



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

UNU-MERIT



Maastricht University

Maastricht Graduate School of Governance



Introduction to Social Protection for the Poor

Online Course Manual



1. Objective of the course / learning goals

The main objective of the course is to provide an introduction to non-contributory social protection and its relevance for fighting poverty and vulnerability. The course will highlight the role social protection measures can play in the development process and it will show the advantages and disadvantages of different policy interventions and design options.

At the end of the training you will have a better understanding of the rationale for social protection interventions from a development policy perspective and will be informed about advantages and disadvantages of different issues related to the design and implementation of social assistance schemes in developing countries. More specifically, you will have gained knowledge on:

- the rationale for governments to invest in non-contributory social protection programs;
- the link between social protection and inclusive growth and development;
- types of social protection instruments;
- beneficiary identification;
- the relevance of fiscal space and how it can be created.
- performance indicators for social protection interventions;

2. Structure of the course

The course is divided into four Units of one week each. The Units have been carefully chosen in order to provide an overview of the most important aspects in the design and implementation of social protection programs.

The four Units are:

- Week 1: The 'why' and 'what' of social protection
- Week 2: Identifying beneficiaries – costs and benefits of targeting the poor
- Week 3: Financing social protection
- Week 4: Measuring the sustainability of social assistance programs

The learning material is presented as follows:

- Short videos: introduction of the topic and key messages,
- PowerPoint presentation: Overview of main concepts and evidence. The presentations provide participants with the state-of-the art knowledge for the respective topic.

- Readings: For each week/Unit, a selection of compulsory readings is identified, complemented with a list of additional readings for the interested reader.
- Assignments: Each week contains an assignment, which participants have to complete for the course.

All materials can be accessed through the online student platform.

3. Required activities, assignments, and grading

Students are expected each week to watch the lecture video and read the compulsory literature and lecture slides. Next to this, students are expected to hand in assignments, based on the student type.

Non-tutored/stand-alone students.

Non-tutored students are expected to attempt the Unit quizzes on the online student portal. These quizzes are multiple choice. There are no written assignments or final oral exam.

Non-ECTS certificate users

Certificate users are expected to hand in a written assignment each Unit, which will be graded on a pass/fail-basis. The assignments can be accessed through the online student portal. In order to earn a certificate, all assignments need to be passed, but there is no final exam.

ECTS credit participants

ECTS credit participants are expected to hand in a written assignment each Unit, which will be graded on a 1-10 scale. Next to this, there will be an oral exam (usually via Skype) after all the Units are finished, which will be graded on the same scale. The grades are weighted evenly, meaning that the final grade will be the average of all grades.

EPRM Students

EPRM participants are expected to hand in a written assignment each week, which will be graded on a 1-10 scale. Next to this, there will be an oral exam (usually via Skype) after all the Units are finished, which will be graded on the same scale. The grades are weighted evenly, meaning that the final grade will be the average of all grades.

If a participant fails a grade, then it can be resit in the same Unit. Details need to be discussed with the course tutor. If a participant still fails the final grade, then there is the possibility to sign up for the EPRM resit week. For more details, contact Cristina Mancigotti.

4. Timeline

Each Unit should take one week. This means that for non-tutored students and certificate users the course should take four weeks. For ECTS credit participants the course takes one week longer, in order to prepare for the oral exam.

The precise timeline will be discussed before the start of the course with the student and the tutor.

5. Support structure

Sabrina Kouba is the tutor for this course. She can be contacted by email: sabrina.kouba@maastrichtuniversity.nl. She is the primary contact person for all substantive issues concerning the course. (Skype) meetings are available at the student's request.

Ágúst Axelsson is the project officer for all online courses, and responsible for the technical aspects. If you have any problems accessing the course or materials please contact onlinecourses@merit.unu.edu.

If you follow this course under the EPRM banner, your contact person is Cristina Mancigotti. You can contact her via eprm@merit.unu.edu

6. Week 1: The 'why' and 'what' of social protection

Social protection defined as the public provision of support to poor and vulnerable households and individuals has been gaining ground as a feasible policy option to reduce poverty in low and middle income countries. The G20 approved the Convention on Social Protection Floors, whereby countries are encouraged to introduce effective social protection programs to protect the poorest of the poor. Noncontributory social protection interventions have both short and long run effects. In the short run, they contribute to the immediate reduction of (income) poverty and inequality and enable access to the labor market and basic services. In the long run, they strengthen economic growth and the quality of governance (through various multiplier effects) and reduce the likelihood of intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Week 1 provides the economic rationale for investing in social protection programs. We will discuss the different pathways and transmission channels through which social protection impacts economic growth and development, consider the direct and indirect effects of social protection, and look at the different instruments, their objectives, functions and the context in which their use is most meaningful.

Compulsory reading:

- Alderman, H. and R. Yemtsov (2013), 'How Can Safety Nets Contribute to Economic Growth?', Policy Research Working Paper, 6437, The World Bank, Washington DC.
 - o <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/15578>
- DFID (2011) Cash Transfers, Literature Review, DFID, London.
 - o <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/cash-transfers-evidence-paper.pdf>
- Grosh, M. et.al. (2008), For Protection and Promotion. The Design and Implementation of Social Safety Nets, The World Bank, Washington DC. Chapter 2.
 - o <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALPROTECTION/EXTSAFETYNETSANDTRANSFERS/0,,contentMDK:21925478~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282761,00.html>

Additional reading:

- Barrientos, A. (2012), 'Social Transfers and Growth: What Do We Know? What Do We Need to Find Out?', World Development, 40(1), pp. 11-20.
 - o <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2011.05.012>
 - o This article is not open access.
- Grosh, M. et.al. (2008), For Protection and Promotion. The Design and Implementation of Social Safety Nets, The World Bank, Washington DC. Chapter 7.
- Hagen-Zanker, J., McCord, A., and R. Holmes (2011), Systematic Review of the Impact of Employment Guarantee Schemes and Cash Transfers on the Poor, Overseas Development Institute, London.
 - o <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7161.pdf>
- ILO (2010) Effects of non-contributory social transfers in developing countries. A Compendium. Geneva: International Labour Office.
 - o <http://www.socialsecurityextension.org/gimi/gess/ResShowRessource.do?ressourceId=17116>

7. Week 2: Identifying beneficiaries – costs and benefits of targeting the poor

Policy makers basically have two options for the delivery of social transfers. They can give a transfer to everybody (universal transfer) or targeted to a specific group (targeted transfer). Both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages. With a universal transfer, the chance that some needy households are excluded is reduced to a minimum. However, the budgetary resources may not allow providing a transfer to everybody. A targeted transfer may be more cost efficient in that a larger benefit can be given to a smaller group given a constrained budget. In this Unit, the main targeting mechanisms will be critically reviewed in terms of their benefits and costs and the potential trade-offs involved.

Compulsory reading:

- Grosh et.al.: ch. 4
- Slater, R., and J. Farrington (2009), 'Making Social Transfers Appropriate, Achievable and Acceptable: A Practical Tool for Good Targeting', Overseas Development Institute, London.
 - o <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/5757.pdf>

Additional reading:

- AusAID (2011), Targeting the Poorest: An assessment of the proxy means test methodology, Australian Aid, Canberra.
 - o <https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/targeting-poorest.pdf>
- Coady, D., Grosh, M. and J. Hoddinott (2004), Targeting Outcomes Redux, The World Bank Research Observer, 19(1), pp. 61-85.
 - o <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/569401468337868966/pdf/764760JRN0Targ0Box0374379B00PUBLIC0.pdf>
- Schuering, Esther and Franziska Gassmann (2012), "Whom to target - an obvious choice?", UNU-MERIT Working Paper 2012-028.
 - o <http://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:161/wp2012-028.pdf>

8. Week 3: Financing social protection

Social protection programs require funding before the benefits can be reaped. They are generally financed from general government revenues – at least in theory. The question is whether low and middle-income countries can indeed afford implementing basic social protection programs, or whether and to what extent they have to depend on financing from donors, NGOs or even the private sector. Many studies claim that social protection is affordable even for low income countries. But, is it? And where should the money come from? In this Unit, we will review options to create fiscal space and discuss their feasibility for low income countries.

Compulsory reading

- Barrientos, A., (2007), Financing Social Protection, BWPI Working Paper 5, Brooks World Poverty Institute, Manchester.
 - o <http://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/institutes/gdi/publications/workingpapers/bwpi/bwpi-wp-0507.pdf>
- Ortiz, I., Cummins, M. and K Karunanethy (2015), Fiscal Space for Social Protection. Options to Expand Social Investments in 187 Countries, ESS Working Paper no. 48, International Labour Office, Geneva.
 - o <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=51537>

Additional reading

- Cichon, M., Scholz, W., van de Meerendonk, A., Hagemeyer, K., Bertranou, F. and P. Plamondon (2004), Financing Social Protection, International Labour Office, Geneva.
 - o http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---soc_sec/documents/publication/wcms_secsec_8030.pdf
- Bastagli, F. (2015), Brining taxation into social protection analysis and planning, ODI Working paper 421, Overseas Development Institute, London.
 - o <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9700.pdf>
- Duran-Valverde, F. and J.F. Pacheco (2012), Fiscal space and the extension of social protection: Lessons learnt from developing countries, ESS Working paper no. 33, International Labour Office, Geneva.
 - o <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=34168>

- Harris, E. (2013), Financing social protection floors: Considerations of fiscal space, *International Social Security Review*, 66, pp. 111-143.
 - <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/issr.12021/abstract>
 - This article is not open acces.
-

9. Week 4: Measuring the sustainability of social assistance programs

Within the policy making cycle, regular monitoring and evaluation provides highly needed information for the policy design. Monitoring and evaluation guides the policy design ex-ante and evaluates its implementation ex-post. Monitoring is an ongoing activity checking whether the cash transfers function as intended, reach the envisaged beneficiaries, stay within budget and are implemented according to the rules. Evaluation relates the program to the initial objectives and analyses whether these have been met. A good monitoring and evaluation strategy provides evidence about the program inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The presentation focuses on the most important performance indicators used to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of social assistance programs, the type of data required, and the capacity needed for this task.

Compulsory reading:

- Grosh et al.: Chapter 6
- Haughton, J. and S.R. Khandker (2009), Handbook on Poverty and Inequality, The World Bank, Washington DC. Chapters 1-4
 - o <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,,contentMDK:22405907~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367,00.html>

Additional reading:

- Devereux, S., Roelen, K., Béné, C., Chopra, D., Leavy, J., and J.A. McGregor (2012), Evaluating Outside the Box: An Alternative Framework of Analysing Social Protection Programmes, IDS Working Paper 431, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton.
 - o <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.2040-0209.2013.00431.x/full>
- Khandker et al (2010) Handbook on Impact Evaluation. Quantitative Methods and Practices. Washington: the World Bank.
 - o <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2693>
- Ravallion, M. (2001), 'The Mystery of Vanishing Benefits: An Introduction to Impact Evaluation', in: The World Bank Economic Review, 15(1), pp. 115-140.
 - o https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTISPMA/Resources/383704-1130267506458/Mystery_Vanishing_Benefits.pdf



 Maastricht University *Leading in Learning!*



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

UNU-MERIT