

## **INVESTIR DANS LA PROTECTION SOCIALE : Un moyen de réduire la pauvreté et l'inégalité**

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L'offre de la protection sociale est importante dans les vies de la majorité des enfants, en particulier ceux qui sont spécialement vulnérables en raison de leur milieu socioéconomique ou la maladie ou le handicap. L'intérêt porté aux politiques et programmes de protection sociale a été en train d'augmenter en Afrique avec une démonstration de l'impact positif dans les pays à bas revenus dans la réduction de la pauvreté et une santé, une nutrition et une éducation améliorées.

Les programmes de protection sociale peuvent compléter et augmenter l'effectivité des investissements dans la santé, l'éducation, l'eau et les installations sanitaires, et ils peuvent également aider à réduire la vulnérabilité des pauvres aux chocs économiques et aux flambées du coût des produits alimentaires. De la perspective des droits des enfants, ces investissements peuvent constituer également des compléments vitaux aux mesures législatives pour protéger les enfants du dénuement.

Pour de nombreux pays à bas revenus en Afrique, l'existence ou non d'initiatives de protection sociale de base, en particulier pour les enfants, peuvent faire la différence à atteindre ou non les Objectifs de Développement du Millénaire (ODM). **Mais il existe une énorme demande non satisfaite de protection sociale en Afrique et elle constitue le secteur le plus négligé dans le continent.**

### **Programmes de Protection Sociale**

La Protection Sociale implique des programmes et des initiatives qui aident à protéger la population contre les risques et la vulnérabilité, atténuer les impacts de chocs et soutenir des personnes qui souffrent d'incapacités chroniques pour assurer des moyens de subsistance de base.

La protection sociale inclue;

- L'assurance sociale (tels que les assurances de santé, de vie et de biens, qui peuvent impliquer des contributions des employeurs et/ou des bénéficiaires)
- L'assistance sociale (telles que les subventions d'argent, de nourriture et des bons)
- Services (tels que les programmes de santé et de nutrition maternelle et des enfants).

Les programmes de protection sociale qui visent les enfants incluent;

- Cash transfers for poor households needing emergency assistance
- Cash transfers for poor households fostering orphan or vulnerable children
- Cash for work for food-insecure and asset-poor households
- Unemployment benefits
- National orphan care programmes
- Child survival projects
- School feeding programmes
- Minimum income for school attendance for poor families with school-age children.

### **Africa's track record in social protection**

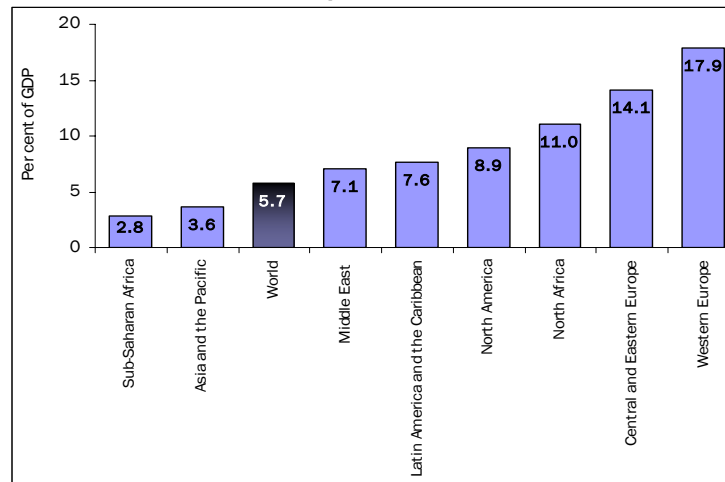
Social protection is the most neglected sector in Africa. Despite increased interest in social protection programmes by governments and donors alike, Africa is still drastically under investing in such initiatives;

- Many countries in Africa spend less than 3% of their GDP on social protection – the lowest among all regions of the world!

Embargoed 7 December 2010 8am GMT

- Unmet social protection needs in Africa remain very high at around 80%<sup>ii</sup>
- But there are a small number of African countries that are committing a relatively high proportion of their resources to social protection including Egypt and Seychelles who are committing almost 12 % of their GDP<sup>iii</sup>
- Economically poor countries such as Ethiopia and Liberia are also investing not insignificant amounts of resources
- South Africa is one of the few countries which provides specific budget information on child-focused social protection programmes. In the 2010/2011 budget South Africa allocated approximately \$US 12 billion to social grants – some 4% of GDP<sup>iv</sup>. Of this, nearly a third is dedicated to child support grants which benefit more than 9 million children below the age of 18<sup>v</sup>.

**Budget expenditure on social protection as per cent of GDP by regions of the world 2004-2007. Africa spends the least.**



Source: Based on data from ILO (2010)

### Short-term relief vs longer term rehabilitation

Social protection schemes in Africa tend to focus mainly on easing urgent problems in the short term, rather than being aimed at ultimately rehabilitating and reducing the vulnerability of the beneficiaries. Where schemes exist, they tend to lack a long-term perspective and in most cases focus on easing immediate problems, rather than providing sustainable support and services over time.

Policy measures aimed at putting in place or strengthening social protection systems can help attain specific MDG targets in education and health, which also help mitigate poverty and vulnerability in the longer term.

### What African governments need to do

- Governments need to align social protection to their policies on education, health, housing and food security
- Sustainable sources of funding need to be developed for social protection
- Mechanisms should be put in place to target beneficiaries effectively
- Reliable data should be collected that can be used to develop effective policies and to monitor progress.

<sup>i</sup> Based on data from International Labour Organization (ILO), 2010

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- <sup>ii</sup> Pal et al (2005), *Can low-income countries afford basic social protection? First results of a modeling exercise*, Issues in Social Protection, Discussion Paper 13, Geneva, International Labour Office
- <sup>iii</sup> Based on data from International Labour Organization (ILO), 2010
- <sup>iv</sup> Gordhan, P. *Budget Speech 2010* delivered by Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance, South Africa
- <sup>v</sup> National Treasury, Republic of South Africa, Medium Term Budget Policy Statement 2009.