



Newsletter 8, December 2010
Conference on Social Protection as Development Policy in Asia

Conference on Social Protection as Development Policy in Asia: The Long Term Perspective

As part of its mandate to facilitate advocacy and networking for an innovative and informed policy on social protection in Asia, the Social Protection in Asia (SPA) Programme organized a three-day conference on 'Social Protection as Development Policy in Asia: The Long Term Perspective'. The conference was held in Bangkok from October 27-29 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in collaboration with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

The main objective of the meeting was to provide a platform for policy-makers, researchers and international organizations to exchange their views and experiences on social protection and its role in the development of the countries in the region. A vital part of the event was the presentation of key findings of the SPA Programme and its synthesis report. In addition, UNRISD also presented its flagship report 'Combating Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics'.

The first day of the conference constituted ESCAP's annual meeting and included general discussion on the definitions and policy directions of social protection in Asia and the Pacific. A policy roundtable on long term perspectives on social protection and development was held with representatives from the two regions. UNRISD flagship report on combating poverty and inequality and its key findings were also shared with the participants.

The second day of the conference was devoted to the SPA programme, and started with the sharing of the SPA Synthesis Report. The SPA research teams presented their findings, and responded to reflections and questions from the participants. Three technical sessions were held on aspects of social protection like public employment programs, residential security, and old age and health.

The technical sessions extended to the third day of the conference, with focus on migration and disaster relief, and strategies to move out of extreme poverty. Towards the closing of the conference, discussions were veered towards the future agenda of SPA, with a focus on its research and advocacy. The conference culminated with a closed-door session for the SPA partners.

For more details see <http://www.socialprotectionasia.org/Conference-on-Social-Protection-as-Development-Policy-in-Asia.asp>

Key Learnings of the Conference:

- Social protection has seen a recent accelerated interest
- Scope and meaning of social protection has shifted from the margins to the mainstream and has expanded to include comprehensive, ex ante systems for

- inclusive growth
- Need for conceptual clarity in defining the contours of social protection
 - Does it include sources and responses to vulnerabilities?
 - Is it limited to only policy instruments that address these vulnerabilities?
 - Does it encompass social policy?
 - Does it overlap with poverty alleviation?
 - Role of the state crucial in social protection interventions as it is the only institution mandated to ensure the basic needs and rights of all
 - Universal social protection with emphasis on rights inculcates notions of citizenship, expression of voice and can build collective capabilities and contribute to state building
 - Need for investments in frontline staff of social protection programmes to enable innovations in implementation
 - Need for monitoring and evaluation, accountability and freedom of the press as checks on the state in providing social protection
 - Need to focus on power dynamics and gender in the operation of social protection programmes
 - Role of private sector in social protection interventions can be explored
 - Need for strong engagement between social protection and development policies and strategies
 - Discussions on social protection encompass wider debates on good governance, redistribution, decentralization and equality

Useful Resources

[Social Protection in Asia: Research Findings and Policy Lessons – Programme Synthesis Report](#)

[Combating Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics – UNRISD Report](#)

Inclusive Crises, Exclusive Recoveries and Policies to Prevent a Double Whammy for the Poor - Ronald Mendoza – UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Working Paper
http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Inclusive_Crises_Exclusive_Recoveries.pdf

Social Protection: Accelerating the MDGs with Equity - UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Working Briefs – August 2010
http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Social_Protection_Accelerating_the_MDGs_with_Equity%281%29.pdf

UNESCAP Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2010 - Protecting Development Gains -
<http://www.unescap.org/publications/detail.asp?id=1406>

UNCTAD Trade and Development Report, 2010 – Employment, Globalisation and Development http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/trd2010_en.pdf

World of Work Report 2010 – From One Crisis to the Next -
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_145078.pdf

Human Development Report 2010 - The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Complete_reprint.pdf

Rethinking social protection using a gender lens - Rebecca Holmes and Nicola Jones – ODI Working Paper 320 - <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/5099.pdf>

World Economic and Social Survey 2010 - Retooling Global Development – UN DESA Report 2010 <http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2010files/wess2010.pdf>

News and Events

A SPA Southeast Asia and China Regional Workshop will be held on December 18-20, 2010 in Beijing to engage with local officials for improving the delivery of social protection programs and also to disseminate the project findings among relevant government and non-governmental agencies. The focus shall be on deriving actionable lessons from research, from the perspective of local implementation and keying in on new areas of exploration for research. Similar dissemination events are to be held in New Delhi and Jakarta.

Final SPA Research Papers and Research Summaries are to be published in December 2010. Other SPA publications are available at <http://www.socialprotectionasia.org/publications.asp>

The ASEM Workshop on Social Protection Floor and the Informal Economy was held in Nice, France on 27-28 September, 2010. Representatives of all ASEM member states held discussions on the issue of integrating the informal economy to the "social protection floor". The results from the workshop will contribute towards the 3rd ASEM Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference to be held in Leiden, the Netherlands in December, 2010.

Development Cooperation Seminar on the Social Protection Floor - 'Social Protection: Towards Universal Coverage in Thailand' was held on 5 November, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. The purpose of this fifth Development Cooperation Seminar, co-hosted by National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), is to bring together high-level government officials, international organisations, academia, employers and civil society to review the current social protection system in the Thailand within the context of the international debate on the social protection floor. See http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/events/lang--en/docName--WCMS_145716/index.htm

The 52nd Conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economics will be held under the auspices of Karnatak University in Dharwad, from 17-19 December, 2010. A special session on Labour Market and Social Protection Policies in Emerging Economies: Experiences and Issues in Brazil, China, India and South Africa, will be held on 16 December, 2010, in collaboration with Indian Council for Social Science Research and Institute for Human Development (IHD). For more details see <http://www.isleijle.org/isleijleconference/default.asp>.

UNESCO Forum of Ministers in charge of Social Development from South Asia is organising its Third Ministerial Meeting on "Social Protection Policies in South Asia" in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 20-22 February, 2011. For more details see http://portal.unesco.org/geography/en/files/13248/12869617765Provisional_Agenda.pdf/Provisional%2BAgenda.pdf

The Centre for Social Protection at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex is convening a three-day conference on "Social Protection for Social Justice", to be held on 13-15 April, 2011. The conference aims to explore future directions for social protection that go beyond social safety nets and risk management, to address broader

concerns with redistributive equity and social injustice. On more updates on the conference, please register your email at <http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/events/csp-conference-2011-social-protection-for-social-justice>

Useful Links

The International Poverty Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) has launched a new South-South Learning Gateway on Social Protection. Launched this week at a workshop in South-Africa, the website aims to promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences among the Global South. See <http://south-south.ipc-undp.org/> for more details.

Centre for Social Protection Newsletter, October Issue No 14 on Social Protection and HIV and AIDS <http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/news/csp-newsletter-oct-issue-14-social-protection-and-hiv-and-aids>

About SPA:

Social Protection in Asia is a research, networking and advocacy programme that aims to create a regional voice and develop a research base for advocating innovative and informed policy on Social Protection issues.

We welcome your contributions

The SPA Network aims to keep people informed of required and requested information and to facilitate collaboration on social protection. To do this, the network needs you! If you would like to share your experiences, express your views or share information, for example, if there is an event you think network members would be interested in, please contact info@socialprotectionasia.org

Unsubscribe:

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please reply to this mail with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line and we will take your name off our mailing list.

The SPA programme is managed by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) (www.ids.ac.uk/go/centreforsocialprotection) at the University of Sussex, UK and the Institute for Human Development (www.ihdindia.org), New Delhi, India.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Programme Director: | Naila Kabeer, School of Oriental and African Studies |
| Co-Directors: | Alakh Sharma, IHD and Sarah Cook, UNRISD |
| Programme and Network Manager: | C. Upendranadh, IHD |
| Programme Administrator: | Marion Clarke, IDS |
| Communication Management: | Rukmini Tankha, IHD |

Email: info@socialprotectionasia.org **Website:** www.socialprotectionasia.org

The SPA Programme is funded by The Ford Foundation www.fordfound.org and the **International Development Research Centre (IDRC)** www.idrc.ca