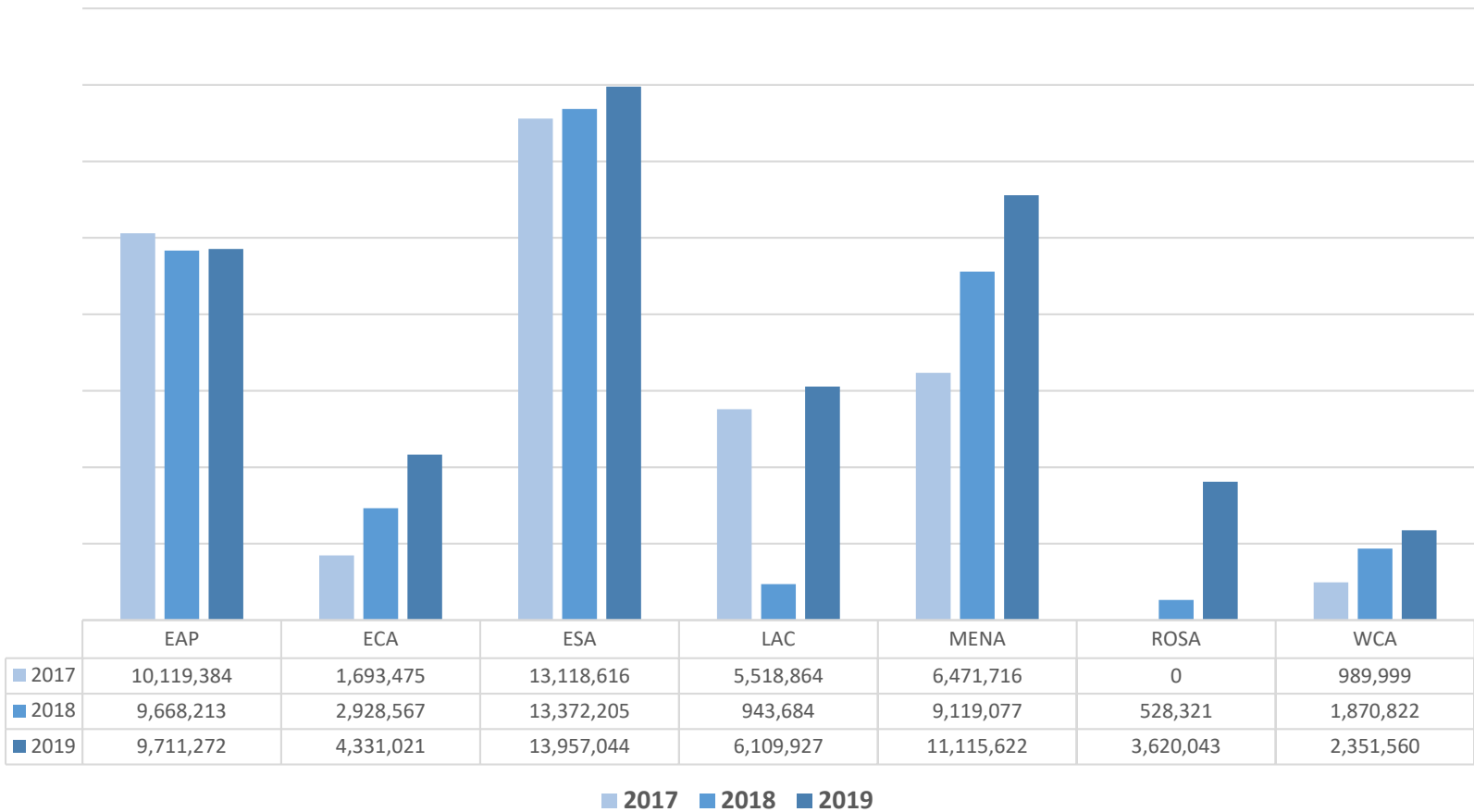
Countries with strong or moderately strong social protection systems, 2017-2019

Source: UNICEF Data

Globally:



By region:



Number of children reached through UNICEF-supported cash transfer programmes

Universal Child Benefits

Universal Child Benefits (UCBs) are defined as tax-financed programmes, anchored in national legislation that provide regular cash payments to all families with children.

Universal Child Benefits

- *Tax-financed*
- *Non-contributory*
- *No means-test*
- *Unconditional*
- *Paid regularly (monthly) to the primary caregiver*
- *Aged 0-18 (up to 21/24)*
- *Children who are citizens/legal residents*

Quasi-UCBs

Quasi-UCBs are child benefit programmes that share most of characteristics of UCBs, yet are:

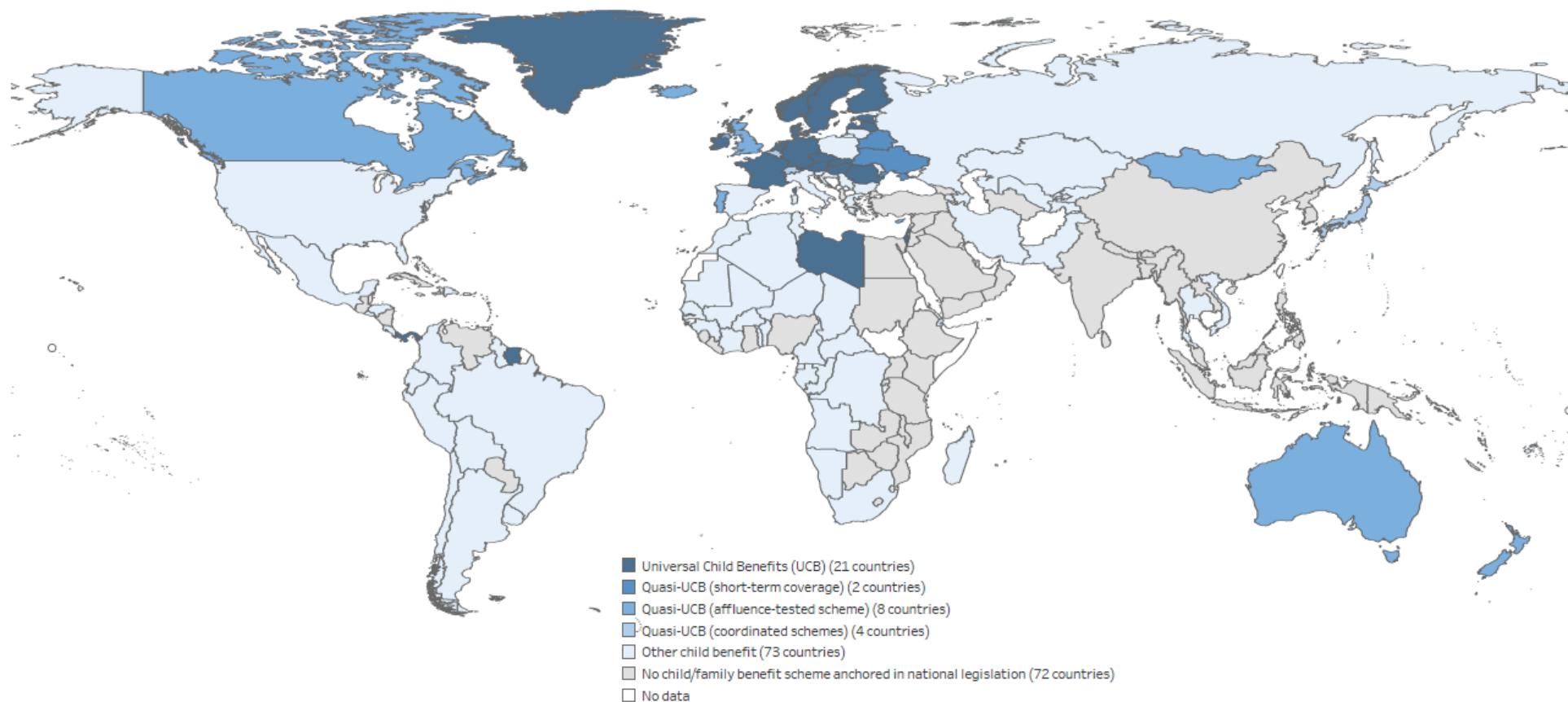
- *Short term age limited:* e.g. for ages 0-3)
- *Affluence-tested:* programmes that exclude high income households, and cover 80% or more of all children
- *Mixed scheme:* achieving universality through contributory and non-contributory scheme

Examining the case for a UCB: Pivotal considerations

1. Human rights - The right to social protection
2. Reaching most vulnerable children and avoiding exclusion errors
3. Administrative efficiency and usability
4. Dignity and shame
5. Social cohesion
6. Political economy
7. Affordability and financing
8. Implications for other social policies and programmes
9. Waste and misuse
10. Gender equality



Worldwide incidence of UCBs and quasi-UCBs

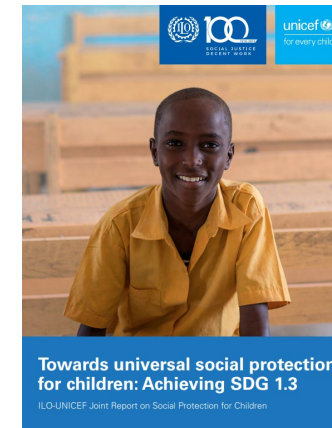


Source: [ILO, UNICEF](#) (2019)

UNICEF's UCB project

UNICEF and partners have launched the [Universal Child Grants Initiative](#) to gather evidence on when, where and how UCBs can be used effectively to reduce child poverty and its long-term consequences.

1. [International Conference on UCBs](#) (Feb 2019)
2. [A Community of Practice on UCBs](#)
3. [ILO-UNICEF report on State of Social Protection for Children](#)
4. UNICEF-ODI Report Examining the Case for UCBs (Q4 2019)



Maximizing the potential of social protection to address child poverty

Conclusions

- Addressing child poverty is central to SDG Achievement: 1 of course, but also 2 – Hunger, 3 – Health, 4 Education, 5- Gender and 10 – Inequality
- Social protection is a promising tool to make headway: it is expanding, but not quickly enough

Recommendations

- Take an intentional approach
 - ✓ use child poverty and child impact to guide SP system improvements
 - ✓ Build in attention to emerging risks and ongoing challenges: climate breakdown, urbanization, gender, fragility and conflict, demographic change, disability
- Promote universal approaches
- Keep up the momentum for better social protection financing – affordability is within reach for most
- Build on partnerships and common interests

Thank you!

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