



DEVELOPING SOCIAL PROTECTION IN A CONTEXT OF GENERALISED INSECURITY

A REPOA Research Programme ¹

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Table of Contents

| | | |
|-------------|--|-----------|
| I. | Introduction and Background | 3 |
| II. | Conceptual Framework..... | 5 |
| | Vulnerability and Generalised Insecurity..... | 5 |
| | Individualistic Versus Structural Approaches to Vulnerability and Risk..... | 6 |
| | The Systemic and Transformative Nature of Social Protection..... | 8 |
| III. | Sub-themes for the Research Programme on Social Protection..... | 13 |
| 1. | Protecting Income Against Impoverishment: Income Transfers and Consumption Smoothing | 13 |
| | Research on Income Poverty and Vulnerability at Household Level | 14 |
| | Research on Making Cash Transfers Productive..... | 15 |
| | Research on the Nature of Delivery Systems..... | 15 |
| 2. | Preventing Capability Deprivation: Enhancing Human Capabilities through Social Provisioning | 16 |
| | Perspective of Systems of the Production and Delivery of Social Provisioning..... | 16 |
| | Behaviour of Users..... | 17 |
| 3. | Social Protection and Productive Competencies: Labour, Productivity and Livelihoods across the Informal/formal Divide | 17 |
| | How the Prevalence of Generalised Insecurity Limits the Space for Innovation, the Development of Productive Competencies, and Productivity Growth..... | 18 |
| | Developing Formalisation to Enhance Skill Formation, Productive Competencies, and Innovation for Productivity Growth | 19 |
| 4. | Pro-poor Growth and Social Protection: Macro Dimensions of Generalised Insecurity | 19 |
| IV. | Institutional Setting, Capacity Building Activities and Research Collaboration | 21 |
| | Research Grants Under the Open Competitive System | 21 |
| | How to Apply for a Research Grant..... | 21 |
| | Criteria..... | 23 |
| | Evaluation Process | 23 |
| | References | 25 |

I. Introduction and Background

As part of implementation of the Strategic Plan (2005-2009) the Board of Directors of REPOA approved new research themes that were developed through a consultative process. These are:

- Growth and Poverty;
- Vulnerability and Social Protection;
- Social/Political/Cultural issues;
- Environment and Agriculture, and

Cross cutting areas of: Gender, Technology and Governance.

As a follow-up on these new research themes, REPOA subsequently commissioned the development of a **Research Programme on Social Protection** within the following terms of reference:

- To develop a conceptual framework that will guide all research in this area and to place this framework in the context of the Tanzanian situation.
- To determine the research problem, questions, etc. and to identify the relevant research areas. Here, it would be useful to focus on research sub-themes that may be developed into full-scale research projects.
- To outline the broad methodology. This has to be indicative as researchers are expected to develop detailed methodologies that may differ from project to project.
- To suggest possible collaborative research activities and a framework for this collaboration, preferably including capacity building of local researchers.
- To put forward a tentative budget, focusing on the type and level of researchers needed for the work, time frame, etc.

The overarching **working hypothesis** of this research programme can briefly be stated as follows:

The prevalence of generalised insecurity is detrimental, first and foremost, to people's livelihoods by engendering widespread poverty and vulnerability to impoverishment, but also to economic performance and sustained broad-based productivity growth in particular. In other words, social protection matters not only for equity, but also for efficiency, and, as such, should come to be seen as an integral part of the pro-poor growth story, rather than as peripheral or residual to it. Social policy, including social protection, therefore, is not something to be done after a country is sufficiently developed, but instead has a productive role to play in achieving development: directly in terms of its immediate impact on people's standards of living and indirectly in terms of raising productivity in society.

Section II of this document on the research programme for Social Protection develops the overall conceptual framework and sets out the overall agenda and rationale for this research programme.

Section III puts forward the following **three research sub-themes** along with one crosscutting theme proposed for the programme:

1. **Protecting income against impoverishment: income transfers and consumption smoothing.**
2. **Preventing capability deprivation: enhancing human capabilities through social provisioning.**
3. **Social protection and the development of productive capabilities: labour, productivity and livelihoods across the informal/formal divide.**

as sub-themes, and,

4. **Pro-poor growth and social protection: macro dimensions of generalised insecurity as the *crosscutting* theme.**

This section also briefly discusses the methodological dimensions of the research sub-themes in the research programme.

Finally, Section IV deals with its institutional settings, outlines its supportive capacity building initiatives, and provides information on the requirements for a proposal and the proposal process.

II. Conceptual Framework

During the 1990s, the question of social protection hardly featured in mainstream development policy discourses. Robert Holtzmann described the poverty reduction strategy inherent in the “Washington consensus” as follows:

“The WDR 1990 proposed a two-part strategy to address poverty: promoting labor-intensive growth through economic openness, and investment in infrastructure and access to basic social services (World Bank 1990). Social safety nets were essentially an addendum, understood as ex post provision of support in response to economic crisis and structural adjustment. Ex ante income-support measures, risk and vulnerability, and the mere concept of social protection were totally ignored.”
(2003: 48)

In Tanzania, for example, social assistance from the state is only invoked as a measure to respond to economic and social crises. That is, most of them are implemented as safety nets to rescue particular categories of individuals or groups of people befallen by some hazard identified as a disaster or calamity. In effect, they remain based on traditional types of single-cause crisis responses such as to cater for food shortage caused by drought, rescue of flood victims, interventions for HIV/AIDS victims, etc., and, hence, are not designed with reference to structural multi-causal vulnerabilities which have a tendency to lead to protracted crises (de Waal *et. al.*, 2004). Thus formal social assistance programmes for the poor have been reduced to schemes of local poverty management, often with patronising characteristics and lack of continuity as they come and go, but not grow.

More recently, however, there has been a significant shift towards a concern with vulnerability to impoverishment, thereby placing the question of *social protection* squarely on the policy agenda (see, for example, World Bank, 2001; P. Mosley & E. Dowler, 2003; I. Gough, G. Wood, *et. al.*, 2004).² In Tanzania, the need to extend coverage also gained wider recognition and has been expressed in several recent research studies and government documents (Wangwe and Tibandebage, 1999; Steinwachs, 2002; URT, 2003; URT-Research and Analysis Working Group (RAWG), 2004; URT, 2005). The Tanzania Participatory Poverty Assessment (TzPPA, URT-RAWG, 2004), for example, features vulnerability as its lead theme. The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (*Mkukuta*, URT, 2005) stresses the importance of having a framework in place capable to address vulnerabilities and provide social protection for various vulnerable groups to enhance their quality of live and well being (URT, 2005: p. 31).

Vulnerability and Generalised Insecurity

This recent shift towards the re-conceptualisation of poverty in terms of *insecurity* or *vulnerability* has two implications relevant to the analysis of the terrain for social protection.

First, studies on vulnerability have shown that the composition of the poverty is in a continuous state of flux, implying that the incidence of poverty (measured, for example, as those below the poverty line) at any given point in time is an incomplete measure of the proportion of the (existing) population likely to experience

² This shift in conceptual emphasis went together with a similar (but not identical shift) towards renewed attention to the question of *economic (and social) inequality* in shaping trajectories of economic growth and their differential poverty outcomes – an issue which was largely neglected within the policy discourses of the 1990s, given the primacy then given to economic growth (whatever its character or trajectory) as the (near exclusive) panacea for poverty alleviation. (See, for example, various contributions in A. Shorrocks & R. van der Hoeven: 2004)

poverty during a given period of time (say, 5 or 10 years). In other words, apart from *chronic* poverty (within which there are also significant movements, including cumulative processes of impoverishment towards destitution), there may also be considerable *transient* poverty – particularly, of the middle strata – reflected in the movements into and out of poverty over time (often also, at different points in the domestic cycle).

Second, a corollary of this dynamic view of poverty, important for policy analysis, is that, as Geof Wood put it, “vulnerability is not synonymous with [static] poverty, so that the non-poor vulnerable need to be included in a pro-poor social policy” (2003: 106). This notion tallies well with the useful distinction the historian Peter Brown (2002: 15) drew between “*shallow*” and “*deep*” poverty: those *liable to become poor* as distinct from those who *are* poor and live in destitution. In other words, the *shallow* poor are but one degree of separation away from *deep* poverty inasmuch as “impoverishment could come at any time, from any number of misfortunes: from ill-health, from the death of spouses, parents and children, from economic and fiscal oppression, and from violence of every kind”.³ Widespread *shallow* poverty thus refers to a “society made up of countless *paupérisables*” – those liable to impoverishment (*ibid.*).

In conditions where, like in Tanzania, the incidence of poverty is high and social protection low, and, hence, vulnerability to impoverishment is likely to reach much higher up the ladder of income distribution than (static) poverty does, it thus makes sense to talk about a regime of *generalised insecurity* to refer to a society where vulnerability to impoverishment is more or less *endemic* in the workings of its economy, thus leaving only few pockets of robust socioeconomic security at the very top end of the income distribution.

It can further be postulated – at least, as a plausible research hypothesis – that, in Tanzania, the spread of generalised insecurity was propelled by the process of the increased informalisation of the economy, thereby progressively eroding and limiting the space for effective social protection. The rapid expansion of its *informalisation* has indeed been one of the defining characteristics of socioeconomic development in Tanzania in recent decades. This process of informalisation did not only embrace the growth of the so-called ‘informal sector’, but also involved the progressive erosion of the workings of the ‘formal sector’ – both private and public, including the State.⁴

Individualistic Versus Structural Approaches to Vulnerability and Risk

The World Bank’s approach to the analysis of vulnerability and social protection focuses on the balance between *ex-ante* and *ex-post* social protection. A distinction is made, therefore, between whether social protection is forward-looking (*ex-ante*) and, hence, in-built, or instead whether it occupies the role of (*ex-post*) partially compensating those who lost out as a consequence of misfortune or adverse developments. The corresponding analytical framework of the ‘social risk management matrix’ features three types of ‘risk’ management strategies – *ex ante*: (1) risk reduction and (2) risk mitigation strategies, on the one hand; *ex-post*: (3) risk coping strategies, on the other – along its rows, and a further three types of social risk management arrangements – informal, market-based and public arrangements – along its columns. This cross-tabulation then provides a frame of reference to identify typologies of strategies and interventions.

³ This concept of *shallow* poverty (Brown, 2002: 15) has affinity with, but is not identical to, the concept of *transient* poverty. The latter refers to the incidence of people moving in and out of poverty over a particular period in time. The former, however, depicts a state of fragility or vulnerability indicative of people whose livelihood is precarious and who may, or may not, fall into transient or chronic poverty, or, as Peter Brown goes on to explain: “for most of them the ‘deep’ poverty of actual destitution remained an ever-present possibility” inasmuch as ‘deep’ poverty was a state into which they might fall, and from which they might emerge again, scrambling back painfully into ‘shallow’ poverty, on many occasions in the course of their lives”.

⁴ The informalisation of the formal economy “refers to economic activity practised by firms in the formal economy, and even in the interstices of the State itself, which is not itself covered by state regulation or record keeping” (*ibid.*: 6).

This framework represents an important shift away from the earlier exclusive focus on *ex post* residual safety nets inherent in the so-called ‘Washington consensus’ (2003: 36). Both dimensions – *ex ante* and *ex post* social protection – clearly matter for policy research: the latter because of the immediacy of need with which it normally is concerned; the former because it is likely to have the highest pay-offs in terms of preventing entitlement failures, given that, generally, prevention is better than cure, particularly also since, if successful, it reduces the subsequent need for *ex-post* intervention.

The World Bank’s approach of bringing vulnerability and social protection mainly under the umbrella of *ex-ante* versus *ex post* risk management in the light of (exogenous) shocks is, therefore, an important step forward, but it remains rather narrow in its scope. More specifically, within this framework, the treatment of ‘risk’ tends to be solely based on the distinction between *covariant* and *idiosyncratic* risks at the *individual/household* level and remains mainly related to income or consumption insecurity and not, for example, to capability deprivation more generally. In this perspective, therefore, social protection interventions are seen to “assist individuals, households, and communities to better manage the income risks that leave people vulnerable” (World Bank, as quoted in Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004: p.3).⁵

This type of approach, however, can easily lead to the adoption of a research methodology – as, for example, was adopted by the Tanzania Participatory Poverty Assessment carried out in 2002/3 and published in 2004 – that “focuses on describing categories of people (‘vulnerable groups’), events and phenomena (‘impoverishing shocks and stresses’), thus providing “descriptive, rather than explanatory knowledge on poverty” (Social Development Direct [R. Waterhouse & M. Green], 2006: 5).⁶

More generally, this individualist approach to (income) risk calculus adopted within the World Bank framework lacks “an institutional account of risk” capable of acknowledging “chronic aspects of risk induced by inequality, class relations, exploitation, concentration of unaccountable power and social exclusion as absence of ‘community’ membership” (G. Wood, 2003: 104/5). Within this latter perspective, the nature and frequency of so-called “shocks” and the scope for “risk management” are themselves seen to be largely socially constructed, highly differentiated and stratified, shaped by spatially specific social and economic dynamics, and *systemic* in nature. Poverty and vulnerability, therefore, can thus be more broadly understood as conditions “that follows from the systematic differences in the flows of resources and opportunities to different kinds of agents – that is, as a structural phenomenon at root, not a behavioural one” (Dimsky, 2005: p. 232). Consequently, social protection (and, more generally, social policy) is not just a question of dealing with individual mishaps and distresses, but instead, particularly in a context like Tanzania where incomes are low and inequality of incomes and of opportunities high, also serves as a key instrument to “prevent developmentally dysfunctional inequality and conflict” from leading to greater social polarisation (Mackintosh and Tibandebage, 2004: p. 143).

Viewing poverty as a structural phenomenon further draws attention to the importance of *institutions* in shaping social abilities to cope with uncertain environments. In this respect, the potentially debilitating effects of the process of increased informalisation of employment (and of the economy at large), associated with the collapse of large-scale production and productivity and the loss of the link between social rights and employment (as well as the collapse of the taxation system and the loss of effective trade union protective organisation) are well-known (see, for example, the work by Barbara Harriss-White, 2003, on India, and by Judith Tendler, 2004, on Brazil). But the interconnections between the process of informalisation in Africa

⁵ See Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) for a more elaborate critique of the Social Risk Management framework of the World Bank.

⁶ This point is further clarified as follows: The PPA set out to capture the dynamics of impoverishment and to differentiate between relative vulnerability of different social groups in order to help policy makers to prioritise their interventions. In practice, however, the research tools were used to gather descriptive rather than analytical information and focused on identifying static categories of people and things rather than exploring the relationships between them or the processes of exclusion and impoverishment (*ibid.* 17). Moreover, in assuming that social categories can explain vulnerabilities the approach confuses the very different trajectories of what are represented as different vulnerable groups. (*ibid.* 19).

with the incidence of generalised insecurity and the lack of productivity growth and the development of productive competences and capabilities are as yet poorly researched and understood.

The Systemic and Transformative Nature of Social Protection

In the Tanzanian context, a comprehensive overview of existing arrangements of public provisioning for social security and social assistance – as far as income-support, in cash or in kind, is concerned – can be found in Research and Analysis Working Group (2004). As this report reveals, perhaps the most distinctive feature of this motley collection of existing arrangements is that it combines low coverage in provisioning with high fragmentation and dispersal of efforts involving a multitude of actors. This could be seen to be the result of a historical trajectory involving the uneasy conjunction of the dwindling remnants of the (older) *ex-ante* formal social insurance schemes (pension and provident funds) with the (newer) *ex-post* targeted social safety-nets which arose in the wake of structural adjustment. The former were subjected to built-in obsolescence due to growing *informalisation* of the economy and society, while the latter have recently come under increasing scrutiny – including from its chief architects – given the *residual* (and largely ineffectual) role structural adjustment policies accorded to social protection. A parallel process of scrutiny and reflection has recently also taking place about social policy more broadly, and particularly about the nature and desirability of targeting and user fees in health and education. Much is alive at present, therefore, in terms of new ideas and proposals about future public action for social protection, in particular also those involving *cash transfers* to vulnerable groups such as orphans and other vulnerable children, on the one hand, and the elderly, on the other. There is the danger, however, that, given the prevailing fragmentation and dispersal of efforts in social protection, new schemes are introduced merely in an *additive* fashion without much consideration for its overall integrative potential.

The first aspect of this integrative potential concerns the *systemic* nature of regimes of social protection. In this respect, for example, Drèze and Sen (1991) drew attention to the very different historical trajectories different developing countries have pursued in shaping socioeconomic security – some successful, even at low levels of income. Their analysis pinpointed the importance of looking at social provisioning *systemically*, rather than *additively*: not just how each of the constituent schemes work, but also how they interconnect as a whole. This led them, for example, to make the distinction between support-led security and growth-mediated security as distinctive alternative trajectories of constructing effective security regimes, thereby also drawing attention to the importance of path dependencies in development.⁷

The second aspect concerns the transformative nature of regimes of social protection. In this respect, for example, Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) argued that:

Strategies to deal with problems of social vulnerability require a transformative element, where “transformative” refers to the need to pursue policies that relate to power imbalances in society that encourage, create and sustain vulnerabilities.
(2004: p. 9)

Social protection, therefore, is not just a question of a finding a technical fix to the problem of vulnerability in society, but instead involves the creation, sustenance and expansion of political and social institutions through which mechanisms of redistribution and social insurance are negotiated and articulated. These institutions thus shape the landscape within which people live and work and, hence, are essentially transformative in nature. Actual outcomes depend on the political dimensions that influence the alliances

⁷ See also the various contributions in Ahmad *et. al.* (1991). Growth-mediated security has, more recently, and particularly in the East Asian context, been referred to as *productivist* or *developmental* security or welfare regimes (see, for example, Gough and Wood, 2004; Huck-ju Kwon, 2005).

through which inclusive (or, alternatively, exclusionary) policies are forged.⁸ In a context like Tanzania, such alliances do not only operate nationally, but also internationally, particularly as mediated by the aid relationship.⁹

A distinctive feature of putting the emphasis on researching transformative social protection is that it shifts attention away from a narrow focus on social protection as income support only toward social protection as capability preservation and enhancement and, by implication, from quantity towards quality of social protection. Bringing in capabilities rather than income also broadens the notion of what should be understood by social protection. Capabilities in this context not only refer to *human capabilities*, but also *system capabilities* and, as argued below, to productive *competencies* as well. This general point has several dimensions.

First, there is the issue of the balance between *short-term* expediency and *long-term* consequences of different strategies of social protection. In matters of social protection, immediacy of need cannot be ignored. And at times, short-term expediency can go hand in hand with favourable long-run consequences. For example, cash support or bridging credit to provide short-term relief in the wake of a crisis such as drought or floods can be a very effective means to safeguard long-run productive capabilities. But it is equally possible that short-term expediency has adverse long-term consequences. As Wood argued, ‘the imperatives of risk aversion in the present may deliver short-term security while reproducing the conditions for long-term insecurity in the future’ (2004: p. 70). To illustrate this argument, Wood cites examples like ‘crop diversification and subsistence preferences regardless of prevailing prices; or debt acquisition foreclosing future investment options (e.g. raising dowry capital versus investment in education; and so on). The interesting feature of these examples is that adverse long-term consequences invariably concern mechanisms of capability deprivation.

The case of *income diversification* is particularly interesting since, in recent years – in part, because of the present-day prominence of livelihood approaches to poverty reduction (see, for example, Ellis and Freeman, 2004) – diversification of economic activities, particularly at household level, has come to be celebrated as a good thing *per se*.¹⁰ But *seemingly* similar forms of diversification may have quite different long-term consequences – some positive, others negative. Diversification in despair (away from an activity in decline) is indeed quite a different matter than diversification through multiple growth poles (for example, using momentum gained in one activity to branch into another, often more complex, but more rewarding activity). Similarly, diversification that deepens the division of labour and propels productivity growth is a different matter from diversification that renders them shallow or erodes them altogether. In other words, what matters is not only whether diversification takes place, but also the nature (quality) of such diversification.

In a recent article, for example, Rune Skarstein (2005) argued that economic liberalization did not produce the strong stimulus to Tanzanian agriculture –and to food production in particular – it aimed to deliver: namely, increased labour productivity, rising agricultural production and higher incomes. This failure to realize the gains of specialization led to the dual phenomena of ‘subsistence fallback’ and ‘income

⁸ For recent references, see, for example, the various contributions in the books edited by P. Houtzager and M. Moore, 2003, and by T. Mkandawire, 2004. See also Kanbur (2004) for an analysis of the international political alliances sustaining the present-day Post-Washington consensus, and P. Houtzager (2004) for a different interpretation.

⁹ For an incisive analysis of the changing and problematic nature of the political context of the aid relationship in Tanzania, see Wangwe (2004).

¹⁰ Similarly, the MKUKUTA (NSGRP) policy document argues that: It is encouraging to note that households have been diversifying their economic activities. Although income from agriculture is dominant, some 40 percent of rural household income originates from farm and off-farm employment. ... The proportion of rural households who derive incomes from more than three sources is 65 percent. The trend is already towards increasing employment in non-farm activities in the rural areas. However, this is happening too slowly and without coordination and support. This trend can be reinforced through more deliberate policy interventions. On and off-farm earnings need support from both a strong agricultural sector and other rural sectors including forestry, wildlife, fisheries and tourism. (URT, 2005: 10).

diversification' which – he argued – should be seen as two sides of the same coin: manifestations of a problem, rather than its solution.

This example further illustrates that the question of the nature of the longer term transformations brought about by the character of social protection is also relevant in a context where social protection is largely absent, rudimentary, or largely left to household and/or individual coping strategies. More specifically, the prevalence of generalised insecurity itself also provokes processes of change and transformation, which adversely affect not only individual well-being of those vulnerable to impoverishment, but also – as argued below – economic performance in general and productivity in particular.

Second, gender matters when dealing with social policy and with social protection in particular. Social institutions shape the ways both marketed and non-marketed activities are organised in society and, hence, enhance or constraint the development of capabilities of men, women and children. Consequently, changes in social policy – for example, the introduction of user charges or the availability of cash grants – can dramatically alter the balance between marketed and non-marketed production (between paid labour and domestic labour). This aspect is often overlooked, particularly in approaches to poverty and growth that emphasize increasing marketed output and money incomes for the poor (both of which are important), but neglect the contribution of non-marketed work to well-being and economic growth (O'Laughlin, 2004: 14). The trade-offs that affect the balance between marketed and non-marketed production are, therefore, often overlooked. Women as caretakers are much more likely to be aware of these trade-off and also to be more perceptive of the need for balancing immediacy of need with stability of conditions of livelihoods.

Third, there is the further issue of the relation between *agency* (the type of social agents involved and their interactions) and the *scale* of social protection. In this respect, the World Bank "Social Risk Management Matrix" approach tends to put informal, market and public arrangements (as proxy for actors) side by side, and only envisages a limited role for government in social protection provisions (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004: p. 8). Holzmann and Jorgensen, for example, argue that social protection should 'provide risk management instruments where the private sector fails' or 'enact income redistribution if market outcomes are unacceptable', and, hence, that the state should mainly provide 'social safety nets for risk coping' (2000: p. 28, as quoted in Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004: p. 8). In contrast, Houtzager argues that construction of a new politics of inclusion 'must concern itself centrally with how societal and state actors democratically negotiate large-scale collective solutions across the public-private divide' (2004: p. 2). In this respect, state action – not just on its own, but particularly in its articulation with wider public action – has a pivotal role to play in bringing about transformative social protection (Wuyts, Mackintosh and Hewitt, 1992).

Scale matters if social protection is to be effective and transformative. An individual household is of necessity much more restricted in its room for manoeuvre than, say, an association of producers, an NGO, or the local State. Scale can be achieved through different mechanisms, from the top downwards, but also through the *scaling up* of more localised public action.

Scale and agency interact in the making of alliances, which raises the related question of the appropriate balance between *broad-based* and *targeted* intervention. For example, shared vulnerabilities and partly overlapping interests between the poor and the 'not so poor, but vulnerable' (the *middle strata* as Joan Nelson, 2003, calls them) may provide fruitful grounds for alliance for more robust pro-poor social policies, thus escaping the common danger that "services for the poor [become] poor services" (Bob Deacon, 2003; see also, A. de Haan, 2003.) More generally, as Barrientos (2004) demonstrated in the case of Latin American countries, the greater the extent of social polarisation and the lesser the poor and not-so-poor middle strata rely on common institutions of social provisioning, the lesser also will be the grounds for alliance between them. In such circumstances, existing arrangements of social protection stand upon fragile political foundations which can easily be eroded, thus leading to rapid shifts in regimes of social protection.

The Missing Link: Social Protection and Economic Development

Finally, the issue of the transformative potential of social protection should not be seen as solely confined to the 'social' sphere, but also concerns 'economic' development. Indeed, research on social protection needs to come to terms with the fact that, as Arjan de Haan put it, "we need a better understanding of the historical role that a broad range of *social policies has played in economic successes*". Much has been written in this respect on the issue of education, or of health – the more conventional 'social sectors'. Apart from Drèze and Sen's analysis of growth-mediated security, however, little has been done on the developmental role other forms of social protection can play in shaping economic successes. An important exception in this respect, however, are the various contributions in Mkandawire (2004), which explicitly seek to address the question of the developmental role of social policy more generally.¹¹

The question, therefore, is to what extent social protection should not also come to be seen as an *integral part of the "pro-poor growth story" and, hence, neither residual nor peripheral to it*. In the past, it was common to argue that a country like Tanzania *could not afford* social protection. But there are good reasons to believe – or, at least, to accept as a *working hypothesis* – that, in a context of widespread socioeconomic insecurity, certain measures of social policy may well be essential to escape from a *low-equilibrium poverty trap*. In other words, the alternative question this research programme seeks to ask is whether Tanzania can afford *not to invest* in social protection if sustained pro-poor growth is the key objective?

It can indeed be argued that the failure to make the link between economic development and social protection can in fact lead to perverse outcomes detrimental to both. Judith Tendler makes this point forcefully and convincingly when she argued that policy makers in developing countries continue to view small firms and informal sector firms "as 'only' welfare, rather than the stuff of serious economic development" (2004: pp. 124-130). This, she argues, leads to a "devil's deal", where informal sector development and small enterprises are given public support mainly as an exponent of social policy, particularly to provide widespread employment for surplus labour, without however much consideration – even as a *quid pro quo* for providing support – for its efficiency, productivity and quality, let alone for its labour and environmental standards. The devil's deal thus reinforces a low-level equilibrium trap – a space to mop up unemployment through low productivity and low quality jobs – which poses "just as significant a barrier to formalization and upgrading of small-firm clusters as the actual costs themselves of formalization and regulation" (*ibid.* p. 125).

The question whether widespread socioeconomic insecurity constitutes a serious impediment (if not, a binding constraint) to economic success remains as yet poorly researched. But if one accepts the premise that sustained poverty reduction requires economic growth or, more precisely, requires sustained productivity growth propelled by incremental innovation and the development of productive competencies and systemic capabilities, the question arises whether such trajectory is likely to come about in conditions where even (very) skilled workers continuously have to hedge their bets to guard against the hazards of socioeconomic insecurity in the absence of any meaningful collective arrangements for social protection.

In this respect, Iversen – writing about the context of developed industrialised countries – stressed "the importance of political and economic institutions for protecting the human capital in which people have invested" (2005:4). Indeed, he argued, "having in place some form of protection is a precondition for people making investments in specific skills in the first place" (*ibid.*). This point, however, is not just relevant for developed countries only. Indeed, in the absence of any form of social protection, households have little option but to fall back on multiple diversified individual household-based strategies to ward off the worse

¹¹ Much more work has been done in this respect on developed industrialised countries. See, for example, the recent interesting book on *Varieties of Capitalism. The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*, edited by Peter Hall and David Soskice (2001). The various contributions to this book provide interesting insights in how differences in social policies, and in social protection in particular, shaped the nature of innovation (radical or incremental), of the development of productive capacities and competences, and of institutional comparative advantages in developed industrialised countries. See also A.B. Atkinson (1999) and T. Iversen (2005).

effects of insecurity. This is a rational risk-averse response to the problem of insecurity. It is doubtful, however, whether, in conditions of generalised insecurity, the aggregation of such responses (coupled perhaps with minimal *ex-post* safety nets) are likely to foster broad-based development of productive and systemic competencies/capabilities and productivity growth. On the contrary, widespread *shallow poverty* – to use Peter Brown's term – is also likely to engender a *shallow economy*. Skarstein (2005) – quoted earlier – argued that this is indeed what is happening in the context of the Tanzanian rural economy.

Wood and Mayer (2001) argued that Africa's comparative advantage does not lie in the abundance of its labour (particularly not, of its skilled labour), but rather in its abundance of natural resources. They further argue that:

From an economic point of view, it is more attractive to have abundant natural resources, both as a source of income (since they generate more revenue for less work) and as a basis for the initial stages of development (since they provide a rent that can be invested in the accumulation of skills and physical capital). Moreover, if a high level of skill per worker is achieved, through education and learning from experience, the skill/land ratio can even in a land-abundant country can rise to a point where comparative advantage shifts to manufactures and services – although in absolute terms its primary production will remain large, and indeed continue to grow (as for instance in the United States). The most serious problems of natural resource-based development are not economic, but political, and in particular that resource rents are often appropriated by social and political elites with little interest in the broad-based development of their countries [Wood and Mayer, 2001: 192].

But such trajectory of development would require that resource-based development goes hand in hand with the progressive accumulation of skills (and physical capital), thus raising productivity, incomes and productive capabilities, particularly also in primary production (agriculture and mining), by raising not only the volume of production, but also its quality (PHDR, 2005: chapter 3, pp. 79-93). This is hard to achieve, however, in a context of generalised insecurity where, as Skarstein argued, households are likely to seek refuge in the relative safety of subsistence fallback and income diversification for lack of broader organised forms of social protection.

This research programme, then, seeks to investigate these interconnections and thus explore the proposition that, in low-income countries like Tanzania, social protection is essential to safeguard people's consumption standards and develop their human capabilities as well as to enhance economic efficiency and growth by creating a more security environment within which productive competencies can flourish, and systemic capabilities – both in production and in the delivery of social provisioning – can develop.

Finally, the research programme is designed to be interdisciplinary in scope and approach. The reason is that questions surrounding social protection cannot be reduced to one discipline only, nor can they be seen as finding the right technical solutions or fixes to specific challenges. Social protection is not just about risk management and insurance against risk, but also about redistribution and political conflict (Iversen, 2005: 4). Social protection requires the creation, sustenance and growth of political, social and economic institutions, rooted in political alliances that carry and govern these processes of insurance and redistribution, and confront the trade-offs they inevitably entail. The research programme, therefore, needs to be cognisant of these different dimensions and include them in its research agenda.

III. Sub-themes for the Research Programme on Social Protection

Poverty is not just a matter of income deprivation (yet income clearly matters), but also of capability deprivation. Social protection, therefore, cannot merely be reduced to income protection against impoverishment only, but should also attend to protecting/enhancing *capabilities: human capabilities* in particular, but also *productive capabilities* (or *competencies*) and *systemic capabilities*, since the latter two create the context and dynamics within which the former can flourish. The sub-themes of the research programme, therefore, seek to address these multiple dimensions of social protection.

The programme contains the following three sub-programmes, each with its own specific theme:

1. **Protecting income against impoverishment: income transfers and consumption smoothing;**
2. **Preventing capability deprivation: enhancing human capabilities through social provisioning;**
3. **Social protection and labour productivity: livelihoods across the informal/formal divide;**

and one integrative theme that cuts across these three major themes:

4. **Pro-poor growth and social protection: macro dimensions of generalised insecurity.**

The idea here is that this crosscutting theme does *not* constitute a separate sub-programme in its own right, but rather that this theme is taken up in each of the three major sub-programmes (sub-themes), thus providing a basis for synthesis across them. It is, of course, also understood that the programme on social protection pays attention to the three overall cross cutting areas of REPOA's research priorities: gender, technology and governance. It should be clear that specific research projects can and should not always be neatly slotted only within a specific theme. Many projects will and should inevitably relate to more than one theme, although principally located in one of them.

1. Protecting Income Against Impoverishment: Income Transfers and Consumption Smoothing

Traditionally, income protection lies at the core of policies of social protection. Income protection can take the form of either transfer payments or soft credits (and thus form part of social expenditures – whether by the state or by non-state agencies) or result from regulatory measures such as, for example, employment protection (minimum wage policies; restrictions on dismissal) or pricing policies (say, for crops). This sub-programme deals with the former, but not with the latter of these two sets of policies¹². This former area covers a wide terrain, including:

- Transfer payments: in cash or in-kind (e.g. food aid);
- Social insurance and pension schemes;

¹² The latter will form part of the third sub-programme.

- Saving schemes;
- Micro credit for consumption smoothing

A distinctive feature of these interventions is that they concern different variants of income support (and consumption smoothing) and are thus based on the twin notions of poverty as *income deprivation* and vulnerability as *exposure to income loss*.

In terms of research within this sub-theme, three broad areas appear to be of relevance here:

- Research on income poverty and vulnerability at household level, not just *statically*, but also, and importantly, *dynamically*, and on the (relative) *effectiveness* of specific income support measures in terms of reducing poverty and vulnerability;
- And, linked with this, research on the important question of “making cash transfers productive” (Comment: Dr Likwelile, Workshop on Social Protection, REPOA, 02/09/05).
- Research on the nature of delivery systems and on how they promote (or fail to promote) the development of system capabilities (including information systems), particularly with respect to effectiveness in intended coverage, inclusiveness (or exclusiveness) in reach, and the balance between short-term expediency and long-term sustainability;

Research on Income Poverty and Vulnerability at Household Level

With respect to the *first* area, much work (particularly, that involving the measurement of poverty) has already been done on the prevalence of (*static*) income poverty and the characteristics of the poor within Tanzania. Some work has been done on vulnerability, which, however, requires more attention. In policy research, this question can be tackled in part by identifying ‘vulnerable groups’ and by pinpointing their characteristics. This is useful, but it is equally, if not more, important to gain understanding of the underlying social processes at work. For example, an analysis of how multi-causal vulnerabilities actually work and how their interactions can lead to protracted crises may help to explain how distinctive social groups end up in chronic poverty (de Waal *et. al.*, 2004). Or how important is transient poverty in the Tanzanian where social protection as income support is minimal and where household adjustments to impoverishment often involve the depletion of assets, including productive assets? In such circumstances, what processes are at work which enable people or households to bounce back out of poverty and what role, if any, does household income diversification –*ex ante* or *ex-post* – play in all this? These and related types of questions can only be addressed in a more process-oriented framework of analysis.

This type of analysis may help to pinpoint the nature of policy interventions – including income support – capable to halt or prevent *vicious* circles of impoverishment. Of specific importance here concerns research on how different (alternative) forms of interventions of income support (and consumption smoothing) affect the dynamics of poverty – immediately and in its long-term consequences – for different social groups in society.

The focus on income support should not lead to a neglect of the importance of non-marketed production and consumption. On the contrary, as pointed out earlier, market and non-market circuits interact and intersect such that changes in one affect what happens in the other. Cash transfers, for example, can have multiplier effects in terms of rendering non-marketed production more effective, for example, by saving labour time or by providing monetary inputs in domestic production. Income support, therefore, does more than just

provide additional cash, but may also induce growth in non-marketed production – a point often ignored with poverty reduction is seen strictly in terms of monetary incomes. More generally, it is important, therefore, to incorporate gender dimensions within the research agenda, particularly where it concerns how cash interacts with household welfare.

Research on Making Cash Transfers Productive

This brings into focus the second issue – the question of making transfers more productive – which points to the necessity not only to impede vicious circles of capability deprivation from occurring, but instead to turn (transform) them into *virtuous* circles of capability enhancement. In this respect, income support has often come to be associated with consumption only, thus detracting from investment and growth. But this ignores that the long-term consequences of short-term neglect can be quite considerable in terms of the adverse effects capability deprivation can have in limiting the scope for social and economic development. This point is obvious where it concerns taking care of orphans and their future potential as members of society, but it also applies more widely to various instances where exposure to insecurity without any form of income protection prevents or impedes investment in human capital (and assets). Income support, then, not only protects immediate consumption, but it can also serve to protect employment capabilities. The lack of support mechanisms, therefore, can entail serious *disinvestments* in the productive potential of the economy and society.

Methodologically, researching these issues requires a focus on “why” and “how” questions: that is, on understanding processes rather than typologies of the characteristics of “who”, “what”, “where” or “how much”. In other words, the emphasis in research should perhaps be less on the identification of “vulnerable groups”, but more on how processes of capability deprivation happen and the role various forms of income support can play in preventing these from happening or mitigating their effects. This does not mean that typologies of groups do not matter – they do – but rather that the focus of analysis should be more slanted towards how interventions through income support can help to prevent cumulative processes of impoverishment which, apart from the loss of income, also entail capability deprivation. In terms of method, furthermore, this would also imply the judicious combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. A more process-oriented approach would also plead for putting more emphasis on research based on panel data, narratives and life histories rather than, say, on simple survey or rapid appraisal methods.

Research on the Nature of Delivery Systems

The third area in this sub-programme concerns research on ‘*systems of cover*’ embracing the policy context, governance structures, institutional setup and modes of financing through which coverage in delivery – universal or targeted – is put into practice, successfully or otherwise. The focus here is on research into systemic capabilities in the management of social insurance, transfer payments and micro credit. While this area of research is specifically focused on the workings, or lack thereof, of institutional arrangements that underlie prevailing or emerging systems of cover, its linkages with the two other areas within this sub-programme cannot be ignored. Indeed, an important dimension of researching systemic capabilities concerns how such systems of cover affect the behaviour of those targeted by (and excluded from) these schemes.

In the case of state provisioning, support is mostly administered through local government structures, which raises the question of systemic capabilities for decentralised public action. In the case of NGO or community-based arrangements, the opposite problem can arise: the question of scaling-up locally based activities. Finally, there is also the question of long-term sustainability of such arrangements, particularly in

cases where payments in kind or in cash are not one-off, but recurrent over time. This is not just an issue of finance, but also of the politics of social insurance and redistribution. The latter issue is particularly important in a context like Tanzania where social expenditures depend to a large extent on aid financing, often subject to the assumption that their longer term sustainability can be locally grounded, not just financially, but also politically.

Methodologically, this area is concerned with the analysis of how organisations and institutions are designed, work, interact and evolve. This involves carrying out organisational assessment and looking at institutional footprints, including systems of information on the basis of which activities are carried and accounted for. It further requires the analysis of both intended as well as unintended outcomes of public policy. Case study research, therefore, tends to be the most appropriate form for approaching these kinds of questions.

2. Preventing Capability Deprivation: Enhancing Human Capabilities through Social Provisioning

This sub-programme brings social provisioning in focus by looking at social protection not only as ways of preventing income deprivation but also capability deprivation. This concern with protecting and enlarging human capabilities (what people can do) rather than with commodities (basic needs) or income (basic income support) thus broadens the notion of, and scope for, social protection.

A distinctive feature of the so-called "social sectors" such as health care, education or water is that, unlike income transfers which only require to be administered but not produced, these services involve complex production systems necessary for their delivery at the point of consumption. Researching social sectors thus requires looking both at the "demand" and "supply" sides of the equation, where the supply side cuts across the public, private and voluntary sectors. Social protection in this case, therefore, raises questions of both *availability* and *access*. Issues of financing such services cut across both these sides.

A key issue for research concerns whether and how equitable access, particularly by the poor, is or can be assured in health, education, water or any other form of social provisioning. Demand reflects want backed by cash and not necessarily need. The mechanisms, therefore, through which demand is mediated with need in organising supply responsiveness matter a great deal for securing equitable access. Access, however, is not just an issue of quantity, but also quality. What matters is universal access to quality provisioning since a differentiated (two- or multi-tier) system where the poor only have access to poor services does no more than serve as a potent vehicle of capability deprivation.

Perspective of Systems of the Production and Delivery of Social Provisioning

Broadly speaking, two distinct, but interlinked areas of research activities can be distinguished. The first concerns looking at the issues from the perspective of systems of the production and delivery of social provisioning. This includes the following interrelated issues or questions:

- The question of quality bifurcation in social provisioning as a vehicle for social exclusion;

- The question of developing – or failure to develop – systemic capabilities (including forms of regulation) across the public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure conditions of equitable access;
- The question of how the spatial distribution of production capabilities (infrastructure, human resources, etc.) relatively to the distribution of needs;
- The question of how the financial architecture of social provisioning – user charges, social insurance schemes, subsidies, etc., and their interactions, nationally and locally – influences availability and access of quality services.

Behaviour of Users

The other dimension concerns how the behaviour of users (and the constraints or opportunities faced by them) is shaped by the character of social provisioning – its modalities of availability and access, in particular – and thus reinforcing processes of inclusion or exclusion and of capability deprivation or enhancement. These processes will affect men, women and children differently, the more so since the ways in which access to (quality) social provisioning – whether publicly provided or market-based – is organised will shape not only the balance between (and access to) marketed and non-marketed production and employment, but also the balance between education and work (for example, child labour).

This area might include the following types of issues:

- The question of how health-seeking behaviour is influenced by the structure of user charges and subsidy in health care across public, private and voluntary sectors with differentiated quality provisioning, both within and between sectors;
- The question of differentiated access to quality education at primary level in terms of social exclusion from subsequent education and/or skill acquisition;
- The question of how deficiencies in social provisioning in two or more sectors – say, health care and water – can interact and reinforce capability deprivation more generally (for example, through access to education or employment, even if available).

Methodologically, it is important that both dimensions feature prominently in this sub-programme to avoid that the analysis of “social sectors” turns inwards by becoming purely sector-specific rather than investigating the wider ramifications of exclusion or inclusion in social provisioning. Indeed, impoverishment seldom results from a single cause, but instead tends to be the product of cumulative processes involving structural multi-causal vulnerabilities that progressively narrow or collapse the room for manoeuvre through capability deprivation and entitlement failures.

3. Social Protection and Productive Competencies: Labour, Productivity and Livelihoods across the Informal/formal Divide

The focus of this sub-theme, then, concerns the relation between social protection and the development of *productive competences* (capabilities) within an economy. It mirrors, therefore, the earlier concern with human capabilities, but now extends the scope of the enquiry directly into the sphere of production. Indeed,

most people rely for their well being mainly on income – in money or in kind – obtained from production and employment. Self-insurance out of own income, therefore, is the norm around which other forms of social protection may – or may not – be grafted. But the very existence of the “working poor” – those in irregular employment and/or in employment with incomes below the poverty line – indicates that not all forms of production and employment guarantee a life without poverty. What matters for poverty reduction is not just productive employment, but (stable) employment with sufficient productivity (provided the direct producers share in the gains from productivity growth). But productivity depends on investment in assets and skill formation – investment in human capital – and on developing capabilities for innovation. These, in turn, as is postulated here as a working hypothesis, depend on the nature of social protection, even in a context of a developing country like Tanzania.

In this respect, a key characteristic of the Tanzanian economy and society in recent decades has been its increasing *informalisation*, which both fuels as well as is propelled by increased socioeconomic insecurity. This process of informalisation is not solely confined to the growth of the so-called ‘informal sector’, but it also embraces and erodes the workings of the ‘formal sector’ – both public and private. This is reflected in *short-termism* in production perspectives and atomised production practices, in widespread employment and job insecurities, and in excessive market volatilities due to the virtual absence of effective labour market regulation and of robust practices – rooted in trust, reciprocity and relational contracting – of effective and lasting coordination and networking (along value chains) in the organisation of production and exchange.

Within such a context, however, where socioeconomic insecurity in production, in employment and in income generation is high, the scope for innovation, skill formation and productivity enhancement tends to be very low. Indeed, as Edith Penrose (1995, as quoted in Kregel and Burlamaqui, 2005: 143) pointed out while discussing the role of firms, to cope with changes in uncertain environments, it is necessary to create ‘pools of relative certainty’ – internal environments (within firms or within coordinated clusters or networks of firms and other institutions) – capable of combining and coordinating responses to external volatility and thereby generating endogenous innovations.

How the Prevalence of Generalised Insecurity Limits the Space for Innovation, the Development of Productive Competencies, and Productivity Growth

Broadly speaking, two related, but distinct dimensions of research activities can be distinguished in this sub-programme. The first dimension concerns coming to grips with how the prevalence of generalised insecurity limits the space for innovation, the development of productive competencies, and productivity growth. The kind of issues that could be explored here might include the following topics:

- Understanding the linkages between formal and informal economy both at macro- and at micro-level, including the intra-household linkages between formal and informal labour supplies and earnings reflective of diversification strategies.¹³
- Looking at processes underlying what Judith Tandler (2004: 124-130) aptly referred to as ‘*the devil’s deal*’ which cause informality to become *more* attractive (even within – and thus eroding – the formal sector), and formalisation *less* attractive, thus turning the informal sector into an instrument for preserving and creating poor-quality jobs in poor-quality firms and micro-enterprises, with adverse consequences for productivity growth and socioeconomic security.

¹³ See, for example, Grimm and Gunther (2005).

- Looking at how the State can actually create informal markets and how, in turn, informal markets can create an increasingly informal State, thereby accentuating generalised insecurity.¹⁴

Developing Formalisation to Enhance Skill Formation, Productive Competencies, and Innovation for Productivity Growth

The second dimension concerns how to develop novel forms of *formalisation* that enhance skill formation, productive competencies, and innovation for productivity growth – in quantity and quality of output – and ensure that the benefits of increased production are more equitably shared, thus enlarging the space for socioeconomic security. The kind of issues that could be explored here might include the following topics:

- Looking at whether the “Property and Business Formalisation Programme” (PBFP / Mkurabita) effectively extends the reach of broad-based and equitable productivity growth, or not.
- Investigating how and whether producer associations through (balanced) networking structured along value-chains (for example, by linking agricultural crop production with processing) might provide avenues to increase production and the quality of production (higher value-added per unit of output), while strengthening labour rights and ensuring that the benefits of increased production are more equitably shared (see the discussion on the ‘cooperative model’ in PHDR, 2005: 88-93).
- Investigating the link between wages, labour conditions (job security, in particular) and skill formation in shaping firm-level or farm-level productivity.
- Investigating how local-level state or NGO action, or specialised financial assistance (e.g. through relational banking) can effectively assist employment-creating growth, for example, through the brokering of the connection to export markets (e.g. by integrating producers within value chains), providing customised training to small-firm owners and their workers, or breaking particular efficiency-hampering infrastructure bottlenecks. (Tendler, 2004: 122).

As was the case with the other sub-programmes, both these dimensions require research methodologies which mainly focus on understanding processes of change, including the role of institutional design and adaptation therein.

4. Pro-poor Growth and Social Protection: Macro Dimensions of Generalised Insecurity

Finally, there is the cross-cutting theme which is meant to serve not as a sub-programme in its own right, but as a vehicle to bring together – make a synthesis – across the different sub-programmes, with specific emphasis on coming to grips with the macro dimensions of generalised insecurity.

The reason for this crosscutting theme is to avoid that, as Mkandawire (2004: 3) pointed out, the analysis of social protection becomes confined to sector, project or micro-level activities only. This may lead to a narrow focus on livelihood strategies of individual households or communities without relating these micro-level strategies to macro-level social policies or economic performance. This tendency to ‘projectizing and micro-

¹⁴ See, for example, Harriss-White (2004) on India.

izing' thus leads to a failure "to address the impact of their activities on efficiency in the allocation of resources, their incentive compatibility in largely market economies, or their effects on long-term economic growth" (2004: 3).

Looking at social protection from this wider perspective is meant to counteract the tendency, prevalent within discourses on poverty, to first make a distinction between the "economic' and the 'social', and then to confine issues of economic growth to 'economic policies' and issues of 'social protection' to 'social policy', each kept separate within its own domain, without much exploration of their interactions. The danger is then that strategies for poverty reduction *de facto* are reduced to the simple addition of a core of macro financial economic policies for growth *plus* a wrapping of 'social sectors' and limited social protection. Consequently, the twin concerns this research programme seek to address – namely, how social protection, or the absence thereof, affects the nature of productivity growth, innovation and, hence, economic growth more generally, and, how the latter, in turn, enlarge the space for social protection – are thus rendered obscure.

More specifically, this crosscutting theme seeks to address two dimensions. First, how the condition of generalised insecurity came about in the Tanzanian context – its history and the processes of change it engendered. And, second, an exploration of how and in what forms the re-integration of social and economic policy can aid to overcome their earlier schism which sustains the residual character of social protection and renders generalised insecurity endemic in the workings of the economy and society.

IV. Institutional Setting, Capacity Building Activities and Research Collaboration

The programme on social protection will make use of the different modalities REPOA employs in enlisting and coordinating its various research activities: its *Open Competitive System* where researchers can submit research proposals for funding, (2) its *Commissioned Research*, and (3) its *Collaborative Research* involving joint projects with other research institutions, including from abroad. The programme will cater for both experienced and inexperienced researchers. It is further the intention of this programme to strengthen the linkages between capacity building and research activities at various levels. Collaboration with other institutions will both concern research as well as capacity building.

Each of the three sub-programmes will have an experienced researcher as its coordinator and preferably involve at least two other experienced researchers along with a number of junior or less experienced researchers. Ideally, each of the three programmes should have at its core at least one collaborative research project to enable local researchers to exchange ideas and practices with peers abroad, particularly concerning issues of broader conceptualisation and research methodology.

Capacity building will be mainly directed to enhancing research capabilities of junior researchers. Two different but interrelated sets of training can be envisaged here. The first set of activities has to do with giving researchers a better grasp of the substantive subject matter of the field of social protection in particular, and social policy more generally. The second set of capacity building activities has to do with research methodology in the broad sense, including conceptualisation and research design, and not just with specific research methods more narrowly. The aim is to ensure that the learning process on research methodology is as closely as possible integrated with the actual practice of doing research.

Research Grants Under the Open Competitive System

Researchers are invited to submit a proposal for a research grant under the **Open Competitive System**. Poverty has multi-faceted dimension; using a multi-disciplinary approach to research will produce a well-rounded analytical perspective of a situation; where the inter-related and relevant aspects are duly examined and considered. Many researchers are specialised in one discipline and topic; therefore, in order to promote multi-disciplinary research, REPOA encourages teamwork on the research project. Also, in order to build the research capacity, senior researchers are encouraged to team up with junior researchers. Women researchers are encouraged to apply.

How to Apply for a Research Grant

Any person(s) or organisation may apply for a research grant from REPOA and a proposal can be submitted at any time. Applications for research funds will only be considered if a comprehensive, well thought out proposal is submitted, based on the structure laid out below. The proposal should not be more than 20 pages (Times Roman text size 10).

| | |
|---|---|
| Title Page | The title of your proposal should be clear and concise (one sentence only). |
| Abstract (1-2 pages) | The abstract should summarise the key information from your proposal, including the research's significance and its potential contribution. It is usually the last part of the proposal to be written. |
| Introduction and Background (2-3 pages) | The introduction should set out the background information to the problem to be studied and the context within which it will be studied. It should also show the importance of the issue, and how this research will influence policy-making. |
| Problem Statement and Significance of the Research (1 page maximum) | This section should show the core of the intended research, i.e. what it is that one wants to study or investigate. It must be brief and clear. |
| Research Objectives (1 page or less) | The objectives should state the key objectives of the research and what it is the researcher is trying to accomplish. Research objectives do not include using the results of the research to influence policy. |
| Theoretical Background and Literature Review (6-8 pages) | In this section the researcher should demonstrate a good grasp of the most recent literature on the subject. REPOA has a library specialised in poverty and developmental issues that you may use. The literature review should give a brief description of what is already known in terms of studies done in the area, policy statements and their implications, and an identification of gaps to be studied and filled, both on a theoretical as well as on an empirical level. It should indicate how existing work contributes to the research at hand, and vice versa, how the study at hand moves beyond this existing work. Alternatively, the study could also show how it builds on the experience of others. |
| Methodology and Hypotheses (3-5 pages) | The hypotheses are intended to identify the key variables that the research aims at, and the relationships the researcher expects to find, or not find, between them. The hypotheses should guide the researcher in determining the exact information he/she requires from the fieldwork. In this part, the researcher should also indicate the main research methods and techniques to be used. They have to be consistent with the objectives and they should be described adequately. |
| Policy/Strategy Implications and Feedback | This part should provide information on the intended policy or strategic action implications of the research. It should show how the target group will be involved in and/or benefit from the action resulting from the research. Feedback to the communities and organisations collaborating in the research is also an important element. The proposal should indicate how the feedback to the community and the sharing of information with the stakeholders would be organised. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Researchers and Institutional Attachment | The proposal should include a form summarising the proposal and giving details of the senior researchers involved, including their institutional attachments and CVs and the division of responsibilities within the proposed research project. |
| Timetable | The proposal should include a breakdown of activities and their approximate timing. The timeframe should be realistic, because it will be binding. |
| Budget | Under the Open Competitive System, the maximum budget granted is usually US\$ 20,000, though this amount is not fixed. The cost for the proposed research does not have to reach the budget limit. The grant can cover items such as labour, subsistence, transport, materials and supplies, photocopying and binding, literature, organising seminars or workshops, training of research assistants, pre-testing questionnaires, data coding and analysis, etc. REPOA's research grants do not include capital expenditure of any kind, such as vehicles and computers, nor do they allow for contingency expenses or running costs. REPOA will pay for the publication costs of the final research report. The budget should include the costs involved in feedback, as this is considered to be an important part of a research project. |
| References | All references in the body of the proposal should appear in full at the end. |

Criteria

The following criteria are taken into account when evaluating a proposal for a research grant:

- The proposal's relevance to REPOA's selected themes and sub-themes
- The competence and potential of the researchers
- The technical merit of the proposal
- The relevance of the proposal to practical and policy issues
- The potential for contribution to capacity building

For further guidelines on preparing research proposals, we refer you to Special Paper No. 15: *"Poverty Research in Tanzania: Guidelines for Preparing Research Proposals"* by Dr Brian Cooksey and Dr Servacius Likwelile. This can be obtained from REPOA for Tshs 3,000.

Evaluation Process

Proposals will be first reviewed by REPOA's staff and, if the proposal meets the minimum requirements, it will then be sent to two anonymous and independent consultants. These consultants provide critical and detailed comments on the main components of the proposal. They also use a rating instrument which

summarises their assessment. The instrument grades such aspects as: the title, introduction and background, statement of the problem, objectives, literature review, relevancy and testing ability of the hypotheses, methodology, sampling procedure, data analysis, presentation, bibliography and contribution to the capacity building of junior researchers.

The comments on the reviewed proposal are compiled and presented to the Technical Advisory Committee who makes recommendations on how to proceed to the Board of Directors for their ultimate decision. For those proposals that do not meet the requirements, the researcher will receive the comments of the reviewers for guidance. They will be encouraged to revise the proposal and resubmit. REPOA may also provide guidance on revising the proposal. A revised proposal may be submitted twice.

Those who qualify receive funding to proceed with the research. All draft research reports are reviewed during REPOA's Annual Research Workshop, where the presentations are subject to wide public comment and peer review, followed by technical consultations with experts. The researchers are required to submit a revised final draft of their research report for anonymous review before the work may be published by REPOA.

Proposals for research should be submitted to:

The Executive Director, Research on Poverty Alleviation

157 Mgombani Street, Regent Estate

Phone: (22) 2700083 / 2772556

P.O. Box 33223, Dar es Salaam

Fax: (22) 2775738

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www.repoa.or.tz

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