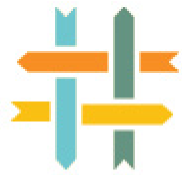

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Provision for Protection

Review of Social Protection in Zambia and Namibia

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Abstract

This paper provides a comparative study of social protection programs in Zambia and Namibia. It defines social protection and outlines the social protection programs in both Zambia and Namibia in great detail, discussing the challenges faced by each country as well as the effectiveness of the programs in poverty reduction. The paper then provides an analysis of the differences between the two social protection systems and policy recommendations for Zambia based on Namibia's successful social assistance programs, notably their universal non-contributory social pension for the elderly which has been fairly effective in poverty reduction.

Acronyms

Zambia

ACC	Area Coordinating Committee
CGP	Child Grant Program
CWACs	Community Welfare Assistance Committees
DSWO	District Social Welfare Officers
DWACs	District Welfare Assistance Committees
FISP	Farmer Input Support Program
FNDP	Fifth National Development Plan
FSP	Food Security Pack
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
ILO	International Labor Organization
IM	10% Inclusive Model
LASF	Local Authority Superannuation Fund
LCMS	Living Conditions Monitoring Survey
MCDMCH	Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health
MCDSW	Ministry of Community Development and Social Welfare
MCTG	Multiple Categorical Targeting Grant
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
MoLSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
NAPSA	National Pension Scheme Authority
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PSPF	Public Service Pension Fund
PWAS	Public Welfare Assistance Scheme
PWD	Person with a Disability
SCT	Social Cash Transfer
SHI	Social Health Insurance
SNDP	Sixth National Development Plan
R-SNDP	Revised Sixth National Development Plan
WEF	Women's Empowerment Fund
7NDP	Seventh National Development Plan

Namibia

MPESW	Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare
NDP	National Development Plan
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
WVS	War Veterans Subversion
DG	Disability Grant
OAP	Old Age Pension

NHIES	National Housing and Income Expenditure Survey
MGECW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
NDP5	Fifth National Development Plan
NDP4	Fourth National Development Plan
NDP3	Third National Development Plan

Introduction

Background:

Social protection is often an important tool used in poverty reduction and social and economic development strategies. In recent years, there have been many concerted efforts to expand social protection policies and programs, however, there is concern about the capacity and scope the existing legal and regulatory framework that may limit the degree of poverty reduction. In order to improve the existing framework through legislative reform, it is important to understand the current policies and practices. This review will answer the following questions:

1. What is the current situation of national social protection policies and program implementation within Zambia?
2. How to these policies and practices compare to those of Namibia and what insights can we learn from different experiences in a similar country?
3. What opportunities exist to improve social protection policies and practices in Zambia?

Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the policy environment, institutional arrangements and challenges of social protection in Zambia and compare it to that of Namibia to highlight gaps, weaknesses and potential opportunities for improvement. The GRZ has indicated increased attention to social protection through new policies and program scale-ups. The purpose of this study is to provide a baseline for advocacy work.

Deliverables

This is a comprehensive review of social protection policies and practices to serve as a platform to raise awareness for enhanced revision and improvement of legal and regulatory frameworks in Zambia. This brief is organized as follows: Section II analyzes the international framework for social protection, discussing models for social protection in Africa. Section III and Section IV examine social protection in Zambia and Namibia, respectively. Section V discusses what lessons can be learned in Zambia. Section VI concludes with recommendations for future directions for social protection in Zambia.

Methodology of the Review

i. Desk Review performed to review existing literature and legislation surrounding social protection.
ii. Investigation of future directions along with current social protection policy through conducting interviews with various stakeholders.

Scope of the study

The principal researchers of this study performed the following tasks:

i. Evaluate various social protection programs and policies in comparable countries.
ii. Assess the past and current situation of social protection in Zambia
iii. Identify gaps and weaknesses in Zambia's social protection framework.
iv. Identify a solid platform for enhanced advocacy for strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework for social protection policies and practices in Zambia.

Why Namibia?

According to the ILO's social protection floor assessment, "compared to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, and indeed large parts of the developing world, Namibia has a comprehensive social protection system, both in terms of risks covered and types of schemes, that plays a critical role in its economy and society" (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). There are few countries in sub-Saharan Africa, aside from Namibia and South Africa which have large-scale social assistance programs as part of their social protection policy framework (Niño-Zarazúa et. al, 2012). Niño-Zarazúa et. al states that due to the underdevelopment of social institutions, the limited reach of the labor market regulations, and the persistence of mass poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, developing a comprehensive social assistance program could be a good foundation for the extension of social protection (Niño-Zarazúa et. al, 2012). This suggests that due to Namibia's successful and developed social assistance program, the country is underway to extending its social protection program to reach its most vulnerable populations.

While we acknowledge that there are multiple differences between Namibia and Zambia, we chose to compare Namibia's social protection program to Zambia's because it is one of the most similar countries to Zambia with a fairly comprehensive social protection system that has been effective in poverty reduction. Both Namibia and Zambia have major mining industries, specifically in copper, diamonds, and uranium. Both countries were also greatly affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic and continue to have a high prevalence of the disease, with Zambia's prevalence being 14.3 percent and Namibia's prevalence being 16.9 percent. The effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic have amplified the need for a reliable and sustainable social protection system in both countries. Lastly, both Zambia and Namibia have about 50 percent of their population living in rural areas, which causes regional variations in poverty headcount and social protection program coverage (Overview, 2017). The Zambian government (GRZ) has used examples of social protection programs in Brazil, Kenya, South Africa and Chile, all of which have notable social protection systems to inform their policy formation[1]. However, these countries are contextually very different and thus the programs serve different purposes and different populations. This study is unique in that

[1] Taken from an interview with Director of Social Welfare at MCD

Zambian programs have not been evaluated against those of Namibia and important lessons can be learned from Namibia's comprehensive social protection system.

Social Protection: A Global Perspective

Social protection is a vague concept that is often overlooked due to its broad nature and relatively undefined boundaries. At its foundation, social protection consists of interventions designed to provide support and assistance to prevent vulnerability in certain populations. Vulnerability, in this context, refers to how likely one is to be poor in the future (Barrientos, Hickey, Simutanyi & Wood, 2005). However, vulnerability in the context of social protection is multidimensional, engendered by factors of income, consumption, assets, susceptibility to risk and circumstance (Sabetes-Wheeler & Devereux, 2007).

Conventional ideas about social protection concern protective interventions to alleviate economic risks associated with vulnerability. Limiting social protection to a mere transfer to needy and vulnerable individuals provides a precise picture of the scope of benefits (Kumitz, 2013). However, providing supplemental income does not address social and structural causes of poverty contributing to limited long-term poverty impact. Sabetes-Wheeler and Devereux (2007) highlight the need to recognize the social dimensions of poverty beyond economic risk. Their transformative approach defines social protection as "all initiatives that transfer income or assets to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized" (p.25). These initiatives are designed with the overarching objective of inclusive economic growth to mitigate economic and social vulnerability. Their inclusion of both economic and social dimensions of poverty promote pro-poor growth designed to integrate the poor into productive society. This multidimensional approach to poverty reduction works to address the root causes of intergenerational transfer of poverty by reducing vulnerability while empowering individuals through building human capital.

Social protection is frequently concealed within social policy framework designed to allow equal participation of the poor and vulnerable in society through a wide range of interventions (OCED, 2009). The rise of social protection in many developing countries coincides with the demonstrated impact of social protection interventions on chronic poverty. High poverty rates and persistent food insecurity create a greater need for social protection with broader policy objectives than in developed countries. Development in Latin America, Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa have shown that when implemented properly at the national level, social protection interventions can mitigate economic insecurity and facilitate pro-poor economic growth (Holmes, 2007). It has been shown that even low-income countries can afford a rudimentary social protection package consisting of a nominal universal social pension as well as grants for disabled persons and children (Hagemejer & Behrendt, 2009). Implementation of social protection initiatives around the

world have demonstrated the ability to effectively smooth economic consumption and enable asset building and productive investment for individuals resulting in growth of the local economy and poverty reduction (Holmes, 2007). International experience lends important insight into the value of social protection interventions.

International Social Protection Frameworks:

International experience shows marginal homogeneity between different national policy frameworks. However, there have been efforts to construct guiding frameworks for creating social protection policy. Wolkenhauer (2016) notes that the recent wave of social protection policies in developing countries has shifted to states as the principal drivers of change for social protection. The ILO Global Floors of Social Protection Recommendation 202 provides a baseline set of guarantees to inform policy prioritization surrounding social protection. These guarantees are designed to push national level initiatives to assure at minimum, access to essential health care and income security in order to obtain necessary goods and services (ILO, 2012). The recommendation includes provisions for types of benefits such as child and family benefits, benefits for sickness, health care, maternity, disability, old-age, and unemployment; as well as, other in-cash or in-kind benefits through schemes such as universal social insurance or social assistance. The recommendation advises members to embed guarantees in law with specifications of scope, criteria and amount of benefits

The guarantees, they specify, should be implemented in line with national priorities with adequate monitoring and evaluation of programs. It does not however, provide information for what the "nationally defined minimum" level of services should be. According to Kate Pruce from Manchester University, "learning from other countries can be useful but often the specific political environment is a determining factor for social protection policies"[2]. The ILO urges members to share information and experiences on various strategies in order to create comprehensive national social protection policies.

The extension of social protection in sub-Saharan Africa is highly diverse and there many challenges to financing and implementing the programs in low income countries. Niño-Zarazúa et. al identify two models of social protection in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle African model and the Southern African model, which differ in the development and extension of social protection programs.

The Southern African model of social protection evolved around more categorical, unconditional grants for vulnerable populations, specifically children and the elderly. In fact, the origins of the Southern African model can be traced back to South Africa's pension system, which was created in 1920. Currently, this model relies on income transfers in the form of social pensions and child support grants. The extension of grant-based social protection emerges as a domestic initiative and is largely tax-funded (Niño-Zarazúa et. al,

[2] Taken from email correspondence with Kate Pruce, Manchester University

2012). The countries using the Southern African model, such as South Africa, Namibia, Mauritius, Lesotho, and Swaziland, all have universal non-contributory pension schemes. This model is rooted in legislation and delivered largely by public institution. Under this model, social protection agendas are proposed as policies and programs, unlike the Middle Africa model where they are proposed as projects.

The Middle African model of social protection is used by Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Swaziland Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, and Zambia. These are countries which have been transitioning their social protection system from emergency aid to more reliable, sustainable social safety nets, as a result of humanitarian crises in the 1980s. The Middle African model is fairly newer than the Southern African model and is largely composed of short-term pilot "projects" principally led and funded by international aid organizations. Niño-Zarazúa et. al note that schemes under the Middle African model often lack the capacity for expansion due to this weak institutional framework. The Middle African model has cash transfers; however, it also aims to integrate service provision and utilization into its transfer programs, creating diverse and distinctive programs. This model prioritizes programs that provide predictable income support and improve access to basic services. According to Niño-Zarazúa et. al (2012), although this new model represents a shift in thinking surrounding social protection, extension of programs under this model have a weak political platform and have limited institutional capacity. They argue that successful extension of social protection systems hinges on the recognition that "the poorest are deserving of public action to solve problems of poverty that are not of their own making and which identify the state as responsible for delivering on this, without which, national-level and government owned social protection programs are unlikely to emerge and be maintained" (Niño-Zarazúa et. al, 2012).

Social Protection in Zambia

Introduction

The Zambian government defines social protection as, "policies and practices that protect and promote the livelihoods and welfare of people suffering from critical levels of poverty and deprivation and/or are vulnerable to risks and shocks" (MCDMCH, 2014). These policies and programs are targeted poverty reduction interventions designed to improve and protect all citizens while recognizing that women, children, elderly and the disabled should be the principal beneficiaries' due to their increased vulnerability. The government's recognition of their responsibility to provide social support to these specific groups have been reflected in increased social protection response (MCDSW, 2016). These policies and programs are framed on a context of persistent poverty and vulnerability. Historically, progress towards poverty reduction has been slow, with sustained levels of poverty since the 1990's. According to the 2015 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (LCMS), the incidence of poverty was 54.4 percent, with rural levels of 76.6 percent compared to a mere 23.4 percent in urban areas. Most concerning, however, is the chronic

extreme poverty affecting 40.8 percent of the population.[3] The 2015 LCMS found that the incidence of extreme poverty in rural areas (60.8 percent) is five times greater than the estimated urban levels (12.8 percent), indicating a failure to meet the MDG target of 29 percent extreme poverty rate by 2015 (Central Statistical Office, 2016).

Narratives of economic development in Zambia run contrary to poverty indices. Zambia has experienced a decade of uninterrupted economic growth, increasing approximately 6.5 percent per annum, making it one of the most prosperous developing economies in Africa (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland, 2017). However, this macro-economic growth does not translate effectively into reduction of poverty. Although poverty trends from 2010 to 2015 indicate an overall reduction of poverty from 60.5 to 54.4 percent, improvements are felt disproportionately by urban populations and in provinces who have the highest level of extreme poverty, such as Western, Northern and Luapula, where the poverty levels have increased (Central Statistical Office, 2016). This chronic poverty with widening income inequalities poses a critical issue in accessibility of goods and services.

The current shift to social protection is an important opportunity to increase inclusive economic growth. In Zambia, social protection interventions come in three forms, social insurance schemes, social assistance programs and empowerment programs (Pruce & Hickey, 2017). However, the existing institutional framework surrounding social protection is insufficient in altering prevailing social narratives that sustain chronic poverty. Political and social contexts are an important factor influencing the expansion of social protection. Specifically, the disconnect between informal political institutions and formal rules create a conflicting and pluralistic political landscape. Lavers and Hickey (2015) state that these competitive clientelist political settlements prioritize short-term outcomes of social protection initiatives, “leading to an ad hoc collection of policies” (p. 21). The current picture of the social protection policy environment is categorized by multiple, low coverage policies and programs that have limited operational synergies and marginal poverty impact.

Increased attention to the expansion of social protection marks a measure of success in Zambia. Social protection has gained a platform within national policy formation representing progress towards the development of a comprehensive social protection system. Provisions laid out in the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) and the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) indicate positive forward movement towards achieving this goal.

Existing Policy Framework

Social protection is often concealed within the context of a larger social policy framework (OCED, 2009). The political environment surrounding social protection has a very volatile

[3] Extreme poverty is defined as a failure to meet the cost of a predetermined basic food basket (Central Statistical Office, 2016).

history and the Zambian government has often been criticized for its transient commitment to the system (Schüring & Lawson-McDowall, 2011). For a long time, there has been a vision for social protection; what is lacking is the strategic planning and policy required for a comprehensive system. The extension of social protection has been hindered by the political environment in Zambia. However, in the past decade there has been progress in creating a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for social protection.

In the past, social protection programs were implemented without an overarching policy framework. The resulting system suffers from significant institutional fragmentation between the programs and the ministries charged with implementing them. In Zambia, social protection falls under nine different ministries, however, in reality, only one and a half ministries take full ownership- the Ministry of Community Development (MCD) and Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MoLSS)[4]. Therefore, there are too many responsible actors with little horizontal integration creating minimal institutional capacity within the system. It is unclear where individual roles and responsibilities lie. In reality, programs as well as oversight can be redistributed and consolidated, yet a lack of an overarching policy framework has created misaligned interventions with overlapping program objectives and little operational synergies.

The original Zambian constitution had no provision for guaranteeing socioeconomic rights to citizens (Schüring & Lawson-McDowall, 2011). The first reference to social protection was in 2005 with the creation of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS). The NSPS differentiated social protection from the larger social policy framework. Social protection emerged on the government's policy agenda in 2006 in the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP). Provisions for social protection under this plan focused on ensuring that incapacitated and low capacity households had access to basic needs through ensuring livelihood security, food security, child protection and justice. The FNDP highlighted the importance of social protection, defining it as "policies and practices that protect and promote the livelihoods and welfare of people suffering from critical levels of poverty and deprivation and/or are vulnerable to risks and shocks" (Republic of Zambia, 2006). Within the entire chapter on social protection, there was no mention of establishing a policy framework. Provisions in the FNDP only focused on the implementation of the social protection strategies. Limited legislative provisions for social protection corresponded with the MMD's reluctance to commit to social protection. Social protection initiatives before 2011 were largely handled by donor organizations and the marginal government attention was attributed to pressures from cooperating partners such as the World Bank, ILO, GTZ, DFID and UNICEF (Kuss, 2015).

The Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) created in 2011, shifted the focus of social protection strategies toward social assistance with an emphasis on human development (Republic of Zambia, 2011). The change in regime when the PF took office in 2011, marked a realignment of social protection. Social protection was now a key government investment

[4] Taken from an interview with Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF

area and benefits were shifted to the poor and vulnerable. Revisions to the SNDP (R-SNDP) then further expanded the scope of social protection to identify persons with disabilities (PWDs) as vulnerable. During this plan period (2011-2015), the government identified the need for an overarching policy framework and prioritized the development of the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP). The R-SNDP stated that the intention of the government in the development of the NSPP was to create an "enabling policy environment for the establishment of a well-defined, coordinated, systematic, equitable and sustainable national social protection system" (Republic of Zambia, 2013). This policy embedded social protection in law and clearly defined the scope and measures involved. Beyond creating a clearer understanding of social protection, it outlined output indicators, the necessary resources and the responsible actors and their roles within the system (Harman, 2015). According to Quarles van Ufford et. al (2016), the NSPP represents the "next stage of social protection policy." It is a comprehensive, integrated approach to transformative social protection that encompasses a range of schemes such as the scaled-up social cash transfer (SCT), a new social health insurance (SHI) scheme and proposed pension reforms. This policy is based on the Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux transformative framework with protective, preventive, promotive and transformative instruments. Social assistance interventions such as the SCT programs are protective instruments which provide immediate assistance to those in need (Kumitz, 2013). Social insurance programs such as the contributory pension schemes and the SHI scheme are preventative instruments to provide assistance in advance. Together, these instruments are designed to act as a safety net to keep the most vulnerable out of extreme poverty and buffer their susceptibility to life-cycle constituencies. On the other hand, promotive instruments including livelihood and empowerment programs and the NSPP protection programs which are transformative instruments, act as a springboard to escape poverty and vulnerability entirely. The hope with these program areas is to address both the social and economic causes of poverty. The inclusion of transformative instruments attempts to tackle the existing social structures that perpetuate the cycle of vulnerability and poverty (Kumitz, 2013). The enactment of the NSPP marked an important step in expanding the capacity of the national social protection system through reforms aimed at increasing coordination and working to integrate and consolidate programs (Quarles van Ufford, Harland, Michelo, Tembo, Toole & Wood, 2016).

The language of the FNDP and SNDP surrounding social protection focused on justifying the need for social protection. The FNDP based the need for social protection on the fact that in its absence, "no meaningful and sustained economic growth can happen" as social protection strengthens the capacity of the poor and vulnerable to withstand most economic shocks (Republic of Zambia, 2006). The release of the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) in June 2017 evinced a changing impression of social protection. The language of the 7NDP surrounding social protection focused on expansion and integration, indicating increased knowledge, acceptability and commitment towards social protection. In the 7NDP, social protection is embedded in strategic goals aimed at effectively achieving wider social goals of reducing widespread poverty and vulnerability.

Together, the NSPP and 7NDP represent a significant paradigm shift toward sustainable social and economic development by working to address the current fragmented, ill-coordinated and inefficient social protection system. Creating an overarching legal and regulatory framework has been a slowly developing political process but these policies and plans provide the foundation for a comprehensive social protection system. Going forward, continued political momentum and effective mobilization will be crucial for successful implementation of policies and programs.

Social Protection Programs

Social protection encompasses a broad set of policies and programs. The framework of the NSPP divides social protection under four program areas, social assistance, social security/social insurance, livelihood, and empowerment and protection. Social assistance programs come in the form of non-contributory, in-cash or in-kind transfers designed to act as supplementary income support to incapacitated and low-capacity households. Interventions under this program area include, SCTs, the Public Welfare Assistance Scheme (PWAS), nutrition and supplementary feeding interventions, bursaries and scholarships and resettlement and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). The second program area is social security/ social insurance programs which include contributory pension schemes as well as the provision of social health insurance (SHI). Together, these two program areas act as focused safety nets that directly target poverty and provide immediate assistance, as well as, secure coping mechanisms (Sabates-Wheeler & Devereux, 2007). Livelihood and empowerment programs focus on improving the capacity and opportunities for stable income generation. This program area includes the Farmer Input Support Program (FISP), Food Security Pack (FSP), Women Empowerment Fund (WEF), as well as various micro-financing programs. The last program area, works to address social justice and problems of exclusion, including programs for rehabilitation of street children, provision of places of safety and children's homes, anti-sexual and gender based violence, anti-human trafficking and child labor, correctional services and legal aid services (Republic of Zambia, 2014). The latter two program areas function as a springboard to escape poverty and vulnerability by addressing the structural influences of poverty and marginalization.

According to the transformative framework (Sabetes-Wheeler & Devereux, 2007), "targeted social transfers provide economic protection in response to economic risks and livelihood vulnerability." These instruments differ from other forms of social protection by working to promote equal integration of individuals, not only through resource transfers but also through the delivery of social services. Historically, the various program areas have seen varying support, contributing to unequal development of programs across the social protection sector. Contributory and non-contributory programs have received the most support and thus are the most comprehensive programs offered by the GRZ because of their poverty reduction capabilities. For this reason, we have decided to specifically analyze the cash transfer programs (SCT and contributory pension schemes) of the Zambian social protection system.

In Zambia, there is a definitive separation of "employment-based social insurance and tax financed social insurance" (Barrientos, Hickey, Simutanyi & Wood, 2005). The ILO makes the distinction between non-contributory and contributory provisions, asserting that non-contributory schemes make provisions without associating benefits with any precursory contribution (ILO, 2008). Social cash transfers are the main non-contributory programs, providing bi-monthly cash transfers of 90 Kwacha to qualified beneficiaries to reduce the risk of extreme poverty among vulnerable individuals. Cash transfers are designed to supplement household incomes and increase school attendance, food security and asset ownership. The non-contributory cash transfers are categorically targeted through three methods: the 10 percent Inclusive Model (IM), the Multiple Categorical Targeting Grant (MCTG), and the Child Grant Program (CGP) (Beazley & Carraro, 2013). These programs are all implemented by an institutional structure at the district level where money is allocated to the district and where benefits are later distributed to determined beneficiaries. Beneficiaries are identified by Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs) who are community members charged with identifying households, conducting interviews and completing application forms, raising awareness within the community about programs, and overseeing inclusion or exclusion errors. Then, enumerators fill in the application forms for the identified households which are approved by the CWACS and the district's Area Coordinating Committee (ACC), which are then given to the District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs) who are responsible for ensuring proper implementation of grassroots structures, assisting, and training the district's Area Coordinating Committee (ACC) and the Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs) and enumerators. District Welfare Assistance Committees (DWACs) are the principal authorities in the system who along with the DWSOs, review all applications for final approval (Beazley & Carraro, 2013). The three targeting methods rely on this district level targeting to identify beneficiary households.

The 10 percent Inclusive Model (IM) uses this community based targeting to identify households that are destitute (extremely vulnerable due to poverty and cannot afford basic needs) and incapacitated (lacking any members who are able to work or households having a dependency ratio higher than 3). Of all the eligible households in the community, the CWACs select 10 percent based on the assumption that this ceiling covers the 10 percent of all households that are critically poor and are in desperate need of social assistance interventions to survive. This targeting method is designed to capture the poorest 10 percent of the population; however, in practice, the design is inherently flawed. This design does not account for geographical distributions of poverty and the poorest 10 percent of households are concentrated in certain provinces, specifically, Eastern, Northern, Western and Luapula (Beazley & Cararro, 2013). In other words, this targeting method may target 10 percent of the poorest people in a community, but that does not translate to providing for the poorest 10 percent of the nation, creating high amounts of leakage. In districts with high levels of extreme poverty (much greater than 10 percent), the 10 percent ceiling, in a context where 40 percent of the national population is extremely poor, is not sufficient in poverty reduction. This 10 percent ceiling is very exclusive, which raises issues of

effectiveness. Nonetheless, it is politically favorable because by design, the ceiling regulates the caseload allowing predictability for budget allocation (Beazley & Carraro 2013).

The Multiple Categorical Targeting Grant (MCTG) is a universal program targeted to households satisfying specific categorical criteria: (1) female-headed households with at least one orphan, (2) elderly-headed households (primary caregiver is older than 60 years old) with at least one orphan, and (3) households with at least one person with a disability (PWD). Compared to the 10 percent IM, the MCTG targeting criteria has a higher correspondence to demographic data in that 15.8 percent of the population is eligible under these criteria, leading to lower amounts of leakage between the poorest 10 percent of the population (Beazlely & Cararro, 2013). However, eligibility criteria are complex and people in the communities are often not aware of the specific qualifying characteristics. Despite these shortcomings, impact evaluations indicate a positive impact on recipient households with a 70 percent net benefit greater than the initial value of the transfer (American Institute for Research, 2016). Findings indicated that these net benefits were translated into improved living conditions, increased asset ownership, a reduction in debt, and increased investment in productive activities. The poverty reduction impacts were significant with long-term persisting effects. This targeting method contributed to reducing severe poverty headcount by nine percent and decreasing the poverty gap by 12 percent. The 36-Month report indicated that the program had a 15 percent impact on households having more than two meals per day with an average increase of 19 Kwacha per person, per month in overall consumption (most of which was food). This 66 percent impact on consumption among beneficiaries indicates that for those whom the program reaches, there is a significant poverty impact. What is lacking is an effective targeting mechanism. By design, the MCTG is a universal scheme; however, community allocated quotas make the program function more as a targeted program (American Institute for Research, 2016).

The Child Grant Program (CGP) is also designed to be a universal categorical cash transfer. The two-part targeting procedure involves pairing geographical targeting, meaning selecting districts with high poverty and high child mortality rates, with criteria-based selection of households with children under the age of 4. The applicant must be the mother or primary caregiver of a child 36-months of age or younger. This application requirement ensures that beneficiaries spend a minimum of 2 years on the program. Additionally, households with a physically disabled child are eligible to receive the transfer up until the age of 14. Impact evaluations indicate similar findings to the MCTG in which the value of the impacts is more appreciable than the value of the transfer itself. Recipient households experienced increased food security, improved living conditions, increased asset ownership (specifically livestock), decreased debt and increased investment in productive activities through increased resiliency and diversified income generating activities. The 48-month report found a 50 percent net benefit, increasing household consumption by 36 percent. As a result of the program, severe poverty headcount was decreased by 10 percent with a corresponding 9 percent reduction in the poverty gap, both which persisted over long term evaluations (American Institutes for Research, 2015). These impact evaluations show that non-contributory cash transfers are successful instruments in reducing

vulnerability and risk of extreme poverty and allow improvements in standards of livings for individuals receiving the grant.

These cash transfers allow people to make their own decisions through smoothing income-consumption patterns and stimulating development in the local economy (DFID, 2011). The principal limitation to the SCT programs is in targeting. By design, it is difficult to apply a ceiling of the poorest 10 percent in a context where poverty levels exceed 76 percent in some areas. While under the SNDP, a total of 242,000 households received the SCT, gap coherence analysis surveys indicated programmatic flaws in fragmentation, scope and inadequate benefit levels (Republic of Zambia, 2017). The Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF contended that despite increases in the value of the transfer from 70 to 90 Kwacha, this is the benefit for the entire household and often acts as the principal source of income. When put into perspective where the poverty line is greater than 1000 Kwacha and this transfer value is a nominal proportion of the poverty line.[5] According to the Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF, transfers are not substantial enough to lift the poor out of poverty by income alone. They have demonstrated some success at reducing the poverty gap, such that adding 90 kwacha to their income represents a large improvement for their quality of life. Nonetheless, these transfers do not necessarily bring them out of poverty and the government is aware that the transfer value is insufficient. Additionally, there is the consideration of coverage. The government is increasing the value of the transfer for beneficiaries, however as of 2015, the SCT programs only covered 22 percent of the population (Beazley & Cararro, 2013). Social Policy Specialist UNICEF highlighted the issue that for the extremely poor, 90 Kwacha provides a significant impact but once beneficiaries are not as poor, the value of the transfer depreciates.[6] SCT programs have been found to be successful in achieving their specific objectives of supplementing income, increasing school attendance and improving food security, however, they are not sufficient in achieving their overall objective of reducing extreme poverty and the intergenerational transfer of poverty.

The other side of social protection is the employment-based social insurance, consisting of three statutory contributory pension schemes: the National Pension Scheme Authority (NAPSA), the Local Authority Superannuation Fund (LASF) and the Public Service Pension Fund (PSPF) all of which cater mainly to the formal sector. These schemes were created through acts of parliament and are operationalized by independent bodies. The social security system was created in 1954 with LASF (Mwiche, 2005). The system itself was designed on the institutional framework of the formal economy relying on the assumption that the informal sector would be progressively integrated into the formal sector.

NAPSA, the largest of the 3-contributory pension fund includes invalidity, old-age and survivors benefits in the form of a defined monthly amount of 40 percent replacement of average earnings over the contribution period. Under NAPSA, it is expected that registered

[5] Taken from an interview with Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF
[6] Taken from an interview with Social Policy Specialist UNICEF

members contribute on a monthly basis over a minimum period of 180 months. Members can collect their pension benefits upon retirement at age 60 in a lump sum followed by a monthly pension (NAPSA, 2017). Invalidity and survivor benefits are also anchored in these monthly contributions. The national pension system relies on a three-tiered system which involves the ministry of labor and social security, the employers and the employees. Contributions to these schemes amount to 10 percent of the monthly income of the beneficiary paid equally by the employer and employee (5 percent contribution each) (Mwiche, 2005). NAPSA does provide a minimum monthly pension defined as 20 percent of the average national income; however, those who are not eligible for the minimum pension, are entitled to a lump sum consisting of contributions from both the employee and employer, as well as, additional interest.

PSPF and LASF are smaller schemes, catering to very specific and small populations. PSPF is designed for civil service employees in which contributions are still paid a rate of 7.25 percent of average income by both the employee and the employer, which in this case is the government. LASF serves employees of all Local Authorities, Water and Sewerage Companies, ZESCO, and National Housing Authority. Contributions are 10 percent and 23 percent for employees and employers, respectively, amounting to a rate of 23 percent of the average monthly income of the recipient (Mwiche, 2005).

The Zambian social security system faces many structural flaws that mark it as largely unsuccessful despite attempts towards reform. The current pension system is skewed toward the formal sector, excluding the vast majority of individuals of whom are employed in the informal sector. The current social security system only manages to cover 16 percent of all employed persons. In Zambia, 86 percent of all employed people work in the informal sector predominantly in agriculture and household work (Goursat & Pellerano, 2016). The issue with the informal economy is that it is highly dynamic and multifarious, characterized by high employment turnover, unpredictable income levels and unregulated employment arrangements. The nature of the informal economy makes it seemingly impossible to design a program tailored to fit this irregular institutional structure. However, it is important to recognize that informal employment is generally associated with poverty because the nature of employment activities resides outside of the formal institutional structure and therefore very few informally employed individuals benefit from social security (Goursat & Pellerano, 2016). The ILO analysis of the coverage situation of the social security system showed that only half of all actively employed Zambians make regular monthly contributions to the pension schemes (ILO, 2008). According to Kidd (2009), the pay-as you-go model of the contributory pension system provides low coverage. For people employed in the informal sector, a monthly contribution is not always feasible. The Director of the Social Security Department stated that, “because of their characteristics they may prefer to contribute on more flexible basis, current pension reforms are not to come up with specific schemes for specific groups rather to relax the law for the informal sector.” He explained that an individual could pay for example, 2 Kwacha on a daily basis but a monthly contribution would not be affordable. He adds that the idea

is to not prescribe the rates and intervals for contribution and rather allow the system to be tailored with more flexibility towards the informal sector with room for revision[7].

The current pension scheme is also plagued by many operational challenges that make it ineffective even in providing for eligible individuals. This scheme is anchored on low monthly pensions. Many reforms have tried to adjust the proportion of payments; however, the current problem is that the lump sum is proportionately much larger than the monthly pension, which over time, leaves people more vulnerable to poverty. A study on social insecurities in the social security system of Zambia revealed that retirees were given a lump sum of 67 percent of their contributions, leaving only 1/3 left as a monthly pension (Museya, 2014). Forteza et. al (2009) found that lump sum payments in reality do not aid in income security for the elderly because when they receive the lump sum benefit they spend it too rapidly. To make matters worse, the system is fraught with delayed payments (as high as 50 percent), as well as, structural barriers to making and receiving payment, specifically, high transport costs, incomplete payment of benefits and issues surrounding documentation (Museya, 2014). Proposed reforms, in particular the E-NAPSA program, are designed to address some of these operational flaws by making registration and payments easier.[8] However, these challenges create a situation where as much as members receive access to some level of protected income, it is not effective in reducing the risks to shocks and perpetuates their vulnerable context and their risk of falling into poverty (Museya, 2014). Like the rest of the social protection system, social security is fragmented but proposed reforms will attempt to extend coverage to the informal sector in the future.

There are significant overlaps in challenges: both areas of social protection, social assistance and social security programs, suffer from poor implementation and targeting that affect the delivery of benefits. The current design for targeting mechanisms for the social protection programs in Zambia provide for large amounts of exclusion error; therefore, those most in need are not being served. Currently, neither the existing social insurance nor social assistance programs are sufficient in covering the population and providing adequate benefit amounts. According to the Director of Social Security at the MoLSS, the goal of the government is to ensure that people do not enter into poverty and, in the event that they do, there is a mechanism in place to bring them out. In this sense, social protection programs should be complementary and supplementary and there is a complex interaction between social assistance and social insurance programs that significantly impact the welfare of individuals in society.[9]

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[7] Taken from an interview with Director of Social Security Department, MoLSS
[8] Taken from an interview with Director of Social Security Department, MoLSS
[9] Taken from an interview with Director of Social Security Department, MoLSS

Social Protection in Namibia

Introduction

Namibia, classified as an upper-middle income country, sits on the western coast of Southern Africa (Human Development Reports, 2016). While Namibia has well-developed financial markets and excellent infrastructure when compared to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, it also has one of the world's worst HIV epidemics, high levels of income disparity, a high unemployment rate, and an inefficient education system (USAID). Since its independence from South Africa in 1990, Namibia has enjoyed a sustained period of strong growth. Between 2011 and 2015, the economy grew at an average annual rate of 5.6 percent and since independence, the poverty incidence has declined from 69.3 percent in 1993/4 to 28.7 percent in 2009/10 (Overview, 2017; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). According to the most current statistics, Namibia has an unemployment rate of 29.6 percent, poverty incidence of 26.9 percent, and an HIV/AIDS prevalence of 16.9 percent (Human Development Reports, 2016). Due to Namibia's diverse geographical features, the poverty prevalence is regional with the highest incidence of poverty in Kavango, Ohangwena, and Oshikoto. These three northern and largely rural regions account for almost half of the poor population in Namibia. Namibia also has one of the lowest population densities in the world because much of the country has low and highly variable rainfall, making the region too dry for human settlement. Additionally, about two thirds of the population live in rural areas, predominantly in the northern regions (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2009). Due to many different factors including its climate, the northern regions are characterized by "communal land ownership, high levels of poverty and food insecurity, and poor coverage of economic and social infrastructure" (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2009).

Child poverty is also a large problem that Namibia faces because over a third of all children (34 percent) currently live in poverty and 18.3 percent of all children live in severe poverty (Namibia Statistics Agency, 2012), although the child welfare grants have helped lower these percentages. The social protection of children became a significant policy issue in Namibia during the HIV/AIDS epidemic, when many children became orphaned. The strain that HIV/AIDS has imposed on the traditional safety nets provided by the family and community has caused social protection programs in the form of cash transfers to be favored as a policy option (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 2010).

Another significant issue Namibia faces is high income inequality. It has one of the highest Gini coefficients in the world of 0.57 (National Planning Commission, 2017). Unfortunately, while Namibia's social protection system has had success in poverty reduction, it has not been very successful in reducing the country's high-income inequality (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). "The impact of the Namibian social assistance system overall is positive and it is

estimated that in 2009/10 it reduced headcount poverty on the higher poverty line by more than 30 percent and severe poverty by an even bigger proportion" (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014).

Social Protection in Namibia

Formerly known as South West Africa, Namibia was colonized by Germany in 1884 and was later annexed into South Africa due to a League of Nations mandate until its independence in 1990. Due to its previous association to South Africa, upon independence, Namibia inherited an apartheid mentality and racial biases. In 1989, the settler community and a small black elite group, which comprised just 5 percent of the population accounted for 71 percent of the GDP, while the bottom 55 percent of the population only accounted for three percent of the GDP (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). It can be argued that the origins of Namibia's high level of income inequality traces back to the racial biases and apartheid mentality it inherited from South Africa. Aside from creating income inequality, the policies of apartheid caused racial and ethnic divisions throughout the society, which caused different communities to be separated geographically, economically, and socially. One place where is division is evident is in the segmented labor market, especially in terms of access to employment opportunities and wages (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). In order to address this division, since independence, the government has created policies in areas like employment and land redistribution to direct affirmative action towards historically disadvantaged groups.

Besides inheriting these racially biased mindsets, Namibia has also inherited its system of cash transfers, more specifically its system of social pensions and social grants, from South Africa (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). In South Africa, the cash transfer system was initially set up to protect the white population and can be traced back to the Old Age Pensions Act of 1928 (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). This act was extended to the white residents of South West Africa in 1949 and in 1965, the Social Pensions Ordinance extended eligibility to colored Namibians[10]. Finally, in 1973 this act was extended to all residents of South West Africa, however the pension amounts were dependent on race. At the time of independence, the highest pensions were paid to white citizens at a rate of R382 per month while some black Namibians received pensions of R55 per month, which was worth about 14 percent of the white pension. When designating the pension amounts in colonial Namibia, the 9 distinct non-white groups were organized into 7 different categories, each of which received a different payment. The justification for unequaled pension amounts was that the people in each category had different lifestyles, and therefore, varying costs of living (Devereux, 2001).

When Namibia gained independence in March 1990, the government declared its commitment to eliminating the inherited discrimination in Namibian laws and practices (Devereux, 2001) and equalized the Old Age pension age to 60 for both men and women

[10] A colored person is defined as someone who is not white or a native (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011)

(before, women were eligible at age 60 and men were eligible at age 65). However, the shift to equalizing pensions across all races was a longer process. Initially, the government planned on increasing all pension amounts to the white pension amount. The National Pensions Act of 1992 entitled every aged Namibian permanent resident or citizen, meaning anyone older than 60, to receive a basic state pension. In 1992, the government raised the amount to N$120 but quickly realized that distributing the white pension amount to all residents would be unsustainable and fiscally unfeasible in the future. Therefore, in 1994, all racial disparities were eliminated by making the standard pension rate N$120. This pension amount angered many white people because their pension amounts were cut to a third of their original values. In 1998, the name of this pension was changed to the Basic State Grant (Devereux, 2001).

Due to its influence on the Namibian pension scheme, South Africa and Namibia's pension schemes have multiple similarities. For example, in both countries, the social pension is funded directly from the national budget and is financed through tax revenue and other sources of governmental income, rather than through the earnings of government employees. In other words, both countries have non-contributory pensions. Where the pensions differ, is that while South Africa's universal old age pension is means-tested, Namibia's is not. However, there have been recent talks about means-testing not only Namibia's Old Age Pension, but also some of its other social cash transfers (Devereux, 2001). Because Namibia's system of cash transfers was inherited from South Africa, a country with one of the most successful and advanced social protection systems in the world, Namibia's system of cash transfers is "probably the most comprehensive in the developing world" (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011).

The social protection system in Namibia consists of three main components: social assistance, social insurance, and occupational and private pension provision (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). The social assistance programs are defined as non-contributory "direct, regular, and predictable cash or in-kind resource transfers to poor and vulnerable individuals or households" (Dempers, 2016). In Namibia, the social assistance programs consist of the universal pensions for aged and disabled people, as well as benefits for war veterans and child welfare. The social insurance schemes are run by the Social Security Commission (SSC) and are defined as contributory programs where participants make payments to a scheme that will cover costs for life-course events, like maternity, unemployment, motor vehicle accidents, and illness (Dempers, 2016). In Namibia, these benefits are only offered to workers in the formal sector and all members are part of the Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF). According to the ILO, the occupational and private pension provision seems to solely be accessible to the upper end of the labor market. This type of social protection includes health insurance funds and medical aid schemes and is regulated by the Namibian Financial Services Authority. In addition to these three main schemes, the government and other agencies fund many projects aimed at poverty alleviation and economic development (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). Overall, the social protection programs in Namibia are financed through returns on investment (47 percent), employer-employee contributions (38

percent), and general government revenue (12.6 percent) (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). Additionally, in Namibia most government expenditures go towards education and health.

Existing Policy Framework

While the Namibian constitution does not provide an explicit framework for social protection or social security, it does mention a right to dignity and protection of people by the state (Dempers, 2016). Article 10 of the constitution states that" all persons shall be equal before the law" and "no persons may be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, color, ethnic origin, religion, creed, or social or economic status" (Republic of Namibia). This article relates to Namibia's social protection system because it represents one of the founding principles of the system, especially the universal pension program. The other part of the constitution which relates to the social protection is article 95 which states that "the state shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of people by adopting inter alia, policies aimed at the assurance that senior citizens are entitled to and do receive a regular pension, adequate for the maintenance of a decent standard of living and the enjoyment of social and cultural opportunities (Dempers, 2016)." This article describes the premise of Namibia's universal non-contributory old age pension.

In addition to various articles in the constitution, Namibia also has various acts in its legal framework which are a part of its social protection programs. The National Pensions Act (10 of 1992) provides national pensions for the aged, blind, and disabled. Additionally, this act also states that recipients of a basic or disability pension are also registered for 'mandatory life insurance' paying a funeral benefit (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). Another component of the social protection system is the War Veterans Act (8 of 2008) which marks the establishment, management, and control of the Veteran's Trust Fund, which is where the War Veteran's Subvention is distributed from. This act also marks the provision of assistance to veterans and defendants of veterans while outlining the constitution and functions of the Veteran's Board and the Veteran's Appeal Board (Republic of Namibia, 2015). The Social Security Act (34 of 1994) established the Social Security Commission and the Maternity, Sick Leave, and Death Benefit Fund to provide payment of maternity, sick leave, and death benefits to employees. This act also created a national pension fund to provide pension benefit to all retired formal sector employees, as well as a Medical Benefit Fund for the payment of medical benefits to employees (Kalusopa, Dicks, & Osei-Boateng, 2012). Additionally, this act made provisions for a Development Fund to provide funding for employment training programs for disadvantaged and unemployed people (Dempers, 2016).

While the child welfare grants are not specifically mentioned in the legal framework of Namibia's social protection system, the Child Status Act (6 of 2006) and the Child Care and Protection Act of 2015 both make provisions for the overall protection of children. The Child Status Act (6 of 2006) mandates that all children should be treated equally regardless of whether they are born inside marriage or outside marriage, especially in matters of

custody, guardianship, and inheritance (Kalusopa, Dicks, & Osei-Boateng, 2012). The Child Care and Protection Act of 2015 calls for the establishment of a Children's National Advisory Council, a children's fund, and the appointment of social workers, social auxiliary workers, community child care workers, and probation officers (Republic of Namibia, 2015). This act also makes provisions to combat the trafficking of children and to create places of care and shelters for orphans and vulnerable children (Republic of Namibia, 2015).

The Harambee Prosperity Plan, launched in 2016, pertains to 2016-2020 and describes the "Namibian government's strategy towards prosperity for all (Republic of Namibia, 2016)." With regards to social protection, this plan discusses the administration of more targeted social safety nets and also describes the creation of a Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) which will investigate the feasibility of consolidating the various grants controlled by different ministries into a more "effective, coordinated safety net during year 1 of HPP (Republic of Namibia, 2016)." According to the plan, the MPESW will also be responsible for the creation and implementation of a poverty blueprint and improved coverage of the Foster Care Grant (FCG), one of the child social cash transfers.

Namibia's National Development Plans outline many details about the social protection system, its limitations, and its effectiveness on poverty reduction. The NDP4 which was effective from 2012/13 to 2016/17, describes that by 2017, the goal of the government is to have the proportion of severely poor individuals drop from 15.8 percent to below 10 percent. In the section about extreme poverty, the document also mentions that the government has "expanded the social protection system to prevent and alleviate poverty and vulnerability (National Planning Commission, 2012)." It describes that while the government has tried to create an attractive environment for domestic and foreign investment where the private sector has an opportunity to flourish, these policies do not provide immediate relief to the most poor and vulnerable and therefore, the government has expanded the social protection system. While discussing the expansion of the social protection, the NDP4 focuses specifically on the expansion of program into the informal sector, describing the increase in grant coverage in relation to the coverage goals set in the NDP3. According to the report, the coverage of the old age grant for people over 60 increased to 91 percent of eligible persons during the NDP3 period, and the number of people benefiting from the maintenance grant (MG) exceeded the goal by registering 117,000 people (National Planning Commission, 2012).

The news was not all positive, however, because the plan also states that the FCG and disability grants (DG) trailed behind with respect to the targets set in NDP3 (National Planning Commission, 2012). A main challenge this document mentioned in terms of accessing the grants was a lack of required documentation for the grant application process. The plan to overcome this challenge was to start issuing birth certificates at hospitals and increasing the number of registration points, especially in rural areas. For the FCG, NDP4 described that the main problems impeding grant expansion were a backlog in civil registration and a lack of social workers to investigate and verify all FCG applications.

Additionally, 95 percent of FCG applicants were extended family members who were not eligible for the MG (National Planning Commission, 2012). Due to this recurring problem, multiple sources have suggested the government create a kinship grant to help support OVC under the care of extended family members. Another problem NDP4 addressed was that the child welfare grant system excludes children being raised by impoverished parents. Therefore, the plan states that there will be a gradual expansion of the grant system to include all children, including newborns, regardless of parental income amount. However, this universal child grant is still in the development phase. According to Gemma Wright, the South African Social Policy Research Institute's (SASPRI) research director, the universal child grant is "eminently affordable and possible, especially in a country with such a tiny population."[11] Other issues with the child grants that NDP4 discussed were the misuse of the grant money to pay school fees and the cost effectiveness of means-testing the MG. To address the school fee issue, NDP4 suggested abolishing the school development fund to make education freer for everyone, so that the grant money could be used for more important necessities. Assessing the cost-effectiveness of means-testing was not only a problem for the MG but also for the WVS, which is also means-tested. NDP4 mentioned how means-testing has high administrative costs and is drawing important human resources away from more necessary causes (National Planning Commission, 2012). Along these lines, one of the main goals of NDP4 was to increase the effectiveness of the social protection system by reviewing and simplifying bureaucratic procedures to diminish unnecessary administrative costs (National Planning Commission, 2012).

Another aspect of the social protection system that NDP4 discusses is the need to introduce an inflation-indexed or public-sector-salary-increment-indexed social grant so that beneficiaries can maintain or even improve their standard of living. In the past, the grant amounts were adjusted irregularly and beneficiaries were unable to maintain their standards of living. NDP4 aims to calculate the inflation rate for the lowest income group to determine the degree to which the grants will be adjusted for inflation because the consumption basket of poor households differs from that of the average income household.

In addition to discussing how the SCTs can be improved, NDP4 stresses that supplementary measures are necessary to enable people living in impoverished conditions to lift themselves out of poverty. Some of the measures the document discusses include increasing household food security by creating school feeding programs and adopting new farm management systems to result in higher yields. NDP4 also describes plans to develop more roads so that there is easier access to public services in rural areas, where most of the country's most poor and vulnerable reside (National Planning Commission, 2012).

Future Plans

The fifth national development plan (NDP5) was launched in May 2017 and will remain effective until 2021/22. Social protection is one of the main focus areas for the NDP5, however it only describes the strengthening and expanding of social safety nets, without

[11] Taken from an interview with Director of Research at SASPRI

going into much detail about the specific social safety nets themselves. The document discusses much of the progress made during NDP4. During NDP4, Namibia expanded the social safety nets to cover over 400,000 beneficiaries and reduced extreme poverty from 15 percent in 2010 to 11 percent in 2015. The goal for 2022 is to have this proportion drop from 11 percent to 5 percent (National Planning Commission, 2017). NDP5 also discusses how the fragmentation of the social protection system, specifically with regards to the absence of a national social protection policy and the lack of an integrated database of grant beneficiaries, poses one of the biggest challenges to the implementation of its programs.

In order to overcome these challenges, NDP5 aims to strengthen social safety nets by improving registration for national documents and ensuring the effective operation of the distribution of benefits, a goal similar to one made in NDP4. NDP5 also aims to create a national social protection policy and make investments to expand social assistance to poor individuals, while coordinating delivery systems to ensure that the grants are being used properly and reaching the correct populations. Finally, NDP5 aims to improve the coordination of sectoral initiatives so that there is no duplication of poverty alleviation efforts, which the MPESW will be responsible for (National Planning Commission, 2017).

Social Protection Programs

The social assistance schemes in Namibia's social protection system consist of three different types of non-contributory cash transfers: The social pensions, the war veteran's subvention, and the child welfare grants. This paper will focus on the social pensions, specifically the old age pension (OAP) and the child welfare grants. The WVS is a means-tested grant distributed to anyone who "underwent military training and participated consistently and persistently in the war in order to bring about the independence of Namibia (Wright, Noble, Barnes, McLennan, & Mpike, 2016)." To apply for the grant, an application must be filled out and submitted to the Veteran's Board for the applicant to be registered as a veteran, although the grant can also be paid to registered dependents such as a child under the age of 18 or a widow or widower. The WVS has the highest value of all the SCTs, and in 2015 it was worth N$2500 per month (Wright et. al, 2016).

The universal benefit for the elderly, also called the basic state grant, is termed the largest formal safety net in Namibia with the oldest and most organized payout structure. Many pensioners have now entered the formal banking system into which their benefits are deposited. This is much more efficient system than before because pensioners do not have to wait in long lines to collect money. People who are not part of the formalized banking system also have the option of collecting the money at the post office or at mobile ATMs. The government also has built permanent payment structures in rural areas to reduce transport costs for the more rural beneficiary population. The cash dispensation system is also highly advanced and requires the match of a name, ID number, and fingerprint before the money is transferred. The DG uses the same payment transfer system as the OAP (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011).

"The universal social pension combined with social services can be an effective instrument to lift older people out of extreme poverty, to strengthen their dignity and to stimulate local economies (Wiman & Helenius)." In fact, the impressive impact that the OAP had on poverty reduction caused the government to nearly double its value in 2015/16 from N$600 to N$1100. In the past year, the grant value was increased further to N$1200 per month (Republic of Namibia, 2016) (Kalusopa, Dicks, & Osei-Boateng, 2012). The basic state grant is a universal grant, meaning it is not means-tested and it is payable to any Namibian citizen or permanent resident who is over 60 years of age (Wright et.al, 2016). The OAP currently has a large number of beneficiaries, which has increased dramatically in the last decade from just under 110,000 in 2003 to 143,000 in 2013 (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). "Coverage in the old age category can be described as excellent" because in 2013, it was estimated that around 92 percent of the eligible were covered by the grant (Schleberger, 2002).

The disability grant (DG), which is the other universal social pension, is a grant for any person aged 16 or older "who is, owing to any physical or mental disability, incapable to obtain any employment or the practicing of any profession or trade, or from the rendering of any service, the means needed to enable him or her to adequately provide for his or her own maintenance (Wright et. al, 2016)." As part of the application process, the applicant must be examined by a medical doctor, who then has to prepare a medical report. The DG also covers people who have been disabled due to HIV/AIDS and the blind. One main issue with the DG is that because many people with disabilities are not registered with the NHIES, it is very difficult to determine a single accurate and widely agreed upon coverage rate (Wright et. al, 2016). This grant as a value of N$1000 per month, however one cannot claim the DG concurrently with the OAP. For both OAP and DG, recipients must take out a mandatory life insurance scheme where funeral costs up to the amount of N$3000 are covered once the pensioner dies (Human Development Reports, 2016; Dempers, 2016).

The child grants in the social assistance program are controlled by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW). The grants are aimed to specifically target groups of vulnerable children by paying their guardians. Child poverty is one of Namibia's biggest problems, with there being high regional variation in child poverty rates. The highest rates of child poverty are in the northern provinces of Kavango (59.5 percent), Zambezi (53.2 percent), and Oshikoto (48.7 percent) (UNICEF Namibia, 2015). There are four main child grants: the maintenance grant (MG), the foster care grant (FCG), the special maintenance grant (SMG), and the vulnerable child grant (VCG).

While the SMG targets children under 16 who are permanently or temporarily disabled (including blind children and those with AIDS), the MG was created for children "living in a poor household where one parent is absent due to death, imprisonment, or impairment (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014)." Aside from the WVS, the MG is the only other means-tested social assistance cash transfer and the grant is only given to households where the biological parent earns less than N$1000 per month. However as mentioned before, there is much debate as to whether this grant should be means-tested or

not. From many of the interviews conducted for this paper, there seemed to be a general recommendation against the means-test. Currently, the grant has a value of N$200 per month for each child and there is no maximum on the number of children (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, n.d.). Although the grant was not explicitly conceived as a conditional cash transfer, applicants must produce the latest school report of each school-going child older than 7 to have a successful application. In order to encourage beneficiaries to continue their education, children over 18 who are still attending either secondary or tertiary school on a full-time basis are also still eligible for the grant until age 21 if they provide proof of their schooling. In addition to a school report, applicants are also required to provide birth certificates, death certificates, a prison letter (where applicable), proof of employment (where applicable), pay slips, marriage certificates, and baptism cards (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 2010). In 2013, just fewer than 69,000 caregivers collected the MG, which was up from 22,000 in 2006 (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014).

The FCG targets children "who are in the temporary care of a foster parent where the child has been placed by the courts (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014)." The grant is paid to any person who chooses to care for a child temporarily and pays N$200 per month per foster child. In order to apply for the FCG, applicants must provide certified copies of the foster care court order, the child's birth certificate, the foster parent's identity document, the foster parents' marriage certificate, the latest school reports of each school-going child, and the death certificate of the biological parents (if applicable) (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, n.d.). In 2013, 14067 collected the FCG which was an increase in beneficiaries from 2006 when the number of recipients was 5275 (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014). For the FCG, grant use is monitored by a yearly visit by a social worker and recipients must show a school report annually.

Out of all the child grants, the FCG has the most challenges, mainly because the approval process can take a long time. In order for an FCG application to be approved, the foster home must be visited by a social worker, however due to the severe shortage of social workers, there is an accumulation of FCG applications and the approval process can take from 6 months up to 7 years (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 2010).

The VCG, created in 2014, is the newest child grant. It provides N$300 per child per month to support families in distressed financial situations (UNICEF Namibia, 2015). In order for a child to be eligible, the parents must have no source of income and the child cannot be receiving any of the other child grants (Wright et. al, 2016). On average, beneficiaries wait 4 months to get their application processed. Since this grant is fairly young, it is still in the trial phase and the government is working with UNICEF Namibia to determine its effectiveness and whether or not it should become a permanent part of the social protection system. The grant was gradually expanded starting with a one-month registration window in 2014 and 2015, and then an extended window in 2016 (Wright et. al, 2016). However according to testimonies from grant recipients, the VCG has changed a lot for people in Namibia (UNICEF Namibia, 2015).

Major Challenges

While the universal social pension is one of the largest and best organized social safety nets in Nambia with the most sophisticated and advanced payout structure, it still has some challenges. Firstly, for the OAP, some of the relatively less poor do not receive it, even if they are eligible (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). There are also large regional variations in OAP coverage, which highlights the high inequality between different population groups in Namibia (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). While more urban regions have coverage rates of over 100 percent (which is a case where the actual coverage rate is overexpressed), many rural, northern regions have fairly low coverage rates. Another major challenge with the universal pension is that its administrative costs are fairly high. It was estimated that administrative costs accounted for about 4 percent of the total cost of the pension scheme, however other studies have suggested costs as high as 36 percent (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011).

One of the main challenges with the child grants is a misuse of the grant income. While the grants are used to fulfill basic needs like clothing and food, many recipients also spend the grant money on school fees, even though OVC receiving the grants are supposed to be exempt from paying school fees. Additionally, the value of the grants is so low that for many caregivers, although the grant is their main source of income, it is not enough to meet their own or their child's basic needs (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 2010). There is a need to provide grant recipients with information about the grants so that they are used to support OVC and not to pay general household expenses. Another major problem with the child grants is the barriers to access. There are high transport costs associated with the grant application process and a general lack of awareness of the eligibility criteria for the various grants, which either prevents people from applying or causes people to spend resources applying for a grant they are not eligible for (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 2010; UNICEF Namibia, 2013). This problem is especially evident with the FCG. Also, another major problem with the child grants is that most of the child grants require a lot of documentation which many times, potential beneficiaries do not have access to (i.e., birth certificates, school reports) (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). However, this particular challenge is being addressed in NDP4. Human resource constraints in the MGECW, especially regarding the severe shortage of social workers, also pose problems to the expansion of child grants.

Effectiveness in Poverty Reduction

It has been shown in empirical research studies that the social cash transfers in the form of social assistance play important roles in alleviating poverty (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). "It is estimated that in 2009/10, it reduced headcount poverty on the higher poverty line by more than 30 percent and severe poverty by an even bigger proportion (Wiman & Helenius)." The OAP specifically has had a major impact in reducing poverty in old age mostly due to the universal design of the grant, which reduces any potential exclusion error and allows the benefits to reach the most poor and vulnerable (Wiman & Helenius). Aside

from giving the elderly more income security, the basic state grant has also made older people more valued members in families and communities because according to NHIES 2009/10 much of the grants are used by the elderly to benefit their grandkids. Many times, the grant money goes towards nutrition and education costs for secondary beneficiaries (Wiman & Helenius). Additionally, in a study on the impact of social cash transfers on poverty and income inequality conducted by Levine et. al, the multivariate profit regression showed that the OAP "lowers the probability that the recipient lives in a poor household" at both the upper and lower bound poverty lines (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011). The study also showed that the effect of the OAP on poverty measures that are more sensitive to the severity of poverty[12] is strong for both poverty lines (Levine, Berg, & Yu, 2011).

The child grants, despite their problems, have also been shown to be quite effective in poverty reduction. "The NSA estimates that in the absence of all social grants, child poverty would have increased from 34 percent to 41 percent (UNICEF Namibia, 2013)." While between 2002 and 2009, the grant recipients grew from 9000 to 106000, the rate of child poverty reduced from 43.5 percent to 34 percent suggesting that the expansion in child grants contributed to this reduction in child poverty (UNICEF Namibia, 2013). Looking at the findings, "some of the child grant amounts are being spent on basic needs" such as health, clothing, and education, which is an overall positive finding (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 2010). Also, the grant values, while small, do "play a critical role in reducing the burden of poverty by… supporting household economic activities and other productive activities like job seeking (Wright et. al, 2016)." Due to these reasons, there is a general positive sentiment about the child grants among participants.

While the existing child grants have been effective in poverty reduction, according to NHIES 2009/10 the administration of a universal child grant would reduce child poverty from 34 percent to 9 percent and eliminate extreme child poverty (UNICEF Namibia, 2015). A universal child grant is mentioned in Namibia's development plans and NDP4 recommends that "the government significantly expands access to child grants or puts in place universal access to the grants for all children below age 18 (UNICEF Namibia, 2015)." However, no universal child grant has been implemented yet. Another future change to the child grant system is to add a kinship grant, which would support family members who are caring for children, and are not eligible for the FCG.

[12] The poverty measures used were the household poverty gap ratio and the squared poverty gap ratio. The squared poverty gap ratio was used to represent severe poverty.

Lessons Learned from Namibia

Legal Frameworks

One of the major differences between social protection in Zambia and Namibia lies in the legal and regulatory frameworks of the two systems. In Namibia, the social protection system was built upon a legal framework, while in Zambia the social protection programs were created without an overarching policy and legal framework. All of Namibia's social assistance programs are embedded within a strong legal framework, which has helped social protection be on the country's political agenda since independence in 1990. The War Veterans Act (8 of 2008) gives provision for the War Veterans Subvention and the Child Status Act (6 of 2006) and the Child Care and Protection Act of 2015 describe the child grants and ensure the protection of poor and vulnerable children. Because of its colonial legacy, Namibia inherited its social protection system, specifically its universal non-contributory social pension, from South Africa upon independence. Namibia's National Pension Act of 1992, which guarantees a social pension for all aged, blind, and disabled citizens, is modeled after South Africa's Old Age Pensions Act of 1928. Unlike this act however, the National Pension Act of 1992 guaranteed equalized pension amounts for all citizens regardless of sex or race.

In Zambia, the disconnect between the policy framework and the implemented programs has caused fragmentation not only between the various social protection programs, but also between the ministries charged with program implementation. As stated earlier nine different ministries are currently responsible for various social protection interventions with no mechanism for institutional oversight. The lack of coordination and coherence has resulted in an inefficient use of resources, both financial and administrative, as well as limited impacts on poverty reduction (International Labour Organization, 2008). In 2015, Namibia created the MPESW which is responsible for investigating the feasibility of consolidating the various grants controlled by different ministries into a more coordinated and integrated safety net. In Namibia, although the MPESW is responsible for the overall social protection system, individual programs are still controlled by a limited number of government institutions. The GRZ has addressed this issue by making provisions in the NSPP and 7NDP for the creation of a Social Protection Coordination Unit at the cabinet level. However, according to an UNICEF social policy specialist, even the consolidation of the social protection system into 4 ministries would be a huge improvement.

Budget Allocation

According to the ILO, the initial annual cost of a basic social protection package should be about 3.7 to 10.6 percent of the GDP (International Labour Organization, 2008). In Namibia, the entire social protection benefits expenditure accounted for about 6.6 percent

of the national GDP in 2010/11[13], which falls comfortably into this suggested range (Dempers, 2016). In 2015, the social grants accounted for 2.2 percent of the GDP and about 5.4 percent of national expenditure in Namibia. Under this budget allocation, 30 percent was allocated to private and occupational funds for retirement and medical costs and 5 percent went to social insurance. Budget reviews show that 55 percent of the benefits go to the elderly, disabled and survivors (National Planning Commission, 2017). In Zambia, social protection expenditure constituted only 1.03 percent of the GDP in 2017 and 2.4 percent of the total budget in 2016[14]. This proposed expenditure discounts the ILO recommendation, showing that Zambia has failed to provide a basic level of social protection. Zambia's budget allocation for social protection is interesting because while SCTs only account for about 7 percent of the budget, the FISP and fuel subsidies account for 27 percent and 24 percent, respectively (UNICEF 2016). This distribution of funds is ineffective because numerous empirical research studies have shown that the agriculture support programs, such as FISP are not nearly as effective in poverty reduction as the SCTs are, and yet they are allocated more than three times the budget of the SCTs (UNICEF, 2016). Additionally, while the fuel subsidy accounts for the largest share of all the transfers, it is the most unequal because the poor consume less fuel than the wealthy, and therefore benefit less from this subsidy (UNICEF 2016). In Namibia, most of the social protection budget goes towards the social assistance programs, or SCTs, which are the most effective in terms of poverty reduction.

Pensions

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the social protection program in Namibia that has been the most effective in poverty reduction is the universal, non-contributory OAP. According to Kidd, "universal pensions financed from general taxation should be regarded as the foundation pillar of a well-functioning pension system, and key to reducing poverty among older people." One of the biggest differences we found between Zambia and Namibia's social protection system was in the pension system. While Namibia's universal non-contributory OAP is one of the largest social safety nets with the most sophisticated and organized payout structures, Zambia's pension system currently has no institutional structure for the informal economy, low compliance by employers, weak enforcement mechanisms, an incomplete legal framework, and is not trusted by the general public because people are not able to see the immediate effects of where their money is going (Goursat & Pellerano, 2016). There is also no provision specifically for the elderly in the SCTs because the SCTs are targeted more towards other vulnerable groups. However, in Zambia, the elderly make up about 50 to 60 percent of the vulnerable population even though they constitute only 4-5 percent of the population, according to the Director of Social Security. Despite this, the elderly are not targeted because of political misgivings. Public and political opinion favor targeting other vulnerable populations such as children or the disabled. Given Zambia's limited resource envelope, according to the director of

[13] This is the last year for which comprehensive and accurate data is available (Dempers, 2016).
[14] Calculated based on data from (UNICEF, 2016) and (Central Statistical Office, 2016).

social security, there is not enough fiscal space in the budget to provide for all the elderly. They have arbitrarily decided that it would be more effective to target specific groups of vulnerable populations rather than a universal pension for all people above 60 years of age[15].

One of the reasons the universal OAP is so effective in poverty reduction is their effects on secondary beneficiaries. Under this type of scheme, the government can still indirectly target non-elderly vulnerable populations still by targeting the elderly. In Namibia, research shows that the much of the OAP is used by the elderly to benefit their children and grandchildren, especially for nutrition and schooling costs. In Namibia, approximately 10.2 percent of households, define the social pension is their main source of income (UNICEF, 2016). This demonstrates how a universal pension would not only bring the elderly out of poverty, but would also help other poor and vulnerable populations. Additionally, because in Zambia the elderly (people over the age of 65) make up about 10 percent of household heads, which is the fourth largest age group for head of households, a universal pension could have significant effects on poverty reduction for multiple populations. Additionally, another successful aspect of Namibia's OAP is its high coverage rate, especially in rural areas. The Namibian government has made an effort to remove barriers to access to grant access by creating an accessible and sophisticated payout structure, which makes it easy for people to receive their cash transfers. Keeping in mind the transport costs associated with grant obtainment, Namibia has built permanent payment structures in very rural areas and also has mobile ATMs which drive around rural areas and distribute the transfers. In Zambia, the payout structure is not nearly this sophisticated, and many times people have to wait in long lines at the post office[16] to obtain their transfers. Access to pension benefits is often a problem with over 50 percent delayed payments in addition to underpayment (Museya, 2014). Additionally, the rural coverage of the pension scheme is very low because much of the rural population is employed in the informal sector. Since in Zambia, the elderly make up about 3.5 percent of the rural population, which is a fairly high percentage, a universal pension reaching this vulnerable population would have significant effects on poverty reduction, as shown in Namibia (UNICEF, 2016).

Recommendations

Given the extent of poverty in Zambia, the current social protection system is not achieving their overall objective of reducing extreme poverty and the intergenerational transfer of poverty. Current targeting systems are insufficient in identifying the poorest individuals and are based on available funding and political acceptability not need. The existing pension system is designed for a very small proportion of the population and does not account for the contributory capacity of the large share of the population. Assessments of the social protection system highlight that existing contributory and non-contributory schemes achieved only marginal coverage of the intended poor and vulnerable population excluding the vast majority of the needy. According to the World Bank (1994),

[15] Based on an interview with the Director of Social Security

[16] Based on an interview with the director of Social Welfare

“administratively a universal pension is the simplest structure with the lowest transaction cost, an important advantage in developing countries with limited institutional capacity and incomplete record keeping system, universal coverage helps ensure that poverty reduction objectives are met and provides basic income for all old people.” We are therefore arguing that the current social protection system is lacking a universal non-contributory social pension which has the potential to have substantial impacts on poverty among the elderly, as well as, the intergenerational transfer of poverty.

According to the NSPP, “the Zambian Government is committed to reducing poverty and vulnerability among its population in general and for the poor and vulnerable segments of society in particular”. The government recognizes social protection as an integral tool for poverty reduction consisting of policies and programs designed to “protect and promote the livelihoods and welfare of people suffering from critical levels of poverty and/or are vulnerable to risks and shocks” (Republic of Zambia, 2014). However, in their existing system, the GRZ has failed to operationalize pensions in an effective way to achieve this goal. Pensions are valuable because of their ability to smooth and stabilize income to buffer the effects of life’s contingencies. Kidd ascertains that pensions, specifically universal pensions are becoming progressively more important, particularly in developing countries as traditional informal support systems are weakened with increasing poverty (Kidd, 2009). In the past, informal social protection offered support through social networks, most commonly family networks. Like formal social protection, support often came in-cash or in-kind, however, they are provided by extended family. Children also often served as old age insurance for parents. With worsening poverty however, people are no longer able to offer support and children who once acted as insurance for parents are no longer able to support themselves, let alone other dependents.

One goal of social protection is to break the intergenerational transfer of poverty. It is important to recognize the critical role that pensions play across generations. Kidd points out that pensions concern the elderly, as well as, children. In the absence of pensions, incomes are highly strained and there is little incentive for parents to prepare for old age when, in the present, they have to prioritize the livelihood of their children. There has been evidence that households which have elderly and child dependents, guaranteed pensions allow for resources to be directed toward children. Specifically, in Namibia, successes in the Old Age pension have shown that the pension often serves as the primary source of income and principal beneficiaries only spend 28 percent of the benefit on themselves and the largest share of the benefit is experienced by children. Universal non-contributory pensions have exhibited success in addressing poverty (Kidd, 2009). Given that the government has prioritized poverty reduction on the social protection agenda, non-contributory pensions are a more effective alternative to employment-based pensions. There are two types of non-contributory pensions, means-tested and universal. However, it has been shown that even when means-tested pensions achieve adequate coverage, many of the eligible individuals are excluded. Means-tests often serve to over-simplify individual poverty contexts. As seen through the 10 percent IM SCT, the main failings of means-tested programs are low coverage and inadequate targeting. Namibia’s universal old age pension

is based off of the South African pension scheme. South Africa's non-contributory pension scheme has achieved 68 percent coverage of the older population, however,13.8 percent of the eligible population did not receive benefits (Kidd, 2009). In Namibia, the old age pension reached 92 percent of the older population. This shows that if the priority is to reduce poverty levels among the elderly, universal schemes are the better alternative to means-tested schemes.

Opponents of universal non-contributory pension schemes often cite that there is not enough fiscal space to implement a program of that magnitude. The director of Social Security stated that, in fact, the elderly make up a majority of the vulnerable population and there is not enough fiscal space to provide for all elderly people and children. Contrary to this; however, evidence from other low-income countries who have established similar programs, allocating between 0.5 and 1.7 percent of the GDP (Kidd, 2009). The ILO endorses that a basic package of social protection including a universal pension and social assistance to the poorest 10 percent would require less than 1 percent of the GDP (Schüring & Lawson-McDowall, 2011). This, in the context of the current social protection system, becomes more complicated given that the entire system is allocated a budget of 1.03 percent of the GDP. A system of this magnitude would consume the entire budget, which highlights the need to increase government funding toward social protection programs. The GRZ has ratified the ILO Recommendation 202, the Global Social Protection Floors; however, it has been slow to fully implement these minimum standards. By ratifying these recommendation, the government recognizes that the ILO expects that a proper basic social protection system should constitute 3.7 to 10.6 percent of the GDP (International Labour Organization, 2008). Under the social protection floors the principal objective is universality and while the system is growing as fiscal space has become available through increased prioritization. However, the current approach of the GRZ is to establish a system on paper and expect it to be operationally effective without the necessary financial support. This has created a regressive process full of unsuccessful and improperly implemented programs that do not provide coverage for all. Through this brief, we identify the need for a universal non-contributory pension scheme, recognizing that without providing the necessary fiscal space, such a program would not have the intended effects on poverty reduction and protection of livelihood. Our recommendation is therefore two-fold: we advocate for the creation of a universal pension scheme, along with a significant increase in budget allocation towards social protection.

Conclusion

A comprehensive social protection system, when implemented correctly, has been identified as an effective measure of poverty reduction. The current issue is that the poor and vulnerable are not receiving adequate access to the mechanisms put in place by the government which are designed to alleviate poverty. The intergenerational transfer of poverty is perpetuated by ineffective programs that are poorly targeted and costly with little poverty impact.

In Zambia, the building blocks are in place for a comprehensive social protection system, however, the current system needs to be revisited to truly reach those who are least likely to exercise their access to opportunity. The GRZ needs to work to create a system with a wide range of programs that meet the needs of different people. What is clear is that there is no magic bullet approach to poverty eradication. Taking lessons from elsewhere is easy in theory, however, what is difficult is making it work and being able to integrate it within policy priorities and already stretched resource envelopes. There are important lessons to be learned from Namibia's social protection system, specifically concerning their universal pension. The main goal of the GRZ's social protection system is poverty reduction, therefore it is crucial to reevaluate the scope and coverage of the existing programs and their capacity to impact poverty reduction. Thus far, the GRZ has focused on the politically favorable solutions but to achieve significant results, they need to prioritize for purpose and seek the effective solution.

Limitations

We encountered multiple limitations in this study. Our biggest limitation was that we were not able to visit Namibia and conduct interviews there with government officials, like we did in Zambia. Speaking with current employees in the MGECW and the MPESW would have been immensely helpful for getting the most current information on the social protection system. Much of the information, especially on the effects of various social protection programs on poverty reduction, used in the study was taken from the NHIES 2009/10, which poses an issue because the statistics could be outdated. However, because we were not able to speak to any government officials, we could not obtain any newer information. Another limitation we encountered in this study was the short timeline we had to complete this project. Given more time, we would have interviewed more experts, many of whom we were unable to get an interview within the eight weeks we had been given. For the Zambia portion of this study, one limitation we encountered was that we were unable to talk to anyone in the MoF about budget allocations for social protection, which made it challenging to find what percent of the national budget is allocated towards social protection programs as well as an explanation for the reasoning behind the budget allocations for each social protection program.

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