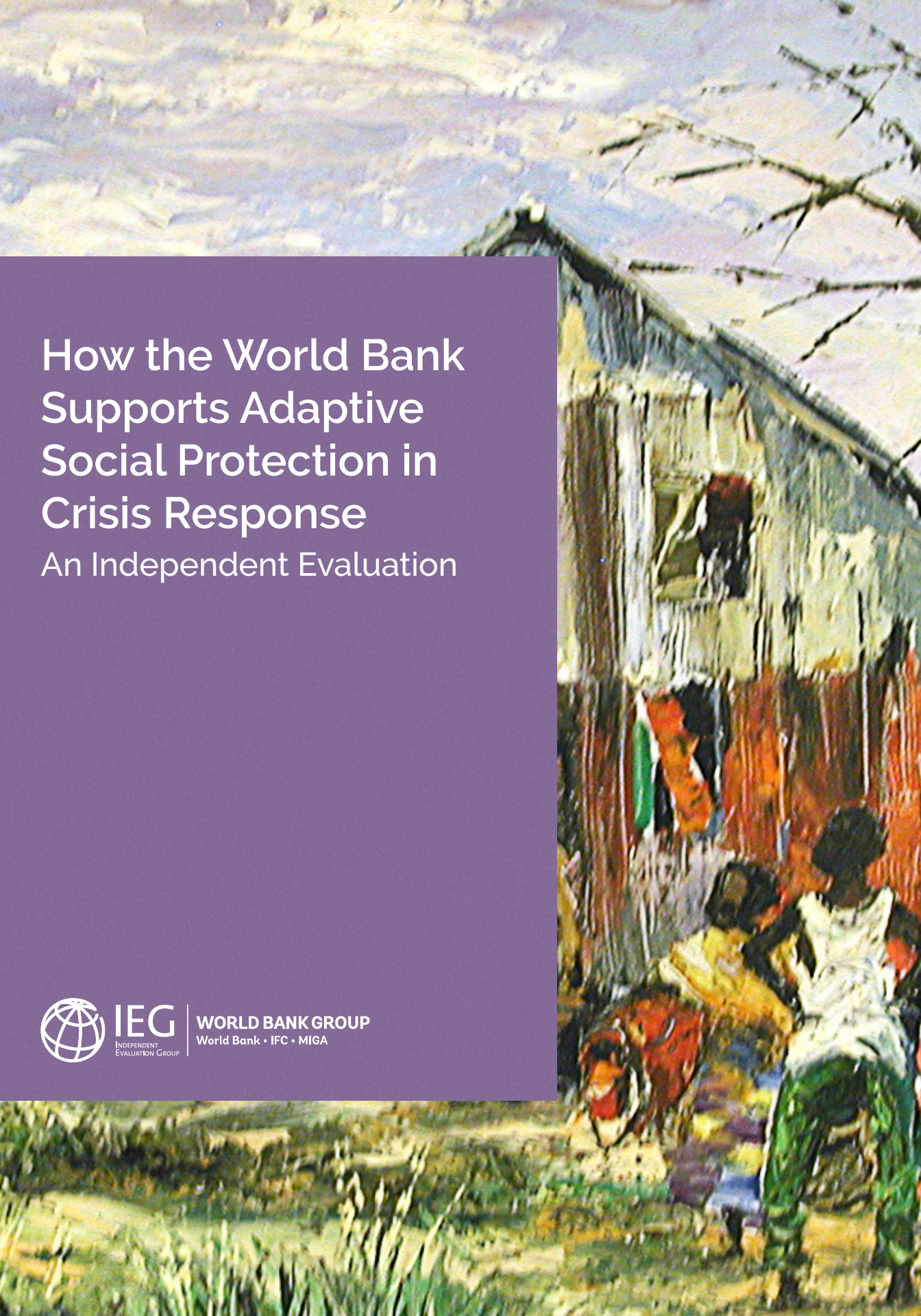
How the World Bank Supports Adaptive Social Protection in Crisis Response

An Independent Evaluation



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Abbreviations

ASA	advisory services and analytics
ASP	adaptive social protection
CAT DDO	catastrophe deferred drawdown option
DPF	development policy financing
DRF	disaster risk financing
DRM	disaster risk management
EWS	early-warning system
IDA	International Development Association
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
MDTF	multidonor trust fund
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PDO	project development objective
PforR	Program-for-Results
SASPP	Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program
SP	social protection
SSN	social safety net
WFP	World Food Programme

All dollar amounts are US dollars unless otherwise indicated.

Acknowledgments

This evaluation was prepared by an Independent Evaluation Group team led by Stuti Sachdeva (evaluation officer) and Rasmus Heltberg (adviser) and was coauthored by Santiago Ramirez Rodriguez (evaluation analyst) and Corinna Kreidler (consultant for the evaluation). The core team included Rosen Asenov (consultant), Thomas Michael Trafalgar Aston (methods consultant), Valentina Barca (adviser), Rodolfo Ignacio Beazley (adviser), Santiago Alejandro Tellez Canas (consultant), Qaiser Khan (adviser), Anna Machado (consultant), and Maria De Las Mercedes Vellez (adviser). Gisela M. Garcia (evaluation officer) and Eduardo Fernandez Maldonado (evaluation officer) were the co-task team leaders for the preparation of the Approach Paper and the first part of the evaluation. The report was prepared under the supervision of Timothy Johnston (manager, Corporate and Human Development) and Theo David Thomas (director, Human Development and Economic Management) and under the overall guidance of Sabine Bernabè (Director General, Evaluation). During the initial phase of the evaluation, Galina Sotirova supervised as the Corporate and Human Development manager.

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Overview

Key Messages

The evaluation focused on the World Bank's support for social protection (SP) systems and these systems' responses to shocks during FY 2012–22.

The World Bank has been a pioneer in conceptualizing such adaptive SP through diagnostics, analytics, and knowledge building.

In countries at high risk of shocks, the World Bank grew its SP lending sharply during the evaluated period, expanding into all Regions and country types and adding much support for adaptive program features in response to COVID-19. This focus was highly relevant for building strong SP systems.

World Bank–supported projects paid strong attention to regular program strengthening but gave inconsistent attention to grounding their designs in countries' institutional arrangements and ensuring predictable financing.

Projects rarely measured the performance of SP systems in response to shocks.

Most countries expanded SP programs to respond to shocks. World Bank–supported vertical expansions were relatively timely, but countries often fell short in delivering adequate shock responses to new beneficiaries because of inaccurate targeting, data system incompatibility, and unpredictable financial resources.

SP systems performed better in slow-onset and recurrent shocks, such as droughts, than in sudden-onset, infrequent shocks, such as earthquakes or tropical storms, because slow-onset shocks have

clearer institutional mandates, more comprehensive information systems, and well-established partnerships.

Mature systems with long-term World Bank support offered more robust shock responses. The World Bank used its contingent and emergency response financing instruments effectively, leading to swift disbursements for shock responses.

The key challenges for adaptive SP involve government commitment—shaped by policymakers' belief and interest in SP, political incentives, presence of champions, and public support—fiscal space, absence of clear institutional mandates for SP, and coherence between SP and disaster risk management.

Shocks and crises pose significant threats to human development, disproportionately affecting poor and vulnerable households. These shocks—whether natural disasters, economic crises, or political upheavals—often force households to resort to negative coping strategies, such as pulling children out of school, selling assets, or going hungry. To address these challenges, social protection (SP) responses need to be tailored to both immediate and long-term needs. Adaptive social protection (ASP) emphasizes the role of SP systems in supporting households and communities in preparing for, responding to, and adapting to various types of shocks. The World Bank Group's approach to ASP has evolved rapidly, becoming a key part of its support to help countries respond to shocks, emphasized in its recently updated Global Crisis Response Framework and Corporate Scorecard, among other initiatives.

Evaluation Scope

This independent evaluation assesses the relevance and effectiveness of the World Bank's support in making SP systems more responsive to shocks through ASP. The evaluation provides evidence-based insights on how World Bank teams have integrated adaptive elements into operations and assesses the performance of these systems in response to shocks and crises. It focuses on social assistance and shock responses at the country level during FY 2012–22.

Overall, this report finds that the World Bank contributed to making SP systems more adaptive to shocks, but the performance of these systems during shocks was often inadequate because of limited financing, political economy challenges, and institutional shortcomings.

Building Adaptive Social Protection Systems

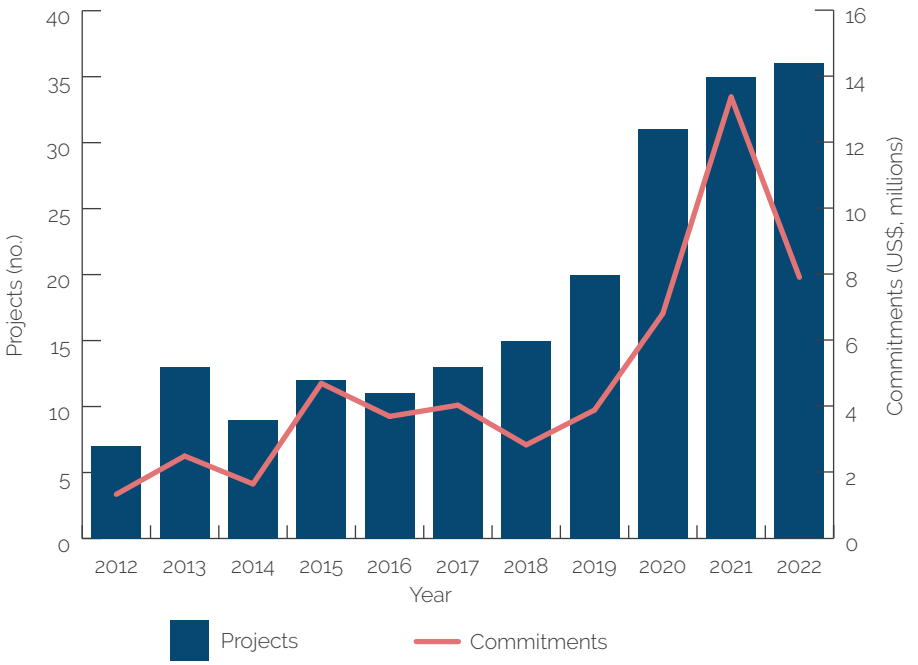
The World Bank has been a pioneer in conceptualizing ASP, significantly contributing through diagnostics, analytics, and knowledge building. The World Bank's ASP framework advanced the conceptual understanding of the field by outlining the spectrum of activities necessary to enable SP systems to contribute effectively to shock responses, while also building consensus among key stakeholders in the development landscape. For example, the

World Bank's stress testing tool supports strategic planning for investments in SP systems to ensure their ability to respond to shocks.

Between FY12 and FY22, the World Bank initiated 155 country-focused advisory services and analytics activities in 40 out of the 70 countries covered by this evaluation. It also engaged in much joint learning with clients and partners.

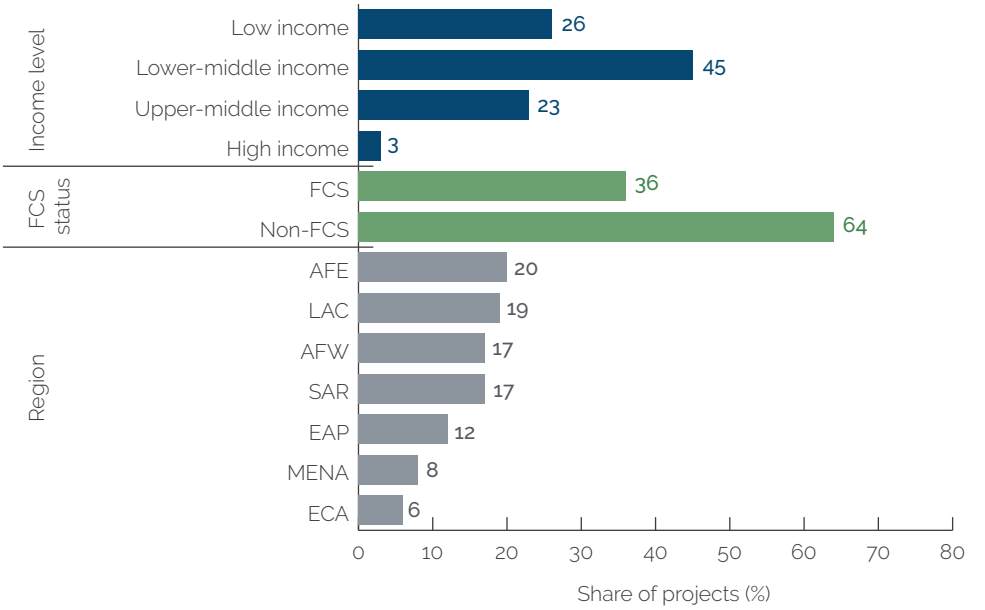
The World Bank expanded its SP lending sharply during the evaluated period, committing $53 billion for operations in 67 out of the 70 high-risk countries selected for this evaluation (figure O.1). The portfolio became truly global, with a significant focus on low- and lower-middle-income countries and countries experiencing fragility, conflict, and violence (figure O.2). The World Bank's support for adaptive and dual-use features of SP grew rapidly, especially in response to COVID-19 (figure O.3). Adaptive features are used solely for shock response, whereas dual-use features are necessary for both regular SP program delivery and shock response.

Figure O.1. The World Bank Sharply Expanded Its Social Protection Lending



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

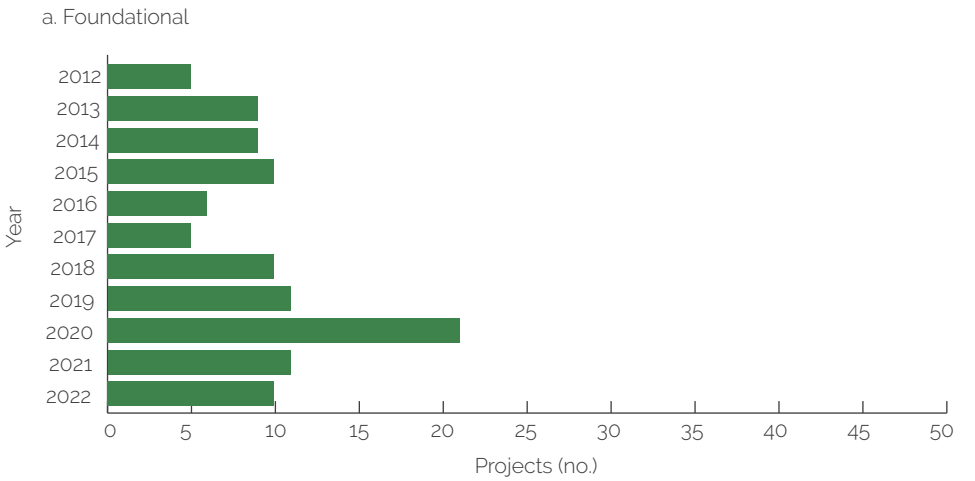
Figure O.2. The World Bank's Social Protection Financing Tilted Toward Low-Income Regions



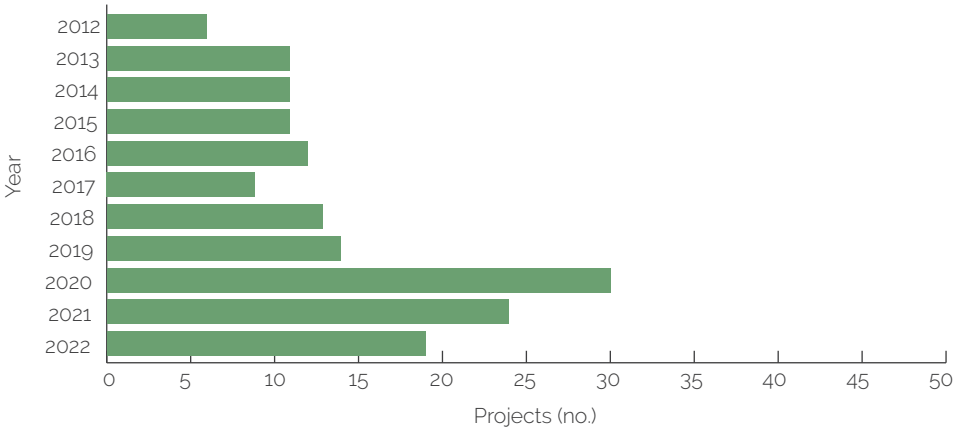
Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: N = 202 projects. AFE = Eastern and Southern Africa; AFW = Western and Central Africa; EAP = East Asia and Pacific; ECA = Europe and Central Asia; FCS = fragile and conflict-affected situations; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA = Middle East and North Africa; SAR = South Asia.

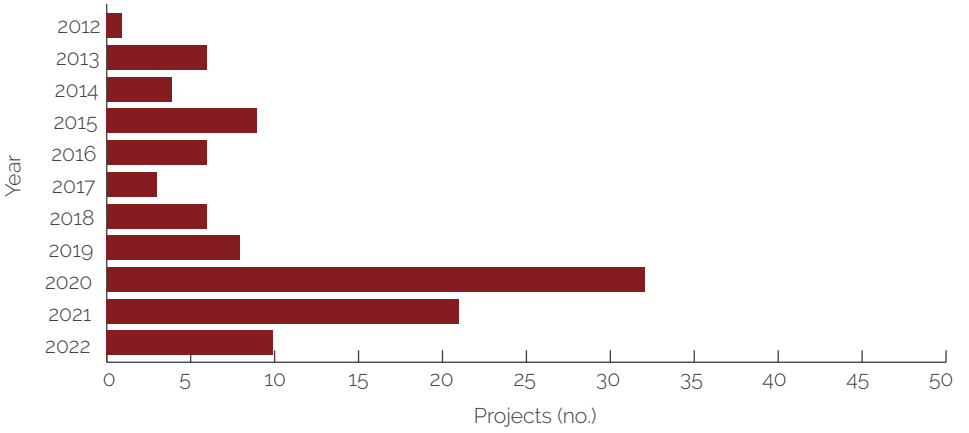
Figure O.3. The World Bank Expanded Investments in Dual-Use and Adaptive Features



b. Dual-use



c. Adaptive



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

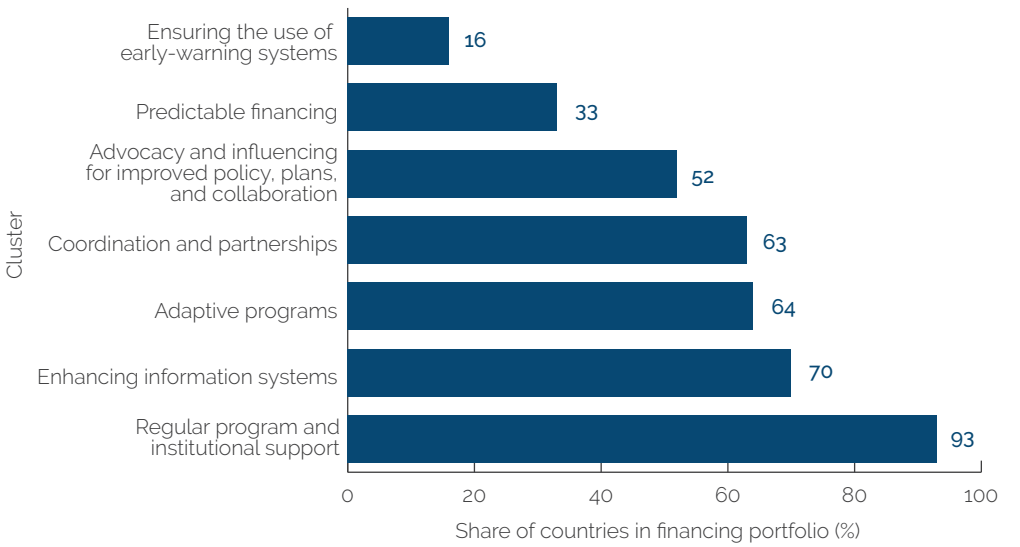
The World Bank's support primarily focused on strengthening regular programs and their management information systems (figure O.4). This focus broadly aligns with recommendations from the literature—readiness and capacity for scaling up SP national systems largely depend on preexisting programs and the robustness of their underlying data and delivery systems. The most frequently supported areas were program enhancements to existing safety net programs, followed by support for enhancing information systems and program expansions. Support for program expansions increased in response to COVID-19 because more than half of the projects approved in FY20 included adding beneficiaries (horizontal expansions), extending the duration of benefits (vertical expansions), or launching emergency programs.

Projects often added these adaptive elements as part of the World Bank's efforts to gradually strengthen SP systems.

The projects did not routinely support policy coherence and cross-sector coordination. SP operations sought to foster institutional links to disaster risk management (DRM) in 12 out of the 67 countries and the use of early-warning systems (EWSs) for setting thresholds or triggering SP responses in 10 out of the 67 countries.

Most cash transfers and public works programs prioritized women as beneficiaries but often lacked the necessary measures to be gender responsive, which means addressing the specific needs of women, or gender transformative, which means actively challenging and changing unequal gender relations. In a subsample of 50 projects, 75 percent were sensitive to gender issues, often in their targeting, but only 6 percent were gender transformative—that is, they aimed to transform unequal gender relations via changes in processes, access, and outcomes. Many projects lacked contextual analyses of the challenges faced by women and girls in project settings.

Figure O.4. Types of Support by Cluster Across Countries



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Triangulating across the evaluation's literature review, portfolio review, and case studies, the evaluation highlights that the World Bank has made

substantial and relevant efforts to address barriers to expanding social safety nets in response to shocks. However, challenges persist, such as incomplete data coverage in social registries and limited work on preplanned risk financing, affecting achievement of optimal results, as detailed in the next section.

Performance When Responding to Shocks

Measurement

Key outcomes of interest include reach, coverage in relation to needs, accuracy of targeting, adequacy of benefits, and timeliness of benefits. Limited measurement of key outcomes restricted the ability of the evaluation to fully assess the performance of SP systems in response to shocks. Regular programs routinely measure the number of beneficiaries reached and some other program outcomes, but few projects measured shock responses.

Outcomes

All 11 evaluation case study countries expanded their programs to respond to shocks at least once during the evaluated period. The World Bank's support for financing program expansions and system strengthening, particularly for data and information systems, helped countries expand safety nets to address shocks.

However, countries often fell short in delivering adequate shock responses. In particular, countries struggled to quickly add new beneficiaries during crises. Coverage rates of affected populations were often below 10 percent—that is, only 10 percent of eligible people in Lebanon were receiving aid, 11 percent of households in the Philippines were reached through the SP system, 8 percent of displaced households in Pakistan were receiving cash for work, and 8 percent of people in the Dominican Republic were supported after a hurricane. Challenges with targeting, data interoperability, and financial readiness hindered program expansions.

At the time of shock, the World Bank used its contingent and emergency response financing instruments effectively to support the ASP portfolio. These instruments led to faster disbursements for SP responses from 2018 onward.

Unfortunately, fast disbursements did not always translate into timely payments to beneficiaries. Untimely payment delivery undermines the effectiveness of safety nets and presents a challenge for both regular and shock response programs. Whereas the evaluation found positive examples during the pandemic, the case studies documented delays of several years in some World Bank–supported shock responses, including in Mozambique and Pakistan. Manual payment processes and the need to contract financial service providers caused the delays.

Systems performed better in slow-onset, recurrent shocks—mostly droughts and recurrent lean seasons—than in sudden-onset shocks for reasons related to mandates, information systems, and partnerships. In slow-onset shocks, EWS helped anticipate the shocks' impacts and locations well ahead; social registries, when they were up-to-date, contained the necessary information; the SP system often had a clear mandate to respond; and there were sometimes preexisting partnerships with humanitarian agencies.

Success Factors and Challenges

Political commitment is necessary to strengthen routine SP and prepare it for shock response. Political commitment also influences the fiscal space and determines the financial resources necessary to sustain countries' commitments to ASP. The absence of sustained political commitment, sometimes linked to concerns about the fiscal sustainability and recurrent nature of such programs, was a major constraint to building adaptable SP systems in several case countries. Consequently, SP is sometimes largely donor funded, and some countries reverted to in-kind assistance outside established SP programs during crises.

The World Bank was able to advance ASP initiatives in countries where political and institutional interests favored cash-based assistance, but it had limited influence when entrenched interests favored in-kind assistance. Funding for shock response, in which the World Bank played a key role, was a strong enabler for building ASP systems and responding to shocks.

The fragmented institutional landscape for SP is a significant barrier to implementing effective ASP. Overlapping mandates and strained interinstitutional relationships within the government hindered the development of

effective ASP in all case studies. The case studies found that the World Bank could have paid more attention to institutional arrangements.

Addressing covariate shocks requires close coordination among central and local government authorities, humanitarian agencies, and development partners. While interagency collaboration among the World Bank, clients, and development partners has improved, often enabled by World Bank staff presence in-country and trust fund resources, some case studies highlight missed opportunities.

The World Bank has made progress on internal collaboration between SP and some other sectors. Collaboration more often focused on payment systems than on ensuring predictable financing and effective integration of SP, DRM, and climate change adaptation. There are barriers to greater coherence between SP and DRM because they each have their own internal logic, intervention types, counterparts, and resources.

Conclusions

This evaluation finds that ASP remains a highly relevant focus area for SP and that the World Bank made significant knowledge and financing contributions that strengthened SP systems. All case study countries were able to expand their safety net programs to respond to various types of shocks. However, countries often fell short in delivering adequate shock responses, struggling to quickly add nonbeneficiaries during crises, sometimes reaching less than 10 percent of those affected by shocks and eligible, for reasons related to financing availability, political economy, and institutional capacity.

Technically, further work is needed to help prepare programs' delivery systems and financing mechanisms to expand and measure the performance of SP systems in response to shocks. Institutionally, progress is needed to navigate countries' institutional landscape, advance policy coherence and interinstitutional collaboration, improve collaboration between SP and DRM staff and agencies, and ensure reliable shock response financing.

This evaluation makes the following recommendations to prepare SP delivery systems for faster and more comprehensive coverage after shocks and to ensure that performance in delivering shock responses is systematically measured:

1. **Continue investing in system building and expanded coverage, focusing on program elements that serve both regular and shock-responsive functions.** This could include the following.

Data and information systems:

» Expanding the coverage of social registries to include vulnerable populations, beyond existing beneficiaries, in both urban and rural areas.

» Linking EWSs with SP systems, with preidentified protocols and thresholds to trigger SP responses during shocks.

Predictable finance:

» Developing and implementing national disaster risk financing strategies that include prearranged funding mechanisms, such as contingency funds and insurance schemes, for more timely financial resources for ASP and to complement the World Bank's emergency financing.

Leveraging more programs for shock response:

» Preparing social insurance, economic inclusion, and labor market programs to contribute to shock responses, aiming for more comprehensive coverage.

2. **Strengthen coordination between client government SP and DRM agencies, improve partnership with humanitarian agencies, and enhance internal collaboration within the World Bank for shock response.** This could include the following.

Client governments:

» Supporting mechanisms for collaboration on shock response between clients' SP and DRM agencies, grounded in improved understanding of agency mandates. The stress test tool could be updated to include recommendations for cross-sector collaboration.

» Ensuring the continuity of SP assistance in fragility, conflict, and violence contexts to foster social cohesion and mitigate some of the adverse effects of conflict, including for forcibly displaced populations.

Humanitarian agencies and partners:

» Strengthening the World Bank's collaboration with humanitarian actors, especially on data, risk analysis, programs, and financing.

» Enhancing cooperation with partner organizations to allow flexibility and continuity of support in fragile contexts, for example via third-party implementation.

World Bank internal:

» Improving internal collaboration among World Bank teams from SP, DRM, and the Prosperity group on EWS, delivery systems, and financial preparedness. Consider incentivizing such collaboration through joint decision-making about trust fund allocations.

3. Enhance the measurement of SP systems' effectiveness in responding to shocks by setting performance targets, monitoring system performance with dynamic stress testing, and using the insights to guide future investments.

Performance targets:

» Define performance targets for shock preparedness and response that depend on SP systems' maturity. This could extend ongoing data collection for the Bank Group Corporate Scorecard on the reach of safety nets to also include coverage, timeliness, and benefit adequacy.

Monitoring:

» Collaborate with partners to conduct periodic stress testing to monitor progress toward strengthened SP systems for shock responses. This would render the existing stress testing tool more dynamic and more collaborative.

Learning over time:

» Use this performance data for knowledge sharing across countries and for discussions of investment priorities, resource needs, and levels of ambition.

Management Response

Management of the World Bank welcomes the Independent Evaluation Group's report *How the World Bank Supports Adaptive Social Protection in Crisis Response* and thanks the team for addressing the comments provided. The evaluation focuses on the World Bank's support for social protection (SP) systems and their responses to shocks during fiscal years 2012–22. The insights provided by the report are valuable and relevant, given the recent target to scale up SP programs to support at least 500 million people by 2030. Management thanks the Independent Evaluation Group team for its continued collaboration.

Overall World Bank Management Response

Management appreciates the evaluation's recognition of the World Bank's strong leadership and pioneering of adaptive approaches to SP, and that the support to adaptive social protection (ASP) in the context of frequent and intense shocks is highly relevant. The evaluation finds that the World Bank has been instrumental in strengthening SP systems through impactful knowledge, financing, and innovative tools, and its ASP framework and stress-testing tool have shaped global discussions and guided system design. Management appreciates the report's recognition of the World Bank's significant expansion of ASP, which accelerated in response to COVID-19, leveraging contingent and emergency financing tools for shock response. The report recognizes that the World Bank provided valuable knowledge and data, conceptual frameworks, technical tools, and financing contributions that helped build and strengthen SP systems with adaptive elements. Management appreciates the report's acknowledgment of the World Bank's expanding portfolio of productive economic inclusion projects over the evaluation period, supported in part by the launch of the Partnership for Economic Inclusion, housed within the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice.

Management welcomes the evaluation's recognition of the World Bank's approach to building productive and economic opportunities (notably for women) and strengthening the climate and disaster risk management

response. As the evaluation recognizes, the original concept of ASP included adaptation to climate change and building household and community resilience. This "ex-ante" investment in resilience was put into practice in the form of productive or economic inclusion and public works programs, many of which introduced a focus on climate change or investing in the natural environment. The report's emphasis on actively challenging and transforming unequal gender relations is welcomed, particularly as teams have increasingly recognized the intersection of gender, fragility, and vulnerability to shocks and disasters in project design and implementation. Management notes that the report's focus on the ASP's role in responding to shocks could be balanced by emphasizing the ASP's strong role in preparedness and building resilience. Management further highlights the ASP's relevance to the World Bank's adaptation targets and its potential to mitigate the distributional impacts of major transitions, such as digital, demographic, and green transformations.

Recommendations

Management welcomes and agrees with the recommendations, which align closely with the state of practice in the World Bank's country operations.

Management agrees with the first recommendation to continue investing in system building and expanded coverage by focusing on program elements that serve both regular and shock-responsive functions. Management notes that improvements in social registries need complementary foundational investments across the SP delivery chain, such as management information systems, grievance redress mechanisms, communications strategies, and outreach. Management is pleased to highlight significant innovations that help build SP systems and expand coverage, including the roll-out of the Social Protection Stress Test Tool in over 50 countries, the launch of Preparedness Plans for Food and Nutrition Security, and the launch of the Social Protection Assessment Resource Kit for Systems. On the Financing and Crisis Response, the SP investments need complementary financing tools to build preparedness and resilience. The World Bank is funding SP responses using the World Bank expanded Crisis Toolkit, the International Development Association Crisis Response Window, and the Global Shield Financing Facility.

Management agrees with the second recommendation to strengthen coordination between the client government, SP institutions, and disaster risk management agencies. This includes enhancing cooperation with partner organizations to allow flexibility and continuity of support in fragile and conflict-affected situations. With increasing frequency and intensity of shocks—from natural disasters to forced displacement—strengthening SP systems is highly pertinent for client countries and development partners. This is critical for supporting the most vulnerable populations in the immediate aftermath of a crisis, especially given the lag in development responses. Management notes that ASP has been a central component of the World Bank's support in such crises, and the World Bank's teams are operationalizing this approach to support government-led systems in fragile and conflict-affected situations and engaging with external partners when relevant.

Management agrees with the third recommendation to enhance the measurement of SP systems' effectiveness in responding to shocks. Key focus areas include setting performance targets, conducting dynamic stress testing to monitor system performance, and using the resulting insights to inform future investments. Management is pleased to report that most of the indicators proposed in the recommendation, such as adequacy, targeting, and timelines, have already been tackled by client systems and through the progress in data strengthening under the Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity, which curates data, including information to measure shock response performance. There is an ongoing collaboration between the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice and the Poverty Global Practice. Ensuring cost-effective and timely monitoring requires high-frequency household survey systems. The Poverty Global Practice's Real-Time Monitoring program includes several ongoing initiatives that support such data collection efforts. Management welcomes the focus on enhancing the effectiveness of SP systems through more precise performance targets and stronger monitoring, and emphasizes the complementary role of knowledge and learning, which are key elements of the World Bank's engagement that have proven impactful in responding to shocks and crises and in understanding effectiveness.

1 | Introduction

Shocks and crises pose significant threats to human development. These shocks—whether natural disasters, economic crises, or political upheavals—disproportionately affect poor and vulnerable households because they lack resources to prepare for, cope with, or adapt to them. Within households, women and children are the worst hit as households often resort to negative coping strategies, such as pulling children out of school, selling assets, or going hungry.

Adaptive social protection (ASP) emphasizes the role of social protection (SP) systems in supporting households and communities in preparing for, responding to, and adapting to various types of shocks. ASP emphasizes the role of SP systems—social safety nets, social insurance, and labor market programs—in protecting people's well-being and preventing them from falling into poverty as a result of shock impacts. To do so, ASP should work alongside disaster risk management (DRM) and humanitarian assistance. While different actors have used different terminologies over time to refer to ASP, it is mostly for reasons of historical legacy rather than vastly different conceptualizations, according to the evaluation's literature review. The concept has been referred to as "shock-responsive SP," "risk-informed SP," and "shock sensitive," among others.

The World Bank Group's approach to ASP has advanced rapidly and become a key part of its responses to shocks. The World Bank's strategic shift from program-based to system-based approaches over the past 10 years has been central to its work on ASP. This evolution is reflected in the World Bank's social protection and labor strategy for 2012–22 (World Bank 2012), which emphasizes system-based approaches, coordination among sectors, and strong government leadership. The strategy also notes the increasing use of noncontributory cash transfers and cash in humanitarian responses, while highlighting the risks of parallel structures emerging without sufficient government involvement. World Bank initiatives such as the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program (SASPP), launched in 2014; the 2018 South-South Learning Forum;

the 2022 report *Charting a Course Towards Universal Social Protection: Resilience, Equity, and Opportunity for All* (World Bank Group 2022); and more recently the *State of Social Protection Report 2025: The 2-Billion-Person Challenge* (World Bank 2025) have helped inform the World Bank's approach to ASP, focusing on building household resilience and improving the responsiveness of SP systems after a shock. In 2022, the Bank Group adopted the Global Crisis Response Framework that reinforces the importance of additional investments in ASP as integral to its operational response to the multiple overlapping crises and food insecurity.

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the performance of the World Bank's SP contributions in shock-prone countries. It covers World Bank lending operations with SP elements for countries at high risk of shocks approved during FY 2012–22. The Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) chose this period to align with the World Bank's 2012–22 social protection and labor strategy. IEG conducted this evaluation at the request of the Board of Executive Directors to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the World Bank's support to help country clients make their SP systems more shock responsive. The evaluation responds to the need for better crisis preparedness and system strengthening, as outlined in current World Bank strategies. It provides evidence-based insights on how operations have strengthened SP systems before crises and how adaptive elements have been integrated into operations, examines the utility of the World Bank's ASP framework in diverse contexts, and assesses the performance of these systems in response to shocks and crises, including COVID-19. The evaluation aims to enhance learning and inform future World Bank support for ASP systems that are inclusive, efficient, and responsive to various shocks, while also fostering long-term development and social stability.

Evaluation Theory and Methods

The evaluation answers the following questions:

» To what extent has the World Bank support for ASP been relevant?

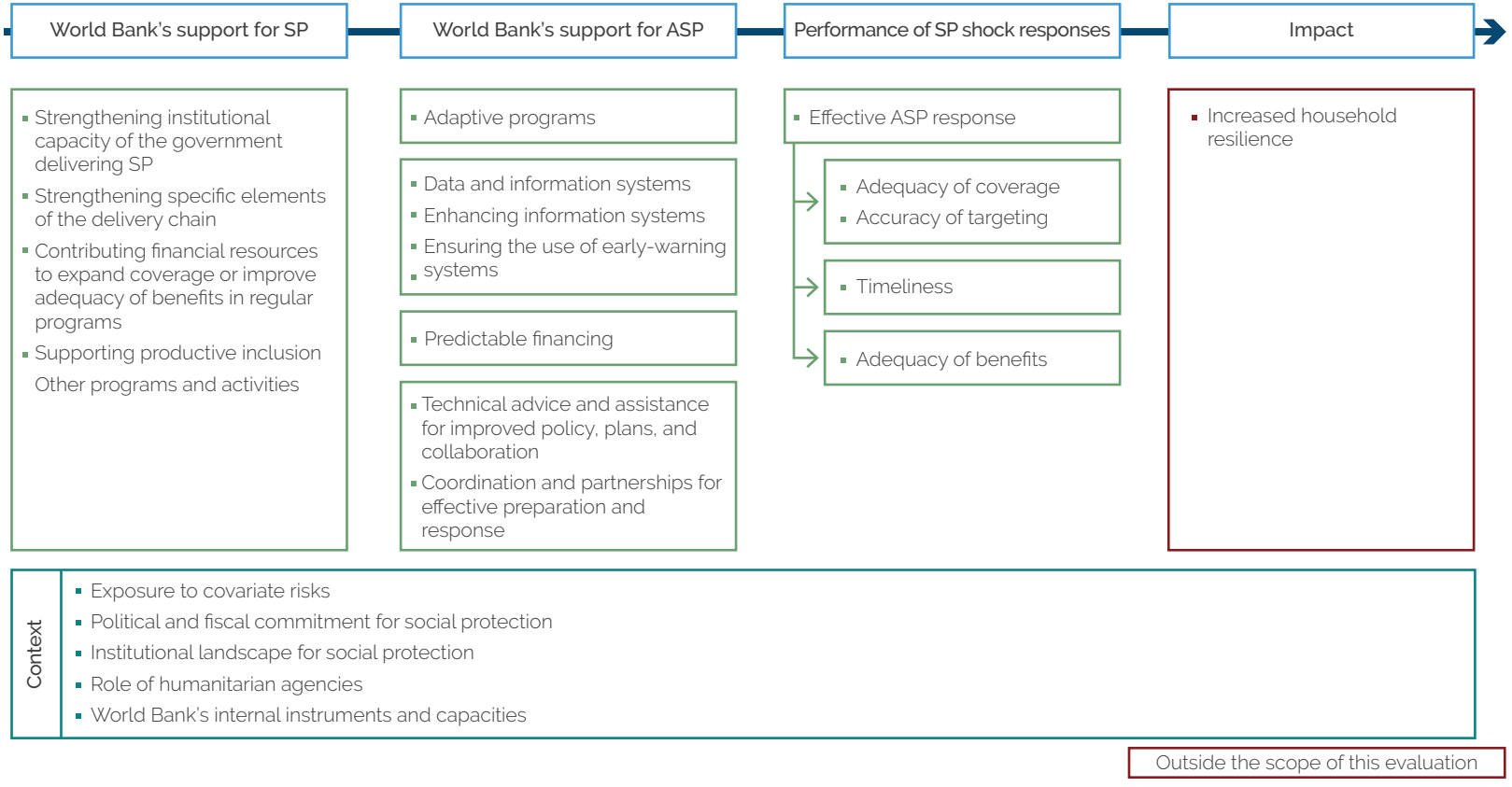
- To what extent has the World Bank supported ASP elements in countries where vulnerability to covariate shocks is higher?
- To what extent has the World Bank incorporated ASP elements into its SP support, and to what extent are these aligned with good practice and evidence of what works?
- To what extent is the World Bank ASP framework a realistic model in different settings?

- How effectively has the World Bank supported ASP outcomes (timeliness and adequacy of SP response) in client countries?
  - How effective has the World Bank's support been for ASP practices and activities?
  - What has worked to achieve successful ASP outcomes in client countries? What factors explain success, and what was the role of the World Bank?

The evaluation portfolio included all lending operations in 70 high-risk countries where the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice is either a leading or contributing Global Practice. This encompassed 202 projects and $52.6 billion in commitments approved between FY12 and FY22. Because of the nature of the catastrophe deferred drawdown option (CAT DDO), all such operations approved during the evaluation period in these high-risk countries were also included in the portfolio, regardless of the involvement of any specific Global Practice.

IEG adopted a theory-based and consultative approach to guide its assessment. IEG developed a conceptual framework (figure 1.1) based on the World Bank's ASP framework (Smith and Bowen 2020), a structured literature review, a review of relevant IEG evaluations, and consultations with ASP experts. The evaluation team engaged with a diverse set of internal stakeholders and external players for triangulation purposes, ensuring thorough analysis, appropriate sampling, and a variety of insights on the findings. These included World Bank management, project teams, country units, technical experts, government representatives, donors, development partners, United Nations agencies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Figure 1.1. Conceptual Framework



Source: Independent Evaluation Group.Note: ASP = adaptive social protection; SP = social protection.

1. IEG developed a classification scheme of foundational and adaptive activities based on the World Bank's original ASP framework. Support for ASP occurs within regular SP systems and as such is hard to delimit. While the framework helped articulate the ASP concept, the evaluation built on it to assess operationalization of it in the World Bank's support. The process involved using the preliminary coding of the portfolio, pilot case studies, and multiple consultations with technical experts to identify areas of support relevant for ASP. The ASP framework articulates four building blocks—programs, data, finance, and institutional arrangements and partnerships—which the evaluation recast into 24 support activities grouped in seven clusters. These clusters reflect the common types of activities found in the World Bank's support to social assistance (table 1.1). IEG used this classification to distinguish among the following:

2. Foundational activities that support the core SP system and are only focused on the delivery of the regular SP program (reflecting preparedness).

3. Adaptive activities that focus only on the use of SP as a shock response and would not be necessary for the delivery of the regular SP program.

Dual-use, both foundational and adaptive, activities that support elements of the SP system that are useful and necessary for the delivery of the regular SP program and the use of SP as a shock response. This is a large category because strong foundations are key for systems' ability to adapt and respond to shocks.

Table 1.1. Cluster Framework

Building Blocks in World Bank ASP Framework	Cluster	Types of Support
Programs	Regular program and institutional support	‡Strengthening institutional capacity of the government delivering social protection
		‡Strengthening specific elements of the delivery chain
		*Contributing financial resources to expand coverage or improve adequacy of benefits in regular programs
		*Supporting productive inclusion
	Adaptive programs	†Designing and funding new programs and vertical and horizontal expansions
Data	Enhancing information system	‡Strengthening institutional capacity for data systems and improving data collection and analysis quality
		‡Promoting the use of social registry
		‡Promoting an integrated beneficiary registry function
		‡Supporting interoperability with other databases
		†Supporting vulnerability assessment tools
	Ensuring the use of early-warning systems	*Strengthening institutional capacity and improving data collection and the quality of the data analysis
		†Promoting the use of early-warning systems as a trigger for shock response

(continued)

Building Blocks in World Bank ASP Framework	Cluster	Types of Support
Programs	Regular program and institutional support	‡Strengthening institutional capacity of the government delivering social protection
		‡Strengthening specific elements of the delivery chain
		*Contributing financial resources to expand coverage or improve adequacy of benefits in regular programs
		*Supporting productive inclusion
	Adaptive programs	ŧDesigning and funding new programs and vertical and horizontal expansions
Data	Enhancing information system	‡Strengthening institutional capacity for data systems and improving data collection and analysis quality
		‡Promoting the use of social registry
		‡Promoting an integrated beneficiary registry function
		‡Supporting interoperability with other databases
		ŧSupporting vulnerability assessment tools
	Ensuring the use of early-warning systems	*Strengthening institutional capacity and improving data collection and the quality of the data analysis
		ŧPromoting the use of early-warning systems as a trigger for shock response

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: * (green) = foundational activities; ŧ (red) = adaptive activities; ‡ (yellow) = both foundational and adaptive, or dual-use, activities; § (black) = activity is not part of the ASP framework. ASP = adaptive social protection.

IEG used a mixed methods approach to answer the evaluation questions at the global, portfolio, and country levels:

- At the global level, the evaluation team conducted a structured literature review to identify best practices in ASP and compare them with World Bank strategies. They also interviewed World Bank staff and global experts.
- At the portfolio level, the team carried out a systematic analysis of 202 lending projects in 67 high-risk countries, totaling $52.6 billion in commitments. They also analyzed 189 advisory services and analytics (ASA) projects amounting to $184 million. The analysis aimed to categorize World Bank support into clusters, identify factors affecting the effective delivery of shock responses, and assess the extent to which key outcomes of interests are measured at the project level.
- At the country level, the team conducted 11 country case studies, 6 of which involved field visits. The case studies considered various types of shocks and the maturity of SP systems to assess the World Bank's support for preparedness and shock response. Additionally, the evaluation team conducted a targeted regional review of SASPP.

The evaluation faced some evidence limitations. First, the evaluation primarily focused on social assistance programs, in particular cash transfers. This is in line with the World Bank's ASP framework and the bulk of its efforts during the evaluation period but limited the evaluation's ability to compare the relative effectiveness of different types of shock responses, such as social assistance, social insurance, and in-kind assistance. The evaluation focused on shock responses rather than SP's role in helping households exit poverty and build long-term resilience as shown in figure 1.1. Second, existing tools and indexes used to assess SP system maturity and risk levels are imprecise, with incomplete databases and a limited ability to make valid cross-country comparisons. The evaluation addressed this issue by complementing the Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity data set with data from the World Bank's stress tests of country systems. Third, the evaluation often depended on self-reported activities in project documents—that is, unreported activities often could not be captured in the analysis. Last, the evaluation's scoping primarily included projects led or co-led by the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice, which may have resulted in underreporting activities related to the cluster on predictable

or preplanned financing, as such initiatives are often led by other Global Practices within the World Bank.

Evaluation Message and Outline

Overall, this evaluation finds that the World Bank contributed to making SP systems more adaptive to shocks, but the performance of these systems during shocks was often inadequate because of limited financing, political economy challenges, and institutional shortcomings.

Chapter 2 reviews the World Bank's contributions to strengthening SP systems and making them more adaptive to shocks. Chapter 3 assesses the performance of the World Bank–supported SP systems during shocks. Chapter 4 reviews the challenges that undermined the World Bank's ASP efforts and the factors that explain their successes. Chapter 5 concludes and recommends actions to strengthen the World Bank's support for ASP.

2 | Contributions to Adaptive Social Protection Systems

Highlights

- The World Bank was a pioneer in conceptualizing adaptive social protection through its diagnostics, analytics, and knowledge-building contributions.
- World Bank social protection lending grew sharply in high-risk countries during the evaluated period, expanding into all Regions and country types and adding many adaptive features.
- The World Bank's increased focus on low-income, lower-middle-income, and fragile countries; its efforts to integrate adaptive elements into foundational social protection programs; and its work to address barriers to expanding social safety nets during shocks were highly relevant.
- The World Bank–supported projects consistently emphasized regular program strengthening but paid inconsistent attention to aligning their design in countries' institutional frameworks and ensuring that resources required to respond were in place.
- Most cash transfers and public works programs prioritized women as beneficiaries but often lacked supporting measures to foster deeper gender results.

This chapter assesses the World Bank's knowledge and financing contributions to making SP systems more adaptive to shocks. It begins by examining the World Bank's contributions to the conceptual foundations of ASP. It then explores its knowledge support, followed by an in-depth analysis of its financing support, which includes the World Bank's types of programmatic and operational support and its efforts in removing barriers to effective ASP and addressing gender-related challenges. It finds that this work has been relevant and grounded in solid diagnostics but could have more consistently aligned with countries' institutional landscapes.

Conceptual Contributions

The World Bank's ASP framework and its four building blocks advanced the conceptual understanding of ASP (see chapter 1). The framework outlines the spectrum of activities necessary to strengthen and enable SP systems to contribute effectively to shock responses, eventually building household resilience. The framework acknowledges that different types of covariate shocks affect households in unique ways, suggesting the need for tailored policy and programmatic responses. Nevertheless, the building blocks provide a solid basis for a structured approach to advancing ASP across various covariate shocks. World Bank knowledge products and diagnostics, including its stress test tool, frequently refer to the framework's four building blocks (described in table 1.1). The framework aligns well with those of other actors and embodies a shared vision that SP systems can play a crucial role in supporting households and communities in preparing for, responding to, and adapting to diverse types of shocks and stresses, working alongside the DRM and humanitarian sectors. However, the framework focuses on social assistance and does not consider the role of social insurance and labor market interventions in responding to shocks.

The World Bank's tool for stress testing SP systems supported policy dialogues. The tool was designed to assess the resilience and effectiveness of an SP system under various adverse conditions. Before the tool's introduction, identifying gaps in crisis preparedness and determining the scale of effort required for SP systems to effectively respond to various shocks were challenging. The tool enables countries to assess their programs and prioritize investments in specific areas of SP systems that will improve their shock

responsiveness (World Bank 2021a). So far, it has been applied in 42 countries. Key informants at the global level praised the tool's implementation process but noted that results are static snapshots. They emphasized the importance of promoting the use of such tools, either in whole or in part, to monitor progress regularly.

Knowledge Support

The World Bank was a prolific producer of analytics. Between FY12 and FY22, it initiated 155 country-focused ASA activities in 44 out of the 70 countries covered by this evaluation. These activities fully or partially focused on ways to make SP systems adaptive (box 2.1).

The World Bank engaged in joint learning with clients and partners. The World Bank supported joint learning initiatives, knowledge exchange, and South-South learning—bringing together stakeholders from different countries—in at least 26 percent of the portfolio countries. Evaluation interviews showed appreciation for joint learning and study tours. Trust funds were essential for these learning activities. For example, the SASPP trust fund finances a regional platform that promotes research, coordination, knowledge sharing, and learning across six countries. While much knowledge generation was collaborative, the World Bank at times also competed with other key actors over primacy in the space, according to the interviews and literature.

The World Bank used ASA to inform operations how to design for shock responsiveness. The evaluation team identified 24 ASA—valued at $24 million—that were tied to 20 investment project financing or Program-for-Results (PforR) operations, 15 percent of the portfolio's total. Out of $24 million, $2.9 million were financed through trust funds. Key themes of these ASA included building resilient systems, supporting early-warning systems (EWSs) and disaster financing strategies, improving data and social registries, and fostering gender inclusion. Out of 24 ASA, 16 financed impact evaluations, focusing on assessing regular programs' effectiveness, analyzing specific program components, and evaluating targeting mechanisms to ensure inclusivity. In general, these evaluations aimed to enhance impact, targeting, and evidence-based policy making of SP systems. Among the 16 ASA supporting impact evaluations, at most 4 ASA were on shock responses,

focusing on the impact of health insurance programs on household resilience to shocks and assessing different shock responses. This aligns with the findings of an unpublished note from the Development Impact Evaluation that highlights the scarcity of impact evaluation evidence on ASP.

Box 2.1. Areas and Subareas of Support in Advisory Services and Analytics

Integrated support for strengthening adaptive social protection (ASP) systems includes system assessments and diagnostics with follow-up capacity building; just-in-time technical assistance for design, implementation, and evaluation of ASP systems and programs; policy dialogue; and collaboration and coordination with technical and financial partners. This integrated support was sometimes tailored to specific vulnerable groups (for example, support to gender-smart ASP or attention to the needs of people with disabilities).

Support for improving specific shock-responsive elements includes design and implementation of emergency cash transfers, proof-of-concept activities for disaster risk management and decision support tools, reports on financial resilience against natural disasters, and support to disaster financing strategies and disaster insurance.

Diagnostics and assessments include climate and health stress tests of social protection systems, estimation of welfare impacts of shocks, impact evaluations of social safety net programs, and social protection expenditure analyses.

Dialogue, coordination, or strategies include advisory services and analytics activities that seek to strengthen synergies among the social protection and labor and disaster risk management and health sectors within the World Bank, activities that exclusively support experience sharing and learning on ASP, and activities that support only ASP strategies.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio analysis.

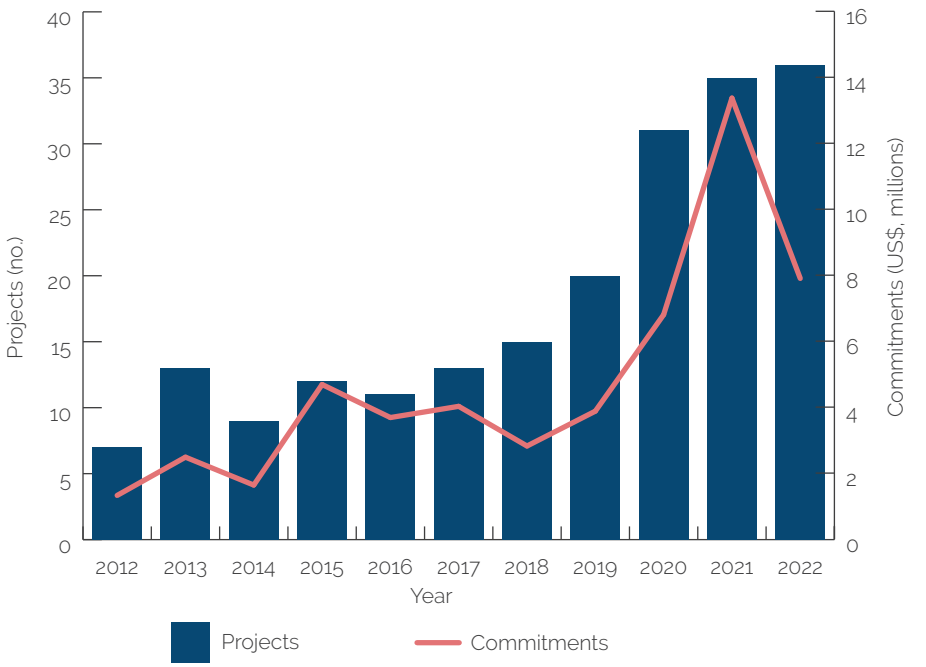
The ASA tied to operations helped scale up ASP and enhance program design. For example, in Burkina Faso, the World Bank evaluated an innovative approach that integrated cash, health, and behavioral change within a cash transfer program. In Lebanon, the ASA helped shift the focus of a project from a poverty graduation pilot to studying refugee-host dynamics. In Haiti, studies assessed readiness of

the SP system, recommending harmonization of programs and improvements in disaster response. Some ASA helped projects identify gender-focused activities (for example, on economic inclusion for women, gender-based violence prevention and response, and monitoring and evaluation of gender outcomes).

Financing Support

The World Bank sharply expanded its SP financing. The evaluation identified 202 operations in 67 out of 70 high-risk countries selected for this evaluation led or co-led by the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice, as well as CAT DDOs during the period. The World Bank committed $53 billion for these operations between FY12 and FY22, for all purposes, not only ASP. Commitments grew sharply after FY19 in response to COVID-19 and other shocks (figure 2.1). There is little doubt that the World Bank's financing contributed to the much-needed resources. Countries' SP systems are often underfunded, resulting in undercoverage, low benefits, limited diversity of services to address differential needs, and few resources for shock responses (ILO 2021).

Figure 2.1. The World Bank Sharply Expanded Its Social Protection Lending

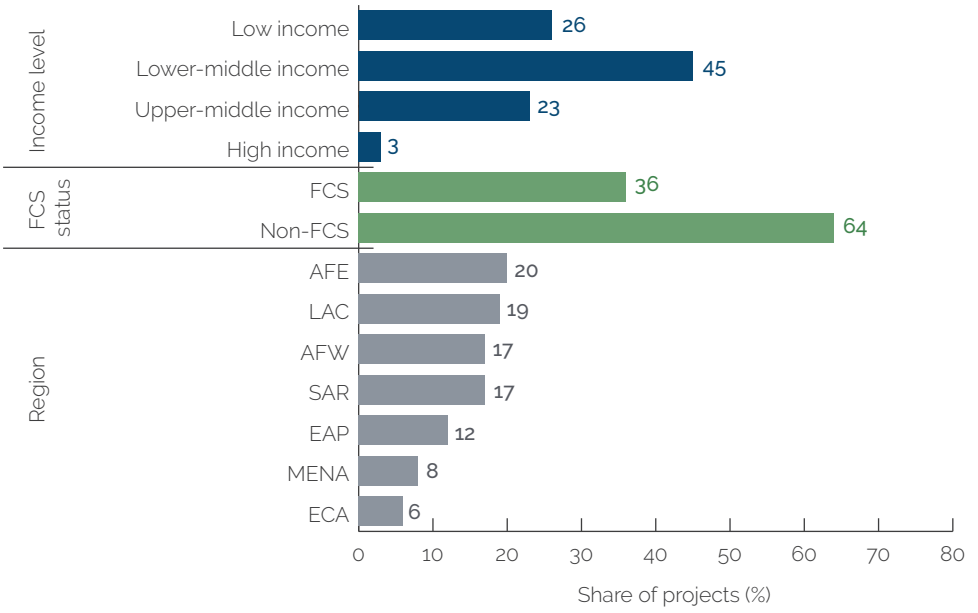


Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: The graph includes the evaluation portfolio, the selection of which is described in appendix A.

The SP portfolio shifted toward low-income regions during the period. An IEG evaluation found that the World Bank's work on social safety nets (SSNs) tilted toward more advanced regions of the developing world and recommended more focus on lower-income countries (World Bank 2011). By FY22, the World Bank had provided financing for SP in all regions and in countries at all income levels. The evaluated portfolio tilted toward low-income regions with 27 percent of projects in low-income countries, 46 percent in lower-middle-income countries, and 36 percent in countries classified as fragile and conflict-affected situations (figure 2.2). The bulk of this portfolio was in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia, with less concentration in East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and Middle East and North Africa.

Figure 2.2. The World Bank's Social Protection Financing Tilted Toward Low-Income Regions



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: N = 202 projects. AFE = Eastern and Southern Africa; AFW = Western and Central Africa; EAP = East Asia and Pacific; ECA = Europe and Central Asia; FCS = fragile and conflict-affected situations; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA = Middle East and North Africa; SAR = South Asia.

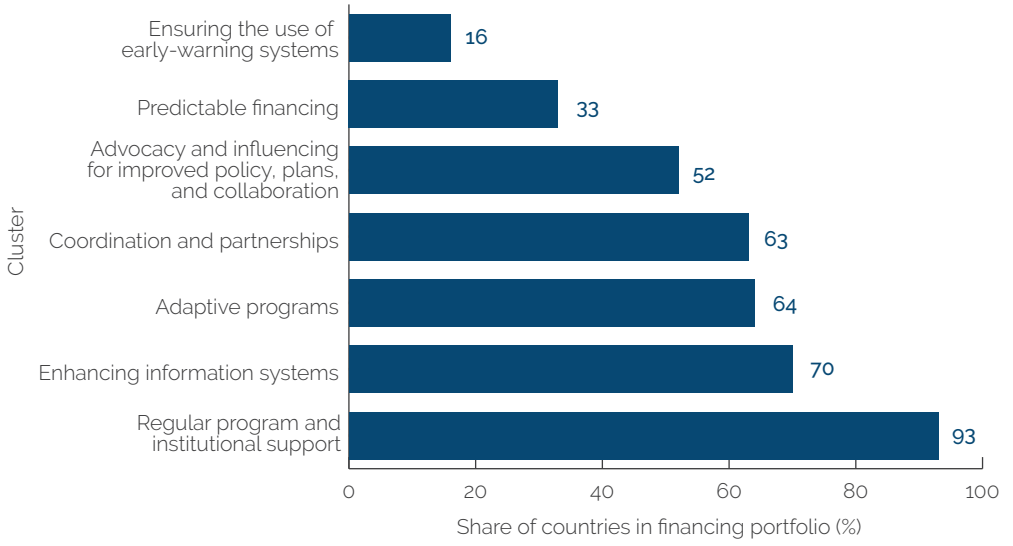
Programmatic and Operational Support

Strengthening regular social assistance programs and their information systems were the most common types of World Bank support. The original concept of ASP included adaptation to climate change and building household and community resilience. In practice, the World Bank has focused largely on enhancing social assistance programs' ability to respond to different types of shocks. Figure 2.3 shows that the most frequently supported areas were enhancements of various types of safety net programs, done in 93 percent of the portfolio's countries. This aligns with the recommendations of IEG's *Social Safety Nets: An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 2000–2010* (World Bank 2011) and the ASP framework, which highlights existing SP systems to be the cornerstones for building household resilience. This was followed by support for enhancing information systems in 70 percent of the countries; support for adaptive programs (that is, program expansions in response to shocks) in 64 percent of the countries; and coordination and partnerships in 63 percent of the countries. The least frequently supported areas in the portfolio were EWS and predictable financing (that is, ensuring that resources required to respond were in place). These projects supported many types of safety nets (figure 2.4), social insurance, and labor market programs, but, as mentioned in chapter 1, this evaluation focused on the operations' support for social assistance.

Support for adaptive and dual-use features of SP grew rapidly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (figure 2.5). Adaptive features focus only on the use of SP as a shock response for all types of covariate shocks, including natural disasters, and would not be necessary for the delivery of the regular SP program. Dual-use features are useful and necessary for both the delivery of the regular SP program and the use of SP as a shock response and are thus a broad category. This includes the World Bank's support to program expansions that jumped from FY20 onward in response to COVID-19. More than half of projects approved in FY20 supported adding new beneficiaries (horizontal expansions), adding benefits, or extending benefits' duration (vertical expansions) or launched emergency programs, compared with about 30 percent between FY12 and FY19. The addition of such adaptive elements was often part of the World Bank's support for gradually strengthening SP systems. For example, in Djibouti, the World Bank helped develop a flexible SP system with

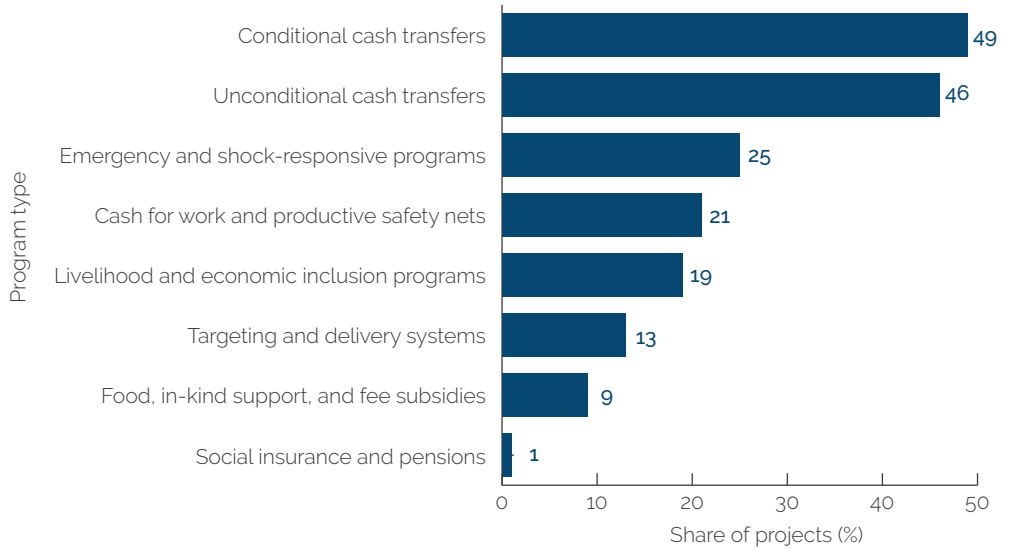
cash-for-work programs to address drought-induced food insecurity and later reinforced these systems to rapidly respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

Figure 2.3. Types of Support by Cluster Across Countries



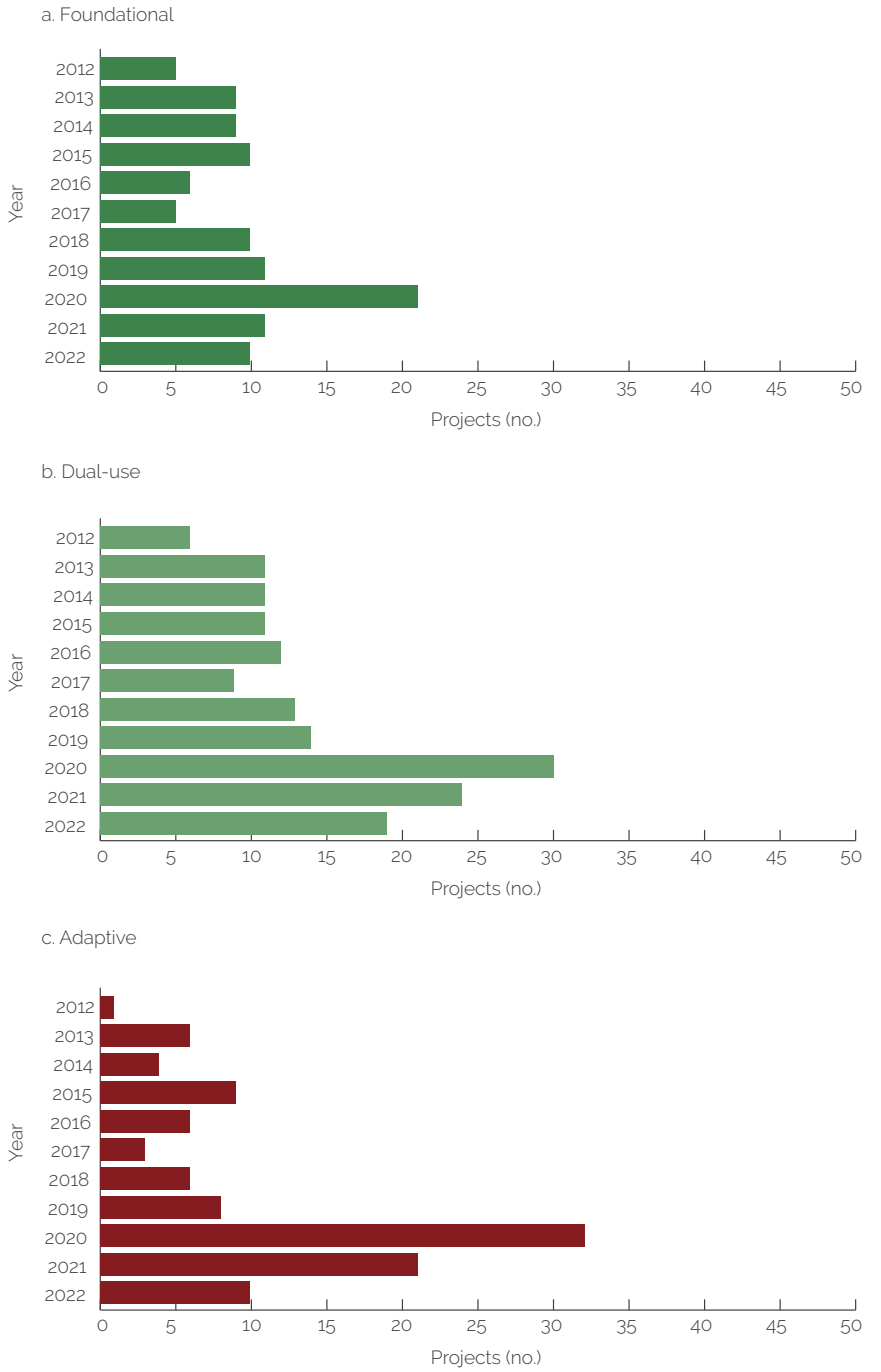
Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Figure 2.4. Many Types of Safety Nets Are Represented in the Evaluation Portfolio



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Figure 2.5. The World Bank's Expanded Investments in Dual-Use and Adaptive Features



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Delivery chain strengthening and program financing were the most frequently supported subclusters (figure 2.6). In most countries (58 out of 67 in the portfolio), the World Bank supported strengthening the delivery chain of regular programs—that is, management information systems, payment systems, targeting, outreach to communities, grievance redress mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation systems. This type of support is the main feature of much SP investment project financing and PforR lending and is coded as "dual use" in figure 2.5 because it is critical for programs' functioning in both normal times and when responding to different covariate shocks. The World Bank supported expansion of regular programs with financing for coverage expansions or benefit increased in 50 out of 67 countries with SP support. The World Bank supported adaptive program expansions in 43 out of 67 countries via designing or financing horizontal expansions, vertical expansions, or new emergency programs.

In addition, the World Bank frequently invested in enhancing information systems and promoting stakeholder coordination. The World Bank supported the strengthening of information systems in 70 percent of the 67 portfolio countries, often through social registries, integrated beneficiary registries, and pre- and postshock assessment tools. The World Bank–supported projects facilitated coordination, learning, or knowledge exchanges in 63 percent of these countries.

The World Bank–supported programs used different targeting mechanisms, most frequently proxy means testing and community-based targeting. Some programs used hybrid methods (box 2.2). The evaluation found quite few examples of shock-responsive targeting. For example, Niger used drought early-warning indicators to trigger cash transfers, and many countries used categorical targeting to respond to earnings losses resulting from COVID-19 lockdowns. Project documents occasionally mentioned capacity building for better targeting mechanisms or focused on accuracy of targeting.

Figure 2.6. Country Coverage Across Clusters and Subclusters

Subcluster	Regular program and institutional support	Adaptive programs	Enhancing information systems	Ensuring the use of early-warning systems
Strengthening specific elements of the delivery chain for regular programs	58			
Contributing financial resources to enlarge the coverage or improve the level of benefits of regular programs	50			
Strengthening the institutional capacity of the government institution delivering regular SP	37			
Supporting productive inclusion ('cash plus') activities	26			
Contributing to the design or funding of horizontal expansions, vertical expansions, or emergency programs		43		
Promoting the use of the SR and a dialogue with the users			28	
Supporting institutional capacity strengthening, improving quality of data collection, and improving quality of data analysis			24	
Promoting an integrated beneficiary registry function			20	
Supporting pre- and post-shock assessment tools and understanding vulnerability			11	
Supporting interoperability with other databases and supporting data exchange provisions			9	
Promoting the use of early-warning system outputs as triggers and informers for shock response				10
Supporting institutional capacity strengthening, improving quality of data collection, and improving the quality of data analysis				1

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: The figure shows country coverage of the identified financing portfolio, by type of support. *N* = 67 countries. SP = social protection; SR = social registry.

Box 2.2. Targeting Mechanisms in Social Protection Programs

Proxy means testing: Most frequently referenced, proxy means testing was used, for example, in Albania and the Republic of Yemen as a tool for identifying eligible households based on measurable socioeconomic criteria.

Community-based targeting: Frequently mentioned, this approach was used in Burkina Faso and Mozambique, leveraging local community input to validate beneficiaries and align statistical data with local realities.

Geographic targeting: Moderately frequent, examples from Burkina Faso and Kenya demonstrated the use of poverty and vulnerability maps to prioritize regions affected by drought or food insecurity.

Hybrid approaches: Occasionally mentioned, Senegal and Viet Nam used combinations of proxy means testing, management information systems, and community-based targeting for greater accuracy and transparency.

Categorical targeting: Programs target specific demographic groups, such as children or refugees. In Tonga, the World Bank supported families with secondary school children. In the Republic of Congo, the World Bank targeted refugees and host communities for health and education benefits.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

The emphasis on combining regular program support with support in data and delivery systems aligns with recommendations from the literature. The structured literature review and IEG's *Social Safety Nets: An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 2000–2010* (World Bank 2011) found that the readiness and capacity for scaling up SP national systems largely depends on preexisting programs and the robustness of their underlying data and delivery systems. What countries can do in emergencies broadly depends on what they have. For example, low coverage of routine SP programs—particularly among the most vulnerable—is a major obstacle to a stronger role for SP in shock response. This was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which countries with high coverage of social insurance and social assistance were able to expand assistance through regular or newly introduced

emergency programs faster and more effectively (Bastagli and Lowe 2021; Beazley et al. 2021; Williams and Martinez 2020; World Bank 2022).

One-third of the projects in the evaluation's portfolio supported climate-sensitive SP. At least 74 out of 202 projects in the financing portfolio addressed climate risks. Promoting resilience and livelihood diversification was the most prominent (with 21 percent of projects addressing it), followed by shock-responsive and adaptive safety nets (18 percent), and gender-focused climate adaptation (15 percent; figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7. Climate-Sensitive Programming

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

World Bank projects did not routinely support cross-sector coordination, particularly between SP and DRM. Disaster preparedness is usually led by DRM staff and agencies. IEG's evaluation of disaster risk reduction noted that SP had made progress in contributing to disaster risk reduction, albeit from a low base (World Bank 2022). Unpacking this further, this evaluation's portfolio analysis shows that SP operations sought to foster institutional links between SP and DRM in 12 out of 67 countries and the use of EWS for setting thresholds or triggering SP responses in 11 out of 67 countries. While support for developing the EWS in the first place would typically not be part of the SP operations in this evaluation's portfolio, the evaluation finds a few positive examples. In Burkina Faso, the World Bank enhanced the targeting system by integrating geographic information system data to identify shock-prone areas and establish scalability

mechanisms with defined triggers and decision rules for safety net responses. In Kenya, the World Bank helped scale up payments during droughts based on activation of emergency triggers. A few projects supported cost projections for disaster responses. Conversely, some case studies observed that preparedness for sudden-onset disasters did not incorporate ASP as a standard tool, particularly in high-risk countries with less mature SP systems. Mozambique's Country Partnership Framework addresses DRM and ASP under separate objectives (World Bank 2023b). The World Bank's publication on climate change and flooding in Mauritania does not mention ASP (Coudouel et al. 2023). However, the World Bank–housed Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery has sponsored analytic work that integrates DRM and ASP perspectives. The evaluation identified 31 Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery grants related to ASP within the evaluation period supporting 20 nonlending activities and 11 financing operations. These grants focused on program design, data and information systems, and institutional arrangements. Chapter 3 shows that this lack of routine support for policy coherence, cross-sector coordination, and links between SP and DRM limited outcome achievement.

Having funds available when needed enables effective shock responses; as a result, operations in one-third of the countries sought predictable finance. Past crises showed that fiscally constrained countries were unable to respond or relied on donor assistance. IEG's *Social Safety Nets: An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 2000–2010* emphasized the need for predictable financing for shock response (World Bank 2011), and successive World Bank SP strategies have highlighted the need for flexible and prompt financial mechanisms to fund SP shock responses, as well as advanced fiscal planning capacity to address shocks. Countries that relied largely on overseas donor assistance expanded coverage more slowly than those using national resources to fund their responses to COVID-19, according to the evaluation's literature review. The World Bank's production of disaster risk financing (DRF) diagnostics and strategies was therefore relevant. These were done in at least half of the evaluated countries, often led by the Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation Global Practice. However, the World Bank operations in the portfolio included support for securing predictable finance for shock response in only 33 percent of the 67 countries. This figure may be an underestimate because operations led by other Global Practices (and therefore not included in the evaluation portfolio) could also have supported DRF.

Box 2.3 shows examples of how operations supported financial and institutional preparedness, and box 2.4 offers examples from the literature—not necessarily supported by the World Bank—of approaches to predictable financing support.

Box 2.3. World Bank Support for Building Financial and Institutional Preparedness for Shocks

Through the operations in the evaluation portfolio, the World Bank supported approximately 22 countries in implementing laws, funds, policies, and strategies related to financial resilience and institutional preparedness for shock and disaster response:

- Colombia updated the National Disaster, Epidemic, and Pandemic Risk Financing Strategy to enhance fiscal resilience.
- The Dominican Republic developed institutional frameworks for quantifying and managing disaster risks.
- India allowed states to use up to 50 percent of disaster response funds for social protection and increased central grants for livelihood support and cash transfers during relief efforts.
- Jamaica raised the Contingencies Fund ceiling to expedite relief efforts.
- Kenya approved the National Disaster Risk Financing Strategy to improve financial preparedness.
- Madagascar established the National Disaster Fund to finance preparedness and emergency response and proposed new laws enabling sovereign catastrophe insurance and household resilience products.
- The Philippines enacted the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act to shift focus to ex ante preparedness and prevention and integrated insurance premium payments into the National Disaster Risk Management Fund.
- Tonga approved the Disaster Risk Management Act for a proactive and integrated disaster management approach.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Box 2.4. Options for Enhancing Disaster Risk Financing

The literature review conducted by the Independent Evaluation Group highlighted several approaches to enhancing shock response financing. The examples below illustrate options from the literature, regardless of whether the initiatives received World Bank support.

Estimating potential costs of different shocks in advance and simulating response options. This approach allows for the development of contingency plans and can lead to more readily available financing. For example, Senegal's National Food Security Council estimates drought impacts annually to inform the Food Insecurity National Response Plan. This plan incorporates cash and in-kind transfers and uses Senegal's social registry for targeted assistance.

The African Risk Capacity is an African disaster risk facility offering drought insurance. Before a country can purchase a policy, it must develop contingency plans, including the costs of response measures and how payouts will benefit affected households.

Identifying financial resources and preplanning via a risk-layered approach. A risk-layered approach provides a structured way to manage and mitigate risks by categorizing them into different layers based on their severity and likelihood. This approach ensures that resources are allocated efficiently, allowing for a more effective and timely response to various types of shocks. Indonesia launched its National Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance Strategy in 2018, which includes both risk retention and transfer mechanisms to complement the state budget. The Pooling Fund for Disasters enables transparency, efficient planning, and quicker assistance for disaster-affected families.

Planning for timely disbursements. Ensuring timely disbursements of emergency funding requires streamlining the funding process for efficient access to resources for local implementation during emergencies. Some steps to this effect include (i) triggering funding via objective early-warning mechanisms to initiate funding releases and keeping the process free from political influence; (ii) minimizing administrative delays to quickly release emergency funds when needed; (iii) enabling direct funding channels to local areas and allowing for expedited transfers from international partners to district and provincial levels; and (iv) planning in advance for sufficient liquidity at the local level by setting up contingency funds and arrangements. For example, with World Bank support, Malawi put in place a mechanism preparing its Social Cash

(continued)

Box 2.4. Options for Enhancing Disaster Risk Financing (cont.)

Transfer Program to expand during climate shocks, with preset funding triggers, prepositioned financing, and pretargeting of vulnerable households.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group structured literature review.

Removing Barriers to Adaptive Social Protection

The World Bank addressed relevant barriers to expanding SSNs' ability to cover covariate shocks, although some challenges persist. Triangulating across the literature, the portfolio review, and the case studies, the evaluation team found the following:

- The World Bank has supported social registries in many countries. However, the effectiveness of social registries for shock response is limited by incomplete data coverage and outdated information, which require significant time and resources to address (Barca and Beazley 2019). Interviews suggest that, because of its preference for the use of social registries, the World Bank generally does not support lighter information systems that might be fit for purpose in some cases and facilitate rapid targeting mechanisms, which could be beneficial when social registries show severe limitations as seen in Burkina Faso and the Philippines. Moreover, the evaluation finds that foundational identity systems can help in ensuring broader participation in assistance programs and limiting political interference in targeting.
- The World Bank also works on data sharing agreements and interoperability efforts, but these initiatives apply to countries with more strongly developed data systems, such as Nepal, affecting only a small percentage of countries.
- The World Bank has invested in research and policy dialogue encouraging humanitarian actors to align their cash and in-kind transfer programs to increase coherence, as seen in regions such as the Sahel (Kreidler et al. 2022). In Burkina Faso, this reduced the number of transfer values implemented by different actors from 18 to 6, from one lean season to the next. In Mozambique, the World Bank approved a transfer value with the government

for drought assistance that the World Food Programme (WFP) and NGOs subsequently used for their own transfers.

- The World Bank has heavily invested in digital payment processes. The Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation Global Practice often contributed to this work. The World Bank also contributed to easing know-your-customer regulations, as in Mozambique, allowing vulnerable beneficiaries to access COVID-19–related transfers more easily. This work is especially important in countries where vulnerable population groups have low financial access.
- The World Bank has stepped up work on preplanned risk financing; however, more needs to be done given its importance for rapid crisis response.

Integrating Gender into Adaptive Social Protection

Most cash transfers and public works programs prioritized women as beneficiaries but often lacked measures to ensure deeper gender results. The evaluation team reviewed the gender aspects in a randomly selected subset of 50 of the portfolio's projects. Projects have made substantial progress in targeting women's participation in cash transfers and public works, done in about 75 percent of projects. However, the World Bank has room to deepen its approach to gender beyond targeting. More than half (54 percent) of these projects lacked accompanying measures to explicitly make them gender responsive or gender transformative. Only 6 percent out of the 50 projects were gender transformative. These terms can be defined as follows (World Bank 2024c):

- Gender-responsive programs explicitly address the contextual needs of women. They are fair and equitable in both processes and outcomes. These programs are informed by a gender analysis and respond to the challenges women, girls, and gender-diverse persons face in accessing and benefiting from SP.
- Gender-transformative programs aim to actively challenge and transform unequal gender relations. These proactively promote change in processes, access, and outcomes through deliberate design and implementation choices. They do so to ensure that women and girls (and when relevant, marginalized men and boys and other gender-diverse persons) can benefit from SP programs and to enable empowerment and transformative outcomes.

Projects prioritized women by aligning with traditional gender roles and positioning mothers as caregivers, rather than advancing gender equality. IEG's review found that projects often targeted women to receive educational sessions related to fulfilling childcare responsibilities or meeting cash transfer conditionalities, such as health visits. Such requirements treat women as primary caregivers and can add to their time constraints.

Many projects lacked localized and context-specific analyses of women's and girls' needs, undermining gender responsiveness. Many projects relied on national-level statistics rather than contextual analyses of the specific challenges faced by women and girls in different project settings. For example, in public works, low salaries and provision of childcare and training are often used to attract women's participation; projects did not present analysis to justify that these interventions were aligned with the needs of women and girls. A task leader of one of the reviewed projects stated that the "current approach leans toward replicating experiences and approaches rather than tailoring them to the unique needs of the target group, which exceeds a thousand people." This lack of understanding limits projects' ability to respond effectively to women's and girls' needs. For example, Tanzania's shift from cash in hand to e-payments encountered significant implementation barriers, as many women lacked identification documents, bank accounts, or personal phones (World Bank 2024c).

Several project teams used lessons from prior operations to strengthen gender responsiveness. For example, SASPP advanced evidence-based design for improving the gender sensitivity of ASP systems. Tanzania's Productive Social Safety Net Project II used lessons from the previous phase to include community sensitization sessions that challenge traditional gender roles, encourage shared domestic responsibilities, and engage men in discussions on family planning. The Arab Republic of Egypt's Strengthening Social Safety Net Project used an additional financing to enhance gender responsiveness through a communication campaign addressing harmful gender norms, along with a pilot program to support women's self-employment and wage employment.

Projects increasingly recognize the intersection of gender, fragility, and vulnerability to disasters, but theories of change remain incomplete.

Ten of the reviewed projects recognized the vulnerabilities of displaced and conflict-affected women, incorporating targeted interventions such as psychosocial support for survivors. Five projects recognized the disproportionate impact of disasters on women and supported joint land titles for housing reconstruction and other measures. However, there was much variation. Some project documents' theories of change failed to identify the specific contextual vulnerabilities of women in affected project areas. Those projects often lacked gender-responsive or gender-transformative approaches.

3 | Performance of Social Protection Systems

Highlights

The World Bank's limited outcome measurements restricted the ability to assess the performance of social protection (SP) systems' responsiveness to shocks. Regular programs routinely measure the number of beneficiaries reached and some other program dimensions; few programs measured any aspect of their performance when responding to shocks.

All 11 of the evaluation's case study countries expanded their SP programs to respond to shocks at least once during the evaluated period. However, countries often fell short in responding adequately to shocks. Countries struggled to quickly add nonbeneficiaries during crises, as a result reaching less than 10 percent of those affected by shocks through SP systems.

Inaccurate targeting, data system incompatibility, and unavailable financial resources are key factors constraining systems' ability to expand in shocks.

SP systems performed better in response to slow-onset, recurrent shocks than to sudden-onset shocks because slow-onset shocks have clearer institutional mandates, more comprehensive information systems, and well-established partnerships.

The World Bank used its contingent and emergency response financing instruments to effectively speed up disbursements for SP responses from 2018 onward and especially during COVID-19.

This chapter assesses the performance of the World Bank–supported SP systems in adapting to shocks. The focus is on how SP systems, often strengthened with adaptive elements, delivered shock responses and to what extent the World Bank's support influenced the quality of those responses. However, the evaluation found it difficult to understand systems' performance in different covariate shocks in isolation from their performance in normal times and as such covers both shock and routine transfers. The chapter consists of two sections: the first examines how effectively the World Bank measured SP program performance, and the second evaluates the performance of these programs based on the type of shock and the program's targeting accuracy, benefit adequacy, and timeliness. The chapter finds that countries used World Bank–supported SP systems to deliver shock responses, frequently deploying vertical expansions—adding or expanding benefits—for slow-onset shocks. However, these systems often struggled in measuring key outcomes and expanding horizontally—adding beneficiaries—especially during sudden-onset shocks.

Performance Measurement

The performance of ASP shock response is evaluated based on four dimensions. These include coverage and reach, targeting accuracy, benefit adequacy, and timeliness (box 3.1). Targeting accuracy is an additional criterion emphasized by some, and coverage can be reach (that is, beneficiary count) or coverage proper (that is, the proportion of those in need receiving assistance). IEG assessed the outcomes of the World Bank's investments in SP systems used for shock responses based on the extent to which these systems delivered benefits whose timeliness, adequacy, and coverage were broadly adequate to protect the well-being of the poor and vulnerable people affected by the shocks. This benchmark corresponds to the World Bank's expected outcomes of ASP investments (Bowen et al. 2020).

Box 3.1. Defining the Program Outcome Criteria of Coverage and Reach, Adequacy, Accuracy, and Timeliness

Benefits adequacy: The extent to which social protection programs meet the basic needs of beneficiaries and help them avoid negative coping strategies. Adequacy depends on the value, duration of transfers, and the nature of shock.

Coverage: The proportion of people in need who are effectively supported.

Reach: The number of program beneficiaries.

Targeting accuracy: The extent to which benefits or services reach the intended eligible population, minimizing errors of exclusion and inclusion.

Timeliness: A response is considered timely when it ensures that beneficiaries receive support promptly, especially after major shocks.

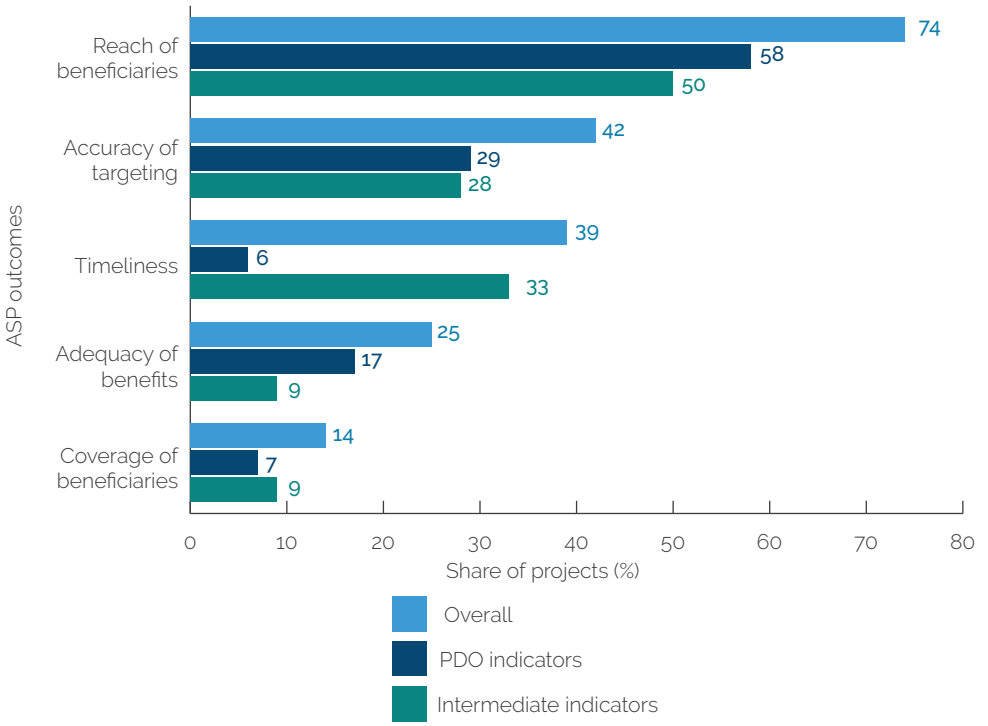
Sources: Beazley et al. 2021; Bowen et al. 2020; World Bank 2022.

Projects did not consistently measure key program outcomes. Two-thirds of the 132 investment projects in the evaluation's portfolio included project development objective (PDO) indicators that could be aligned with expected ASP outcomes—reach, coverage, timeliness, targeting accuracy, and benefit adequacy. Reviewing both PDO and the intermediary outcome indicators, the evaluation team found that while 83 percent of the portfolio projects measured SP-related outcomes, they were mostly related to regular programs' functioning and rarely shock responses.

Reach was the most measured outcome of regular programs, but few projects measured the reach of shock responses (figure 3.1). Seventy-four percent of projects measured reach using either PDO or intermediate outcome indicators for mostly routine programs. Reach was usually disaggregated by gender, which is also a Corporate Scorecard indicator (figure 3.2). The World Bank did not monitor or set targets for the coverage of shock responses. The performance data of shock response coverage were calculated by the case studies, but projects did not often track this information (figure 3.2). Projects or other World Bank documents also did not set achievement targets for what coverage to aim for in shock responses.

Far fewer indicators focused on the percentage of people in need supported. Only 14 percent of the projects tracked coverage as a share of the eligible or vulnerable target population covered by the programs. Only one PDO indicator measured coverage as a percentage of an underlying population in response to a shock. Compared with indicators of reach, coverage metrics give a clearer picture of how well programs meet the overall needs, allow for better comparison across regions and time, help track performance, and can be used to prioritize resources. It is sometimes hard to know the number of people affected by a shock and eligible to receive assistance. Most countries have regular household surveys to calculate coverage of regular programs, and during many large disasters, the United Nations, in collaboration with national authorities, publishes a figure on "people in need."

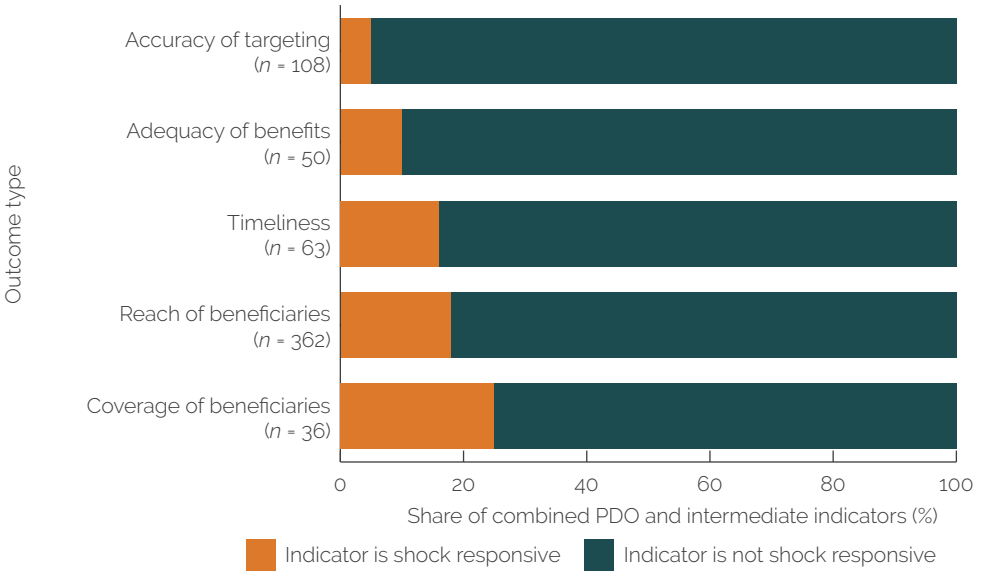
Figure 3.1. Program Outcomes Tracked in Projects



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: The figure shows shares of projects (investment project financing and Program-for-Results) with at least one ASP outcome PDO or intermediate outcome indicator. *N* = 132 investment project financing and Program-for-Results projects. ASP = adaptive social protection; PDO = project development objective.

Figure 3.2. Project Indicators Rarely Measured the Performance of Social Protection Systems in Shocks



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: The evaluation team coded indicators as shock responsive if their definition referred to ex post responses to any type of shock or emergency. PDO = project development objective.

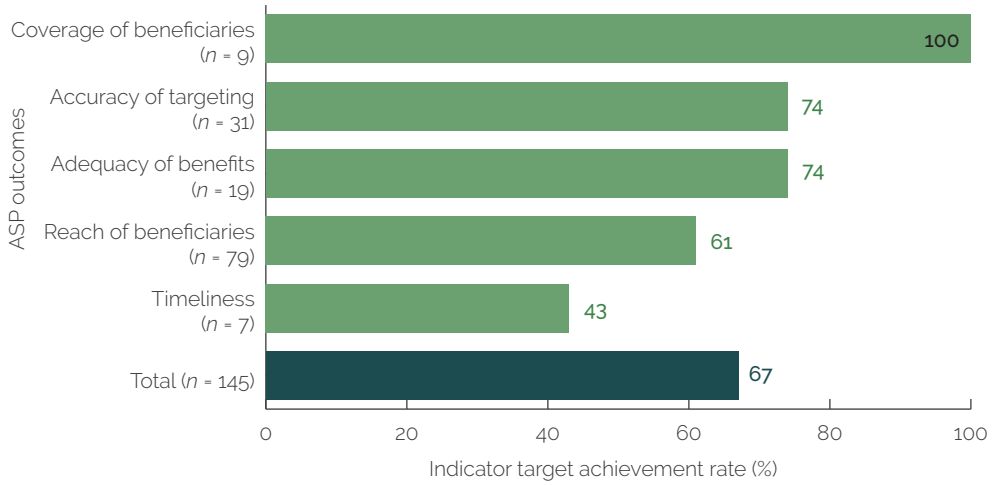
Targeting accuracy was the second-most measured program outcome, but the targeting of shock responses was almost never measured. The case studies in seven countries found that programs did not measure the accuracy of their targeting. Burkina Faso's postdistribution monitoring tracks targeting accuracy but does not consolidate or report the values. The portfolio review found that 42 percent of projects measured some aspect of accuracy through either their PDO or intermediate outcome indicators (figure 3.1). Most indicators by far referred to the targeting accuracy of regular programs, usually with a reference to the share of beneficiaries below a poverty benchmark or a certain quintile cutoff. In addition, the evaluation team found a few instances where programs measured the accuracy of the selection of people into the social registry (in Ecuador, Iraq, and Mauritania) and a few examples where project results frameworks measured the quality of the associated validation or verification processes (in the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, and the Philippines).

Projects did not usually measure the timeliness and adequacy of assistance. Approximately 39 percent and 25 percent of projects measured timeliness of payments to beneficiaries and benefit adequacy, respectively. They often did so through the intermediate outcome indicators rather than as part of their more formal measurement of progress toward the PDOs. These indicators refer only to regular programs and not emergency responses. Few, if any, look at benefit duration as part of adequacy. The evaluation team found that Ethiopia was the only country to specifically measure shock response timeliness. SASPP tracks timeliness by the percentage of payments made on time, for both regular and shock response payments, reporting that, "in FY24, 79 percent of payments were done on time" (World Bank 2024e). Most projects and case studies found an absence of information on timeliness.[1]

Gender indicators in SP programs measure women's and girls' inclusion, access, and some intervention outcomes. Ninety-two of the 132 investment project financing and PforR projects in the portfolio included gender-sensitive SP indicators. The vast majority—two-thirds of all the gender-disaggregated SP indicators—are reach indicators that track the proportion of female beneficiaries in regular SP programs, such as cash transfers and public works. Other gender indicators tracked access to essential services, such as health care and education; economic empowerment; and social outcomes, such as retention in education and leadership opportunities. Four projects had gender indicators on adequacy of benefits.

Several closed projects that measured coverage achieved strong results. Out of the 89 projects with ASP outcomes, 37 were closed. Within these closed projects, the average target achievement rate for PDO indicators was 67 percent. Coverage targets measured as a percentage of an underlying population showed the highest achievement rate, suggesting that greater use of this indicator could be considered, provided projects set meaningful targets. The lowest achievement rates were for indicators of timeliness and reach (figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3. Achievement of Project Development Objective Indicator Targets in Closed Projects



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Projects very rarely measure beneficiary outcomes from shock responses. Some impact evaluations and project indicators assessed outcomes for beneficiaries of regular programs and productive inclusion. The evaluation team found no such measuring of shock responses, creating gaps for the ability to learn about and communicate these projects' outcomes. SASPP included an indicator on the use of negative coping strategies in its initial phase, which could serve as a proxy for adequacy, because insufficient assistance often forces people to adopt such behaviors. However, the program never reported on this indicator because of challenges in collecting the necessary data. The Strengthen Ethiopia's Adaptive Safety Net project, which provides drought assistance, incorporated indicators, such as the number of food-insecure months and the percentage of beneficiary households reporting harmful coping strategies.

Performance of Social Protection Shock Responses

Most countries expand their SP programs to respond to shocks. Eleven evaluation case study countries all experienced a variety of covariate shocks within the period (table 3.1). In response, each country expanded its programs in some form or another.

The World Bank's financial and technical support assisted in many types of shock responses. These shocks include slow-onset and sudden-onset, one-off and recurrent, natural disaster and human-made, massive and confined, and fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV)-related shocks. COVID-19 elicited the largest response. The World Bank's support for financing program expansions and system strengthening, particularly for data and information systems, helped countries expand safety nets in shocks. Examples include the following:

- In Mauritania, NGOs and humanitarian agencies have long provided lean season assistance. The World Bank has been assisting the government in developing key elements of a national safety net system, such as a social registry and an EWS, which has led to enhanced coherence with NGOs using the same criteria and social registry. Since 2016, the World Bank has supported the Tekavoul safety net program and started the Elmaouna shock response mechanism, which began providing aid during the lean season in 2017. In 2021, another shock response initiative was added through a top-up of the regular Tekavoul program called Tekavoul Shock. In 2023, Tekavoul Shock had supported more households, often targeting women, than all participating NGOs combined, with regular Tekavoul participants accounting for 60 percent of its beneficiaries—demonstrating a significant vertical expansion of the program to address shocks while continuing regular support.[2]
- Since 2004, the World Bank has supported the Dominican Republic in developing and expanding its social registry (Sistema Único de Beneficiarios) and creating a flexible payment system to help poor households manage shocks. By 2022, the system covered approximately 85 percent of the total population, enabling the government, with World Bank support, to vertically and horizontally expand the Stay at Home and Employee Solidarity Assistance Fund programs during the COVID-19 pandemic, building on the existing Progresando con Solidaridad program.
- With World Bank support, Colombia created a new cash transfer program during the COVID-19 pandemic and revamped the social registry to enable continuously better targeting of social programs (box 3.2). Colombia has also used its cash transfer program to assist migrants from República Bolivariana de Venezuela.

» World Bank–supported programs in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and the Republic of Yemen, among others, provided support in FCV situations (see below).

Box 3.2. Using Colombia's Social Protection Information System to Guide Shock Responses

The System for the Identification of Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs (Sistema de Identificación de Potenciales Beneficiarios de Programas Sociales; SISBÉN), managed by the National Planning Department and functioning as a social registry, has been Colombia's key tool for targeting social programs since 1995. Information is collected through periodic municipal "census sweeps," with on-demand features allowing households to request updates. The National Planning Department oversees SISBÉN's administration, ensuring compliance, suspending or excluding citizens, and maintaining the national database used to allocate program benefits.

In 2017, the government launched the four iterations of SISBÉN IV, but it was not completed when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, making it difficult to solely use that information to identify those in need of emergency support. With World Bank support, the government created the Ingreso Solidario cash transfer program, based on a new database that merged SISBÉN III and SISBÉN IV with other administrative records, ensuring more reliable and updated identification of poor and vulnerable households and excluding ineligible individuals. The government also vertically expanded some regular social assistance programs (such as Familias en Acción and Colombia Mayor) and deployed a value-added tax refund program.

The World Bank suggested geolocation features in SISBÉN IV to track households in disaster-prone areas. Building on the new database, the National Planning Department launched the Registro Social de Hogares in 2020 to modernize data collection, shifting from census sweeps to a hybrid model that combines continuous updates from households and administrative records. The World Bank continues to actively support this transition.

Source: Dávalos et al. 2023.

Table 3.1. Case Study Countries Experienced a Variety of Shocks

Country	Sudden Onset	Slow Onset (Drought)	Forced Displacement: Internal displacement	Forced Displacement: Refugee influx	Pandemic	Other
Burkina Faso		Recurrent lean season	Internal displacement			
Colombia	Hurricane Iota and landslide Mocoa		Internal displacement	Venezuelan migration		
Dominican Republic	Hurricane Fiona					Dajabón border closure and San Cristóbal
Ethiopia		Drought	Internal displacement			
Jamaica	Hurricane Matthew					
Lebanon				Refugee influx		Port of Beirut
Mauritania		Recurrent lean season		Refugee influx		
Mozambique	Cyclones Idai and Kenneth	Drought				
Nepal	Earthquakes Gorkha and Jajarkot					
Pakistan			Internal displacement			
Philippines	Typhoon Rai (Odette)					

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: Shaded cells indicate the shocks that were covered by the evaluation. This is not an exhaustive list of all covariate shocks experienced by the countries during the evaluation period.

Performance by Type of ShockSystems performed better in slow-onset than in sudden-onset shocks when there were strong institutional mandates, information systems, and partnerships. The case studies showed that safety net systems responded better in slow-onset shocks—mostly droughts and recurrent lean seasons that are easier to predict and prepare for. Table 3.2 illustrates some of the differential implications for SP systems of slow- and sudden-onset shocks and the implications for the World Bank's support to these systems. In slow-onset shocks, EWS helped anticipate the shocks' impacts and locations well ahead; social registries, when they were up-to-date, contained the necessary information on vulnerable populations; the institutional mandates for responding were clearer; and preexisting partnerships with humanitarian agencies assisted. That said, food insecurity brought on by slow-onset, displacement, or other shocks can overstretch the financial capacity to adequately cover the increasing number of people in need, as observed in Burkina Faso.

Sudden-onset shocks can be far more challenging to respond to than slow-onset shocks if they affect larger populations or damage SP delivery systems. Sudden-onset shocks tend to attract more attention and funding, whereas droughts are sometimes silent crises for quite a long time. In sudden-onset shocks, countries need to do postdisaster needs assessments, identify the worst-affected households and help them access financial services, and set up payment systems as was seen in the case of Lebanon during the Port of Beirut explosion. Sudden-onset disasters, when massive, also sometimes disrupt the regular SP services tasked with delivering the assistance. Whether a program can continue to function when a massive disaster occurs depends heavily on the type of the disaster and the maturity of the system. The results have been best in countries with more mature systems.

A system's maturity contributed to its performance regardless of shock type. Looking across countries and shock types, the maturity of the SP system—its coverage, administrative capacity, and existence of social registries—stands out as the most important explanatory factor for performance in shock response, as demonstrated by the cases in Colombia and the Dominican Republic. Where the SP system remains weak or is slow to adapt, the regular programs proved insufficiently fit for shock response, as was the case in Mozambique. It took

almost three years for the SSNs to be horizontally expanded in COVID-19 because of the absence of a comprehensive social registry.

Table 3.2. Implications for Slow-Onset and Sudden-Onset Shocks for Social Protection Systems

	Slow Onset and Lean Season	Sudden Onset
Geographical impact	The impact is often rural.	The impact is rural and urban.
Early-warning systems	Systems can often predict slow-onset shocks relatively early.	Timing of prediction for sudden-onset shocks varies.
Functioning of routine social protection systems	Social protection systems can be used for delivering response, provided they have ability to expand horizontally.	Social protection systems may themselves be damaged by the shock and, if so, need to be part of postdisaster response and recovery.
Social registry	Most at-risk populations are included in the social registry.	Affected populations may not be covered by existing programs or included in the social registry, implying a need for beneficiary identification, verification, and so on.
Institutional mandates	Institutional mandates ought to address turf battles and clarify roles of social protection, food security agencies, and humanitarian agencies.	Institutional mandates ought to define roles, responsibilities, and synergies between social protection and disaster risk management.
Financing for response	Financing is available only if there is preplanned risk financing.	Financing is often more readily available from governments, donors, and humanitarians, given the scale and visibility of these shocks.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

SP can help foster social cohesion and rebuild trust in FCV settings, but system performance has been constrained by political resistance and other factors. In theory, programs can mitigate some adverse effects of conflict, stabilize communities, reduce poverty-driven grievances, and contribute to recovery (Bharadwaj and Karthikeyan 2023). It is therefore encouraging that programs in Afghanistan and Burkina Faso continued to operate amid insecurity. These programs targeted chronically poor people rather

than people affected by conflict. In the Republic of Yemen, the World Bank used third-party implementation to ensure the continued operation of the SP program amid active conflict. For internally displaced people, there was sometimes political resistance to transferring benefits to new locations, thereby limiting the adaptability of ASP for this population group. In Ethiopia, the Tigray conflict led to a collapse of the regular rural Productive Safety Net Program in conflict-affected areas, highlighting weaknesses in the portability of entitlements as people displaced by the conflict lost access to support. Conversely, the urban SSN responded flexibly by admitting newly internally displaced people.

Most countries struggled to add beneficiaries after shocks, limiting aid for those in need. Horizontal expansions are complicated because they require rapidly identifying and reaching new, previously unsupported individuals or households. All 11 case studies struggled with horizontal expansions—that is, broadening the support for affected nonbeneficiaries—in different ways. As reviewed in this chapter, such expansions often involve logistic challenges in scaling up systems quickly, administrative hurdles in verifying eligibility, and limitations in data infrastructure to track nonbeneficiaries. In addition, funding constraints can make it difficult to expand resources adequately, while political and institutional resistance may arise when existing support systems are stretched to cover a larger population.

Coverage rates were often below 10 percent of those affected. Besides the World Bank–supported government responses, many other actors may provide assistance after shocks. Government-provided safety nets reached only 10 percent of people requiring assistance in Lebanon, however. The Philippines managed to reach just 11 percent of households displaced by Typhoon Haiyan through the SP system. The Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project in Pakistan provided cash for work for an average of 25 days for 8 percent of the 10 million households displaced by floods (World Bank 2024d). The Dominican Republic supported cash transfers for only an estimated 8 percent of the people affected by Hurricane Fiona in 2022. (Between 35,000 and 36,000 households received the Bono de Emergencia. With an average household size of 3.1 people in 2022, this would translate to roughly 110,000 beneficiaries. Given an estimated 1.4 million people affected, coverage was approximately 7.9 percent [Banco Mundial 2024; MEPyD

2022].) These limited response outcomes illustrate the range of barriers to rapid, large-scale expansion of government-provided safety nets during crises, particularly related to targeting, political and logistic issues, financing, and partnership building. By comparison, humanitarian actors reached many more people (for example, in Lebanon and the Philippines).

There are several notable examples of strong horizontal expansions among World Bank–supported SP systems after shocks. The literature highlighted how good preparedness in Kenya and Malawi facilitated horizontal expansions (box 3.3). The case studies emphasized the additional examples as follows:

- In Mauritania, substantial World Bank support enabled expansion in the lean season assistance from 13 percent of people in need of assistance in 2012 to 45 percent in 2022.
- In Burkina Faso, World Bank support through the International Development Association (IDA) Crisis Response Window and a multidonor trust fund (MDTF) has helped make the projet filets sociaux Burkin-Naong-Sa Ya—effectively Burkina Faso's regular SP program—a significant part of the annual lean season response since 2021. The Burkin-Naong-Sa Ya project could include additional municipalities and provide seasonal top-ups but only to existing beneficiaries. This meant that people who did not meet the regular SSN program's targeting criteria based on chronic poverty at a certain point in time were also left out of the shock response, regardless of their acute need. Moreover, no humanitarian actor would intervene in these areas to cover other vulnerable households not supported by the Burkin-Naong-Sa Ya project in these areas.
- In Northern Ethiopia, the World Bank–supported Urban Productive Safety Net Project provided temporary unconditional cash transfers to about 770,000 people internally displaced by the conflict. This amounts to a coverage rate of about 22 percent of all the displaced people in Ethiopia—a respectable achievement.

Box 3.3. Good Preparedness in Kenya and Malawi That Facilitated Horizontal Expansions

Kenya's Hunger Safety Net Programme provides rapid-response cash transfers to households in drought-prone areas, achieving impressive scalability during crises. In 2015, the program quickly reached 90,000 additional households within two weeks thanks to key preparedness actions. These included preidentifying vulnerable counties and potential beneficiaries, gathering data for the social registry for all households living in the potentially affected four additional counties, and pre-enrolling nonregular beneficiaries with bank accounts and program cards. The program also used preagreed standard operating procedures based on a weather trigger system that automatically expanded coverage based on drought severity, with funding from a preestablished National Drought Contingency Fund. Although primarily funded by the United Kingdom, the Hunger Safety Net Programme operates within Kenya's National Safety Net Programme, which the World Bank supports through a Program-for-Results.

In Malawi, the World Bank supported the government in enhancing the Social Cash Transfer Program to scale up in response to drought and other climate shocks. This preparedness framework includes a trigger mechanism built on weather impact models, pretargeting vulnerable households (17 percent in selected districts), and setting up digital payment accounts with fixed transfer values. The mechanism was successfully tested in the 2021–22 rainy season, when US$6.3 million in contingency funds enabled support for 74,000 households across three districts.

Both programs showcase proactive planning, targeting, and financing as key to scaling social protection quickly during crises.

Sources: Barca and Beazley 2019; Choularton et al. 2023; Fitzgibbon 2016; Merttens et al. 2017.

Accuracy of Targeting

Expanding safety nets during crises faces many obstacles in the targeting process. Horizontal expansions to nonbeneficiaries place more demands on programs' delivery capacity than other types of shock responses (Bowen et al. 2020). Specifically, effective safety net expansion often relies on needs assessments and robust and up-to-date social

registries to quickly identify and enroll new beneficiaries. However, countries do not always have adequate capacity to assess needs after shocks. They also face challenges with outdated or incomplete registries that do not capture essential data on vulnerable populations or account for the sudden changes a disaster imposes. This was evident in Lebanon, where outdated registry information required time-consuming reverification, and in Mozambique, where identifying vulnerable families for horizontal expansion as part of the COVID-19 response was challenging without a social registry, so new beneficiaries were selected using categorical and community targeting by local authorities, leading to delays of up to three years. Additionally, countries relying exclusively on limited registries, without alternative data sources, struggled to scale up, as seen in Burkina Faso and the Philippines. Alternative data sources, such as national identification systems, tax records, or disability registries, can help make targeting inclusive, efficient, and accurate but require preestablished digitization, interdepartmental cooperation, and data integration (Chirchir and Barca 2020). The literature review has emphasized that data systems can become more adaptive by gradually improving completeness, relevance, currency, accessibility, accuracy, and data protection; promoting data use; and considering alternative data sources (box 3.4). For example, a study of social registries in 19 West African countries found that 17 of these countries either have or are developing a social registry, but that they make little use of the data in the systems (Barca and Hebbar 2023).

Political concerns also affect the speed and effectiveness of safety net expansions. In many cases, governments delay decisions to avoid issues such as beneficiary duplication or inaccurate targeting, which can affect public perception. In Mozambique, the government acknowledges the technical usefulness of a social registry but has avoided establishing it from concerns that it would raise expectations beyond what the government can deliver (the World Bank's dialogue with government was ongoing at the time of the evaluation). Furthermore, political leaders may influence the targeting process to gain visibility or support among constituents, often leading to debates between donors and governments on the transparency of aid distribution.

Box 3.4. Design Choices for More Adaptive Data and Information Systems

Experiences with using existing social protection data, including social registries, in the context of shocks, point to the importance of reinforcing existing systems with an eye to countries' specific vulnerabilities and those shocks that are broadly predictable and recurrent.

Literature has highlighted several design choices for adaptive data systems:

- Completeness: Aiming for high coverage in areas regularly affected by shocks, high coverage of vulnerable groups, and groups commonly left behind, such as refugees.
- Relevance: Collect data that are relevant to assessing the vulnerability to shocks of individuals or households and providing support to these. This could imply systematic linking to other data sources and strengthened use of geolocalized data.
- Currency: Ensuring that data are as up-to-date as possible, developing more on-demand approaches to registration and updating, and enhancing interoperability with other data sources to draw particularly time-sensitive variables.
- Accessibility: Thinking through who may need access to data during a shock and setting up processes to enable that securely via data sharing protocols. This should include food security and nutrition, disaster risk management, and humanitarian actors in the country, and it needs to preidentify how data are likely to be used.
- Accuracy: Building trust in the system via validation, accountability measures, audits, and so on. This is a foundational measure that is critical to guarantee trust in the data during a shock.
- Data protection: Robust data protection and privacy are key. The "do no harm" imperative of humanitarian actors in a shock context can become a barrier to cooperation and information sharing with government counterparts.

Research has also emphasized the importance of investing in broader, interoperable information systems rather than stand-alone registries for adaptive social protection. Key areas of focus include the following:

(continued)

Box 3.4. Design Choices for More Adaptive Data and Information Systems (cont.)

- Promoting the interoperability among different government information systems, hinging on national identification systems and shared data standards, including links with civil registries, disability registries, tax registries, and land cadasters, to facilitate better identification of at-risk populations.
- Using alternative data sources, such as satellite imagery, mobile phone data, web and social media data, digital finance data, and digitalized administrative data. A program in Togo adopted a poverty index inferred from mobile phone data using machine learning to identify beneficiaries in rural areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. Results indicate that the phone-based targeting approach was more accurate than geographic blanket targeting at capturing prepandemic poverty, but less accurate compared with targeting that used data from the social registry.
- Investing in connections with early-warning systems to trigger early or anticipatory action. Once in place, early-warning systems allow quicker, sometimes automated, and nonpoliticized shock response.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group structured literature review.

Financing is another barrier to safety net expansions. Many countries rely on external financing, which can be time-consuming to mobilize, often requiring complex approval processes or adherence to eligibility conditions that may not align with the immediate crisis. Reliance on external funding slowed shock responses in Ethiopia, Lebanon, Mozambique, and the Philippines, causing delays in aid reaching those in need. Countries with access to prepositioned funds or flexible financing mechanisms, such as contingency funds, have generally been more successful in swiftly scaling up assistance. As discussed in this chapter, the World Bank has advanced its use of emergency and contingency financing instruments for SP.

Bottlenecks in safety nets' delivery systems further hinder expansion efforts. Geographic areas not covered by routine safety nets lack the necessary delivery chains, leading to delays, even if funds are available. In such instances, countries often use manual payment processes, making expansion

labor-intensive and inefficient, compared with digital payment systems. The lack of established relationships with financial service providers also adds delays; without preexisting agreements, governments must negotiate terms for payment distribution from scratch, as seen in several countries that lacked digital infrastructure. Barriers to accessing payments, such as identification document requirements for mobile banking, exclude vulnerable populations without proper documentation—particularly women, as evidenced in Burkina Faso, where one-third of eligible market vendors were unable to enroll in COVID-19 relief efforts because of lack of identification documents.

Entrenched bureaucratic processes and weak interagency partnerships contribute to delays. Regular programs' operations often have rigid processes that are difficult to accelerate. In Jamaica, rigid procedures and other factors resulted in slow SP responses to a hurricane and even to the COVID-19 pandemic. Established partnerships across government, donors, and international and local organizations are required for expansions but are often insufficiently prepared ahead of crises. Without these partnerships, efforts to scale up are hampered by coordination issues that are difficult to address in a postdisaster environment. Some countries in the Sahel are exceptions, having set up such partnerships to facilitate program expansions during the lean season.

Relying solely on safety net expansion for shock responses can leave gaps in coverage and inflexibility. For example, in Mozambique, the regular program primarily serves as an old-age pension plan in rural areas—a focus that limits its usefulness for broader disaster response. Discussions with experts suggest that diversified approaches that combine safety nets with DRM and humanitarian responses are the most effective at addressing various vulnerabilities and shock types effectively. A mixed approach ensures more comprehensive support for affected populations in both rural and urban settings, ultimately facilitating a more resilient and inclusive support system.

Benefit Adequacy

Defining the adequacy of program benefits is a complex undertaking. Literature has no yardstick for when SP transfer values are adequate (for both regular and shock response programs), highlighting that the setting of transfer values needs to consider the country's various SP programs, the

objectives of those programs, and fiscal and political constraints (McLean et al. 2021). Box 3.5 illustrates this for Colombia's assistance to migrants. There are trade-offs among transfer values, duration, and program reach. Furthermore, the literature emphasizes that routine transfer values are often inadequate to effectively protect households from risks and shocks, that low transfer values can hamper both routine programs and emergency responses, and that setting transfer values for emergency responses in line with routine programs can undermine the effectiveness of a response. Research in Sub-Saharan Africa suggests that regular programs that provide transfer values larger than 20 percent of beneficiaries' per capita income produce greater results (Williams and Martinez 2020).

Box 3.5. Social Cohesion and Transfers to Migrants in Colombia

Political concerns over social cohesion affected transfer values in Colombia. In 2019, the government mandated a transfer value for support to Venezuelan migrants, which fell below the poverty line for families with more than one member. The aim was to prevent tensions between migrants and the local population and to avoid creating incentives for fresh in-migration from abroad. However, the international community, including the World Bank, missed an opportunity to emphasize that newly arrived migrants often have greater needs than long-term residents and advocate for needs-based support, at least in the short term. It was not until 2021, after humanitarian organizations conducted an assessment of migrants' needs, that the government allowed for a higher transfer value.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group country case study.

The evaluation team could not fully assess the adequacy of transfer values because of limited project monitoring data and inconsistent payment schedules. Evidence from some case studies shows how transfer values and duration were set in drought and lean season assistance. For example, emergency program transfers in Mauritania and Burkina Faso cover 70–75 percent of household expenses based on a minimum expenditure basket, which under humanitarian guidelines is considered adequate for households in the "poor" (and higher) wealth groups but insufficient for households in

the "very poor" wealth group. The case studies did not identify similar clarity regarding transfer values and duration in other shocks. The evaluation team did not find much evidence on the extent to which the World Bank exerted influence on transfer values, except in the Dominican Republic, where the adequacy of the shock response program improved significantly with World Bank support.

In some cases, inflation eroded transfer values. Transfer values are not systematically adjusted for inflation. In Ethiopia, inflation eroded the value of cash transfers in 2021 to 17 percent below food assistance. It also led to regional disparities in transfer values because of regional differences in how these are set (Sabates-Wheeler et al. 2021). In Lebanon, the World Bank's support increased the value of e-vouchers administered by WFP multiple times to counteract the country's hyperinflation. Even so, between 2014 and mid-2021, the transfer amount lost nearly half its value in US dollar terms. Dollarizing payments in September 2021 improved transfer adequacy, with acceptable Food Consumption Scores rising from 51 percent to 64 percent (WFP 2022).

Timeliness of Payment Delivery

Untimely payment delivery undermines the effectiveness of safety nets and is a challenge for both regular programs and shock responses. The evaluation case studies found that the Dominican Republic and Pakistan had good records of timeliness of their routine safety net programs, but that Ethiopia, Mauritania, Mozambique, and Nepal did not. For example, Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets Project 4 made routine payments in an unpredictable fashion with only 9 percent of payments on time (Sabates-Wheeler et al. 2021). Such inability to deliver routine payments in a timely fashion has knock-on effects for shock responses.

The case studies documented severe delays in some World Bank–supported shock responses. After Pakistan's 2022 flood response, a PforR project approved in 2021 to build ASP systems was able to deliver aid within days after the floods. However, the Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project (investment project financing), created in response to the floods, became effective only five months later and took six months after effectiveness to

initiate new cash-for-work income opportunities, resulting in most beneficiaries (74 percent) receiving support only in early 2024 (World Bank 2023c, 2024d). Mozambique also faced significant payment delays, ranging from 15 months to three years for various shock responses, according to the case study.

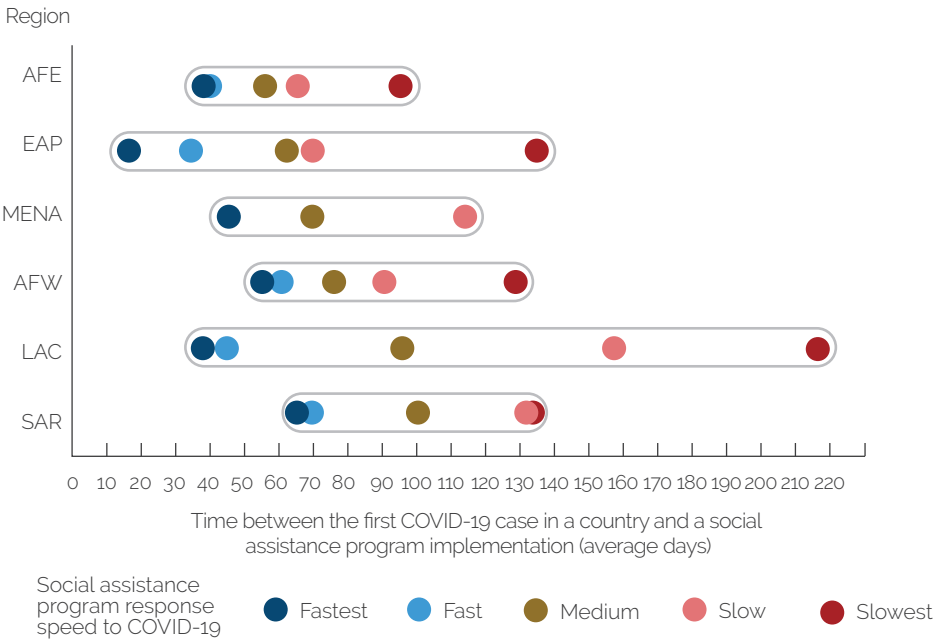
Pandemic response payments were often timely, although with variation. The evaluation's only comprehensive data on timeliness are from the pandemic responses. The benefit top-ups occurred faster than coverage scale-up. Programs that were preexisting and used social registries responded faster (Gentilini et al. 2022). IEG's analysis of the time lag between the first COVID-19 case and the average number of days it took programs to disburse payments to beneficiaries shows much variation within and across countries (figure 3.4). For example, the median response timeliness was 55 days in Eastern and Southern Africa, 62 days in East Asia and Pacific, and 69 days in the Middle East and North Africa. The Dominican Republic illustrates timely COVID-19 response payments (box 3.6). The massive size of the pandemic shock and its impacts on urban populations ensured visibility and, together with the use of categorical targeting of affected workers, are likely explanatory factors for the often timely responses to COVID-19.

These differences in shock response outcomes cannot be attributed to the World Bank. The analysis combines countries where governments implement their own responses to shocks, with or without the World Bank's technical and financial support, and countries where responses are mounted by project implementation units and full World Bank funding. With governments in the lead, timeliness, adequacy, and coverage outcomes of the pandemic (and other shock) responses are usually beyond the World Bank's control.

Manual payment processes and delays in contracting financial service providers were the most frequent delay factors. This is according to a structured comparison of the evaluation's case studies. For example, during the drought in Mozambique in 2016, the most significant delay in the SP response was caused by the World Bank's requirement to outsource payments to an external agency for the sake of transparency and accountability and as part of a broader modernization and transition from manual (cash in hand) to digital payments. Even after the payment process commenced, subsequent cycles were also delayed. Studies on the timeliness of COVID-19 responses similarly

point to slow payment processes as a frequent source of delays (Beazley et al. 2021). Other delay factors highlighted in the case studies include lack of political support for SP; intragovernmental procedures; challenges in flow of funds from federal to local level (for example, in Ethiopia); and incomplete or outdated social registries. Various operational hiccups and delayed access to financing—caused by fiscal constraints and delays in foreign aid disbursements—also hindered swift responses. The evaluation data did not permit systematic comparison of different program types' performance. Therefore, it is unclear if unconditional cash transfers performed better than cash for work in shock responses, although a systematic review of impact evaluations of regular programs has cast doubt on the efficacy of cash for work (Bagga et al. 2023).

Figure 3.4. Timeliness of COVID-19 Response



Source: Independent Evaluation Group based on the portfolio review and country data from IPC-IG 2021.

Note: The total number of countries with timeliness data that overlap with the ASP portfolio is 48. Timeliness is defined as the number of days between the "stay at home" order in a country and the average days it took programs to disburse to beneficiaries. Speed levels are quartiles of the distribution of timeliness across countries. No data are available for high-risk countries in the Europe and Central Asia Region; therefore, it is excluded. AFE = Eastern and Southern Africa; AFW = Western and Central Africa; EAP = East Asia and Pacific; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; MENA = Middle East and North Africa; SAR = South Asia.

Box 3.6. The Dominican Republic's Timely Shock Responses

The Dominican Republic is a standout case for its timely social protection response during the COVID-19 pandemic, enabled by a well-developed system for identifying and reaching beneficiaries and World Bank catastrophe deferred drawdown option funding. The World Bank disbursed funding within days, contributing to a faster response. The time between declaring an emergency and disbursing payments was just 15 days for the Stay at Home program and 19 days for the Employee Solidarity Assistance Fund, performing well compared with international standards and most other countries in the pandemic (Beazley et al. 2021; IPC-IG 2021).

Moreover, the Employee Solidarity Assistance Fund program expanded to support nearly 700,000 formal workers, and the Stay at Home program provided aid to 900,000 households, later expanding to 719,000 more by December 2020 (World Bank 2023a). This rapid expansion helped buffer an estimated 6 percentage point increase in poverty (World Bank 2023a).

Sources: Beazley et al. 2021; Independent Evaluation Group country case study; IPC-IG 2021; World Bank 2023a.

Timeliness of the World Bank's Preparation and Disbursements

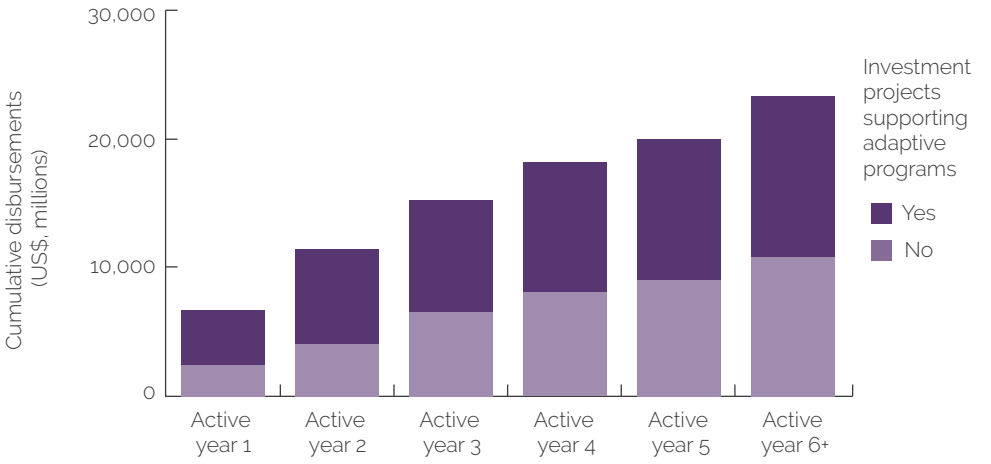
This evaluation did not find a statistical link between the World Bank's project preparation and disbursement times and the timeliness of countries' SP responses to COVID-19. Although multiple factors determine the timeliness of country responses, it is reasonable to assume that the World Bank's timely project preparation and disbursement are a necessary but insufficient condition for achieving timely country responses. However, the analysis did not confirm this assumption, with none of the pairwise correlations between the World Bank's project preparation or disbursement times and the timeliness of countries' responses statistically significant.[3] The strength of countries' delivery chains is likely the more important factor in timely program expansions and payouts to beneficiaries.

Investment projects that supported ASP disbursed relatively quickly. ASP programs—such as those supporting horizontal and vertical

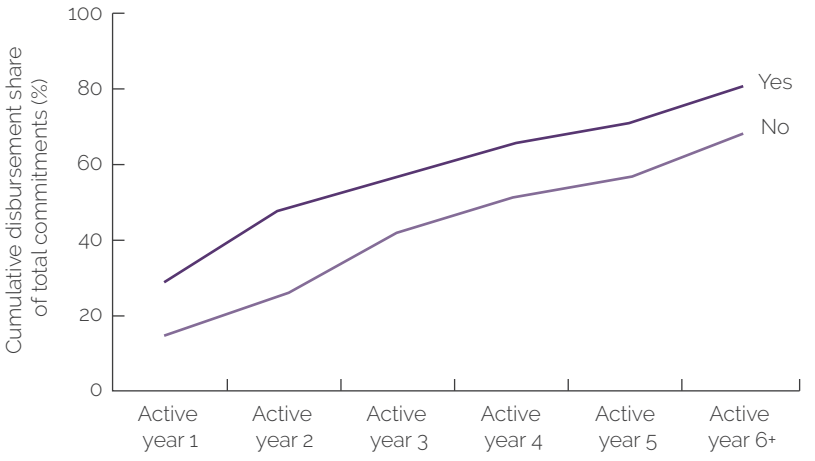
expansions—disbursed just less than 30 percent of commitments within the first year, compared with 15 percent for projects not supporting any of these programs. This initial faster pace persisted throughout the duration of the projects and sped up during the pandemic years (figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5. Disbursement for Adaptive Social Protection and Other Projects in the Evaluation Portfolio

a. Cumulative disbursements



b. Share of cumulative disbursements



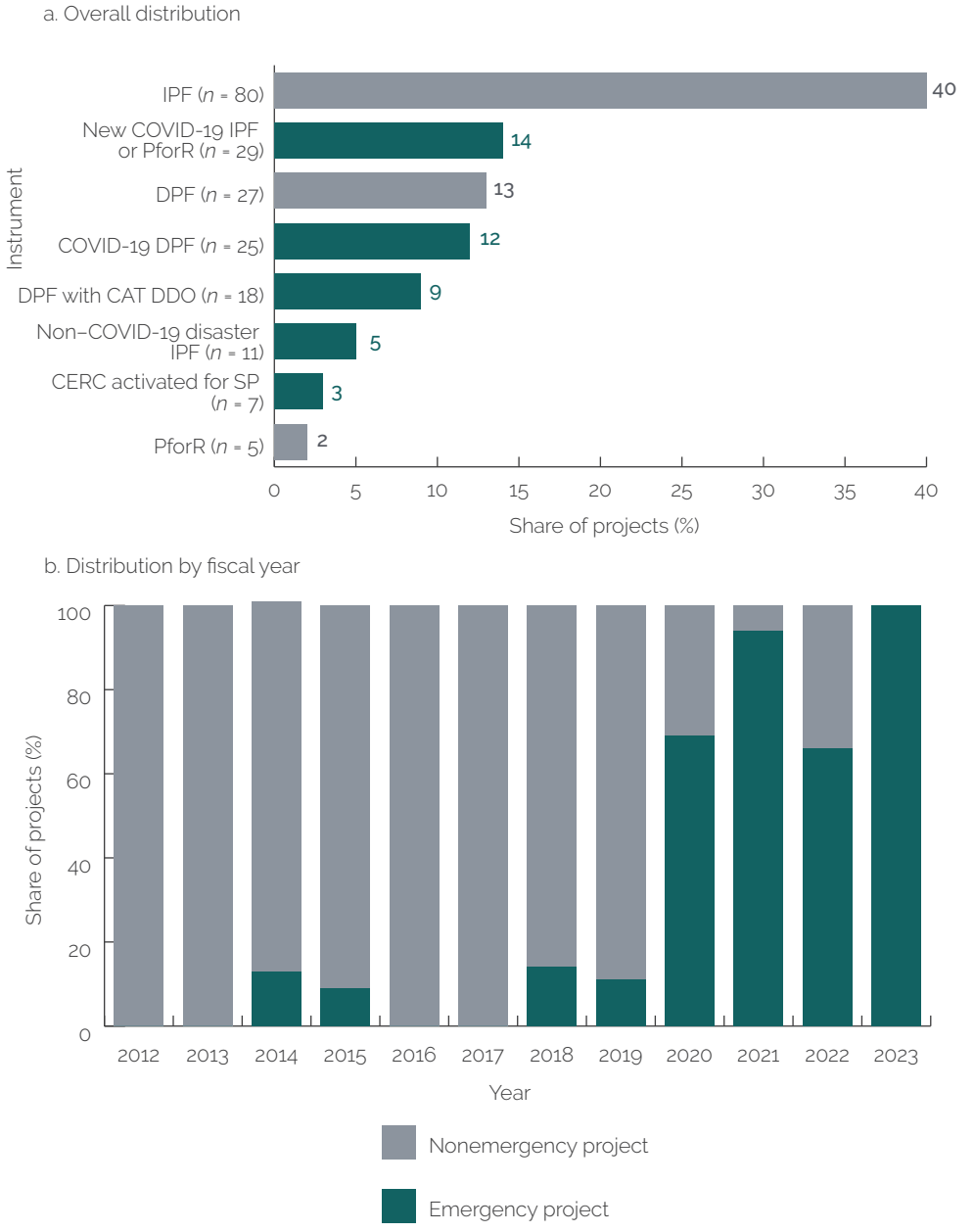
Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

The World Bank delivered more than half of its financing through emergency instruments and tools, leading to faster SP response disbursements after

2018. Contingent and emergency instruments in the ASP portfolio included COVID-19 investments and policy financing operations, development policy financing (DPF) with a CAT DDO, projects with Contingent Emergency Response Components activated for SP, and disaster response investments unrelated to the pandemic (figure 3.6). Some of these instruments disburse directly to treasuries, providing immediate liquidity to governments and relying on their systems to implement. IEG's analysis of instruments' disbursement speed shows that COVID-19 investment project financing and PforR started disbursing much sooner after approval and maintained faster rates of disbursement compared with regular investment project financing and PforR (figure 3.7). Disbursement rates increased after 2018, coinciding with both greater use of these instruments and the pandemic. In addition, CAT DDOs in the portfolio provided rapid financing for responses to many shocks after 2018. CAT DDOs enabled responses not only to COVID-19 (6 out of the 16 activated CAT DDOs in the portfolio) but also to droughts, tropical storms, floods, landslides, and a volcanic eruption. Five out of the 16 activated CAT DDOs addressed recurrent shocks. Kenya activated a CAT DDO twice in response to flooding and landslides in 2019 and again in response to COVID-19 in 2020. Contingent Emergency Response Components activated for SP responses also disbursed relatively rapidly. The World Bank's Mozambique program prepared its entire portfolio to respond to crises by providing every project with a Contingent Emergency Response Component.

The World Bank supplemented the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and regular IDA financing with special IDA funds and trust funds for shock responses. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and regular IDA financing provided the bulk of the financing for the portfolio of $53 billion. IDA special windows, including the Crisis Response Window and the refugee subwindow, delivered a total of $975 million. Trust funds provided an estimated $2 billion, often channeled through emergency instruments, with 61 percent supporting countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. MDTFs were an important funder and enabler of ASP in several of the cases (Ethiopia, Mozambique, and the Sahel), financing responses to both sudden-onset and slow-onset disasters. MDTFs made ASP funding more readily available and enhanced donor coordination.

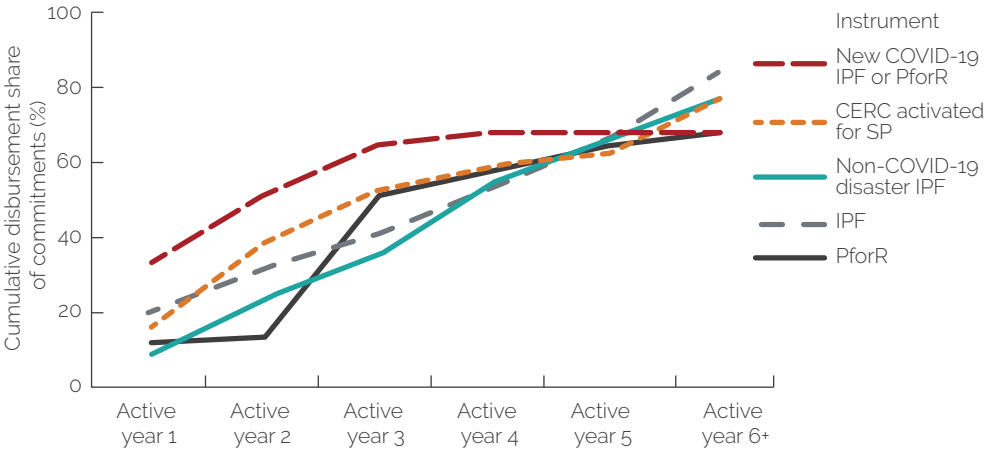
Figure 3.6. Distribution of Instruments in the Financing Portfolio



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: N = 202 projects. Panel a shows shares of projects by type of instrument. Panel b shows the distribution of projects across fiscal years by the type of instrument; the fiscal year is the activation year for DPF with CAT DDO and projects with CERC activated for SP, and the approval year for all other instruments. CAT DDO = catastrophe deferred drawdown option; CERC = Contingent Emergency Response Component; DPF = development policy financing; IPF = investment project financing; PforR = Program-for-Results; SP = social protection.

Figure 3.7. Disbursements in Investment Projects by Active Year and Type of Instrument



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: CERC = Contingent Emergency Response Component; IPF = investment project financing; PforR = Program-for-Results; SP = social protection.

Box 3.7. Versatile Use of the International Development Association's Emergency Tools in Ethiopia

Ethiopia's social protection sector has been a significant beneficiary of the World Bank's emergency financing mechanisms, such as the International Development Association (IDA) Crisis Response Window (CRW), IDA Window for Host Communities and Refugees, and the Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC). Altogether, IDA provided credits of US$221 million through the CRW and US$75 million from the Window for Host Communities and Refugees for various emergency responses.

IDA CRW helped the Productive Safety Net Program respond to severe droughts in 2015–16 and 2017–18 via two additional financing operations that helped provide disaster assistance to 3.6 million people in drought-affected areas, including 1.4 million core Productive Safety Net Program beneficiaries and 2.3 million not previously covered.

A CERC in the Urban Productive Safety Net and Jobs Project was activated to support conflict-affected internally displaced persons and returnees. A subsequent additional financing channeled IDA Window for Host Communities and Refugees, regular IDA,

(continued)

Box 3.7. Versatile Use of the International Development Association's Emergency Tools in Ethiopia (cont.)

and trust funds to scale up public works, host community-refugee integration, and provide youth employment and safety nets for internally displaced persons.

IDA CRW financed another CERC under the Strengthen Ethiopia's Adaptive Safety Net project to support food security crises response. The project combined a preapproved CERC financed from IDA CRW and additional financing to provide shock-responsive safety net transfers to 2.9 million additional beneficiaries for three months, in addition to routine transfers to core beneficiaries from the regular program resources.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group based on project documents.

[1] While most projects in the portfolio had no timeliness measure, those that did have it measured timeliness with reference to an administrative due date for payments, or it was unclear how timeliness was defined. Measuring timeliness with respect to an administrative due date is appropriate for regular payments, but the timeliness of shock response payments should be measured relative to the occurrence of the shock, addressing the actual need for support.

[2] In addition to the government, NGOs also provide lean season assistance. The criteria, transfer value, and so on align across the board, enabled by a coordination platform for all actors.

[3] IEG developed three measures of response timeliness using data from the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth's "Social Protection Responses to COVID-19 in the Global South: Tracking Matrix": (i) timeliness for all SP interventions in the country (that is, horizontal and vertical expansions and changes in implementation); (ii) timeliness for horizontal expansions; and (iii) timeliness for vertical expansions. IEG defined timeliness around elapsed days until payments to beneficiaries started. The analysis does not necessarily extend to responses to shocks other than COVID-19.

4 | Challenges and Success Factors

Highlights

Government commitment is necessary to strengthen routine social protection (SP) and prepare it for shock response. This commitment depends on policymakers' belief and interest in SP, political incentives, champions, and public support. It influences the fiscal space and determines the financial resources necessary to sustain countries' commitments to adaptive SP.

The absence of clear institutional mandates for SP is a barrier to implementing effective adaptive SP.

Interagency collaboration among the World Bank, its clients, and development partners has improved, often supported by trust fund resources, but the case studies indicate room for further progress.

The World Bank has improved its internal collaboration between SP and other sectors, but there are still barriers to greater coherence between SP and disaster risk management.

This chapter analyzes the challenges that impeded the World Bank's ASP efforts and the factors that explain their successes. The chapter looks at the challenges and enablers from within countries, from partner collaboration, and from internal World Bank coordination. It finds that political commitment, clear institutional mandates, and effective coordination are critical enablers for successful ASP systems, while fragmented institutional frameworks and uncoordinated efforts both with partners and within the World Bank obstruct the effectiveness of ASP. These factors have been identified by applying an inductive approach to the case studies and taking guidance from DeCODE (Delivery Challenges in Operations for Development Effectiveness) taxonomy. The findings have been triangulated across cases and other sources of evidence, including the portfolio review analysis.

Challenges and Enablers from Countries

Countries' political commitment to the use of SP in shock response is a fundamental enabler for successful ASP. This is illustrated in table 4.1, which shows the evaluation's cross-case analysis of enabling factors for effective ASP (for the field-based case studies). The case studies show that a major constraint to building adaptable SP systems in Lebanon, Mozambique, and Nepal was that the country governments did not prioritize SP. The literature review highlights that adequate resources, strong technical capacity, and political will are key even in countries with legislative frameworks for SP. The portfolio analysis further suggests that at least 20 percent of closed projects were adversely affected by challenges rooted in wavering political commitment, leading to implementation challenges in regular cash transfer programs, including delays, project restructurings, reduced targets, and underachievement of targets.

Table 4.1. Enabling Factors for Effective Adaptive Social Protection Identified by Field-Based Case Studies

Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
Commitment and leadership	Political commitment and leadership	x	√	√	√	x	x
	Fiscal space and budgetary contributions	x	√	√	√	x	x
Human resources and organizational capacity	Social protection strategies	x	x	√	√	√	x
	Institutional capacity	x	√	√	√	x	x
	Institutional landscape for social protection	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Adaptive social protection readiness	√	√	√	√	x	x
External resource allocation for shock response	Emergency financing	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Disaster risk financing strategy in relation to social protection or contingency finances	√	x	√	√	x	√
World Bank internal factors	Client relationships and partner collaboration	√	x	√	√	x	x
	Staff capacity and in-country presence	√	√	x	√	√	√
	Cross-sectoral collaboration within the World Bank	x	x	√	√	√	x

Source: Independent Evaluation Group field-based case studies.

Note: = enabler; X = hindrance.

Fiscal space is another enabler of effective SP systems and correlates closely with political commitment. Fiscal space determines the financial resources

available to operationalize and sustain governments' commitments to SP (World Bank 2011). The cross-case analysis of enabling factors (table 4.1) shows a one-to-one relationship between political commitment and fiscal issues playing the role of enabler or barrier to ASP. The absence of political will is sometimes linked to concerns about the fiscal sustainability and recurrent nature of such programs. Some countries, nevertheless, have fiscal space for untargeted subsidies and in-kind assistance. In Burkina Faso, spending on food and in-kind transfers represented 1 percent of GDP, cash transfer programs 0.3 percent of GDP, and food subsidies 0.17 percent of GDP in 2021. Food distribution programs in Burkina Faso target those suffering from a shock and have a progressive incidence, but food subsidies mostly benefit the nonpoor population (World Bank 2024b). Mauritania's spending on the regular SSNs was about 11 percent of what it spent on fuel, grain, and fertilizer subsidies combined in 2022.[1]

Government strategies for SP and DRF strategies did not necessarily promote or hinder ASP's shock response capabilities. Development partners sometimes seek to address issues with political commitment and fiscal space by working with countries to develop strategies. DPF supported ASP strategies in Burkina Faso, Fiji, Madagascar, and Mauritania. The cross-case comparison (table 4.1) found that the presence or absence of government strategies for SP or DRF did not make a clear difference, while political will played a larger role for ASP.

Cash-based ASP systems often exist alongside in-kind assistance. The choice between cash and in-kind shock assistance has been much debated in literature and by practitioners. Cash transfers have lower transaction costs and improved transparency, but they are not always provided promptly (as seen in chapter 3), and they may not be adequate when food markets are disrupted. Moreover, inflation can increase recipients' preference for in-kind support given the devalued transfer values, as seen in Ethiopia (Gentilini et al. 2024).

Institutional and political interests also influence countries' preference for using cash or in-kind assistance. Political incentives sometimes favor in-kind assistance immediately after sudden-onset disasters because distributing in-kind assistance makes the government's assistance visible to all. In

Senegal, despite years of investment in the SP system and advocacy for cash transfers, the president opted to distribute bags of rice during the COVID-19 pandemic for better media coverage (Kreidler et al. 2022). Burkina Faso has ceased using cash in three provinces, for use both in regular and in shock response programs, out of concerns that the money could possibly be used to support nonstate armed groups. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the city of Bogotá provided direct food assistance to vulnerable families affected by the lockdown. Similar preferences for in-kind assistance were noted in Mozambique and the Philippines, where political considerations shaped shock responses. In Mozambique, the DRM agency operates a robust network of warehouses and logistics, with backing from the World Bank and other donors. Redirecting resources toward ASP in such cases would shift funding from the warehouse infrastructure toward SP agencies, challenging established response mechanisms and institutional interests. This underscores the fact that, as a sector, SP rarely has strong political interests defending it.

The World Bank was able to advance ASP initiatives in countries where political and institutional interests favored cash-based assistance. The World Bank was able to build on political support for ASP in some case countries, such as Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mauritania, and Pakistan. However, the World Bank had limited influence when political alliances centered on long-established food distribution networks made governments favor in-kind assistance, seen in many Sahelian countries. The World Bank has used DPF to drive change, although success depends on strong internal collaboration and careful coordination with development partners.

Funding for shock response, which the World Bank helps mobilize, was a strong enabler for responding to shocks. The World Bank mobilized donor funds in MDTFs or used its emergency and contingency instruments. Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Nepal all used MDTFs for shock response. Burkina Faso and Mauritania benefited from World Bank–executed funds (SASSP), leading to more reliable shock response funding. Colombia and the Dominican Republic used CAT DDOs to ensure timely availability of funding for disaster response.

Shocks often enhance public support for ASP, but during a crisis is not the ideal time to build the necessary systems. Crises heighten policymakers' appreciation of SP's value and expose system weaknesses (Grosh et al. 2022;

World Bank 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic drove the expansion of ASP in many countries, along with the World Bank's investment in it. However, few countries in the middle of a crisis response can simultaneously strengthen their systems (Grosh et al. 2011; Isik-Dikmelik 2012; Marzo and Mori 2012; World Bank 2011). That said, the urgency among policymakers for strengthening SP programs during peacetime is sometimes weak.

Fragmented institutional arrangements, overlapping mandates, and strained interinstitutional relationships within the government hinder effective ASP. The evaluation found this in all case studies (table 4.1) and most acutely in countries affected by FCV. The stress test in the Sahel suggests that "in most countries in the Sahel, the institutional landscape for ASP lacks strong anchoring, clear roles, and robust coordination mechanisms for government agencies and external partners involved in shock or [DRM]" (Coudouel et al. 2023, 12). In the Sahel, food security agencies oversee lean season support, operating in parallel with the SP agencies. Country case studies highlight how these institutional challenges play out in practice. In many cases, limited collaboration between SP and disaster management agencies exacerbated inefficiencies. In Nepal's context of interministerial rivalries, resistance to consolidating programs or clarifying institutional roles prevented more streamlined and effective service delivery.

Countries' institutional arrangements, therefore, shape the World Bank's space for advancing ASP. The evaluation's literature review and interviews underscored the need to understand how the country context helps in strengthening or undermining shock responses. In other words, dialogue and investment need to be grounded in an understanding of the country's institutional landscape—such as the agencies involved in providing various types of assistance, the degree of policy coherence, the extent of cross-sectoral coordination, and the level of political ambition regarding SP.

The World Bank has not given these institutional arrangements sufficient attention in its DPF. IEG's analysis of DPF's prior actions related to the advocacy and influencing for improved policies, plans, and collaboration cluster found low country coverage of such policy actions (table 4.2). There were many more DPF prior actions on DRM than there were on SP in the evaluation's portfolio. Exceptions include a DPF (P173558) in Fiji in 2021

that supported a policy framework for protecting poor and vulnerable people by delivering targeted and adaptable social assistance programs, specifying conditions for providing assistance after cyclones and floods. Another exception was in Pakistan, where a DPF (also in 2021) promoted intergovernmental coordination for nutrition-sensitive cash transfer programs.

The World Bank has not always tailored its advice to countries' institutional arrangements. Stakeholder interviews suggest that the World Bank's advice to countries sometimes propose unrealistic models better suited to more advanced countries. This was the case in Lebanon, Mozambique, and Nepal, where the World Bank's support was not completely adapted to country context. Some cases found that the World Bank did not always pay as close attention to institutional mandates, turf issues, and other political economy issues as desirable. For example, in Nepal, the World Bank developed a sophisticated integrated social registry framework, when the country did not have a basic social registry in place. Interviews with client country interlocutors suggest that the World Bank was "too ambitious and, therefore, was not successful in operationalizing the concept." Moreover, the team's review of the World Bank's ASP framework found that the framework did not consider institutional factors in a structured manner, suggesting that staff lack adequate formal guidance on how to take institutional factors into account as they operationalize the ASP framework.

Table 4.2. Development Policy Financing Prior Actions on Social Protection Policies, Plans, and Collaboration

Subcluster	Countries (no.)	Share of High-Risk Countries in Portfolio (%; *N* = 67)	DPF Projects, Including CAT DDO (no.)	CAT DDO (no.)
Stand-alone disaster risk management support	11	16	16	14
Supporting the development of a social protection strategy on the role of social protection for shock response	4	6	5	2

(continued)

Subcluster	Countries (no.)	Share of High-Risk Countries in Portfolio (%; *N* = 67)	DPF Projects, Including CAT DDO (no.)	CAT DDO (no.)
Strengthening the collaboration between the government's social protection and disaster risk management institutions	3	4	4	2
Supporting the integration of social protection as a shock response in the disaster risk management strategy	1	1	1	1

Source: Independent Evaluation Group analysis of DPF in the portfolio.

Note: CAT DDO = catastrophe deferred drawdown option; DPF = development policy financing.

Challenges and Enablers from Client Relationships and Partner Collaboration

Improving responses to covariate shocks often requires coherence among central and local government authorities, humanitarian agencies, and development partners. Humanitarian actors—United Nations agencies and international and national civil society organizations—are often responsible for delivering shock responses where government ownership of or capacity for ASP is limited. Therefore, it is important for ASP to strengthen the coherence between humanitarian and development actors—often referred to as "bridg[ing] the humanitarian-development divide" (European Commission 2019, 21).

The World Bank often leads or participates in coordination platforms; these have sometimes built consensus on response strategies among government actors, development partners, and humanitarian organizations (Coudouel et al. 2023; O'Brien et al. 2018; UNICEF 2019; WFP 2023). The evaluation portfolio analysis shows that the World Bank initiated or participated in ASP coordination in 63 percent of the countries. The Dominican Republic stands

out as a positive example, where the ASP working group was instrumental in building capacity. Ethiopia is another example (box 4.1). In addition, the World Bank facilitated joint learning and knowledge exchanges in 26 percent of the countries, serving as effective platforms to bring different actors together and foster peer-to-peer discussions. For example, in Burkina Faso, joint planning exercises, facilitated by SASPP both before and after the lean season, played a key role in harmonizing vertical expansions. Surprisingly, the stress test tool does not have a single question that refers to the quality of country partnerships and has only one question that looks at coordination.

Box 4.1. The World Bank's Role in Ethiopia's Rural Safety Net Program Commended by an Annual Review by the United Kingdom

Key informants confirmed that the World Bank plays an "indispensable" role in Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program. Donor partners acknowledge the World Bank's significant financial contributions, along with its extensive technical assistance and efforts to ensure effective coordination. They particularly appreciated the work of the donor coordination team, especially under challenging circumstances. The team's adaptive capacity was commended, and the coordinator's efforts were described as "extremely effective at improving communication between donors, and between donors and the government" (FCDO 2022, xxii).

Source: FCDO 2022.

The World Bank has improved how it works with the humanitarian system, but collaboration at times remains a challenge. Interviews with partners showed a perception that, over time, the World Bank has improved how it works with the humanitarian system but does not yet fully understand how it operates. There are reports that development partners and humanitarian agencies in some cases give conflicting advice to governments on how to best address covariate shocks (WFP 2023). In Colombia, the World Bank did not frequently participate in coordination platforms relevant to ASP. Similarly, in Mozambique, the World Bank's relationships with other development partners have improved, but there is still no joint vision on ASP, and there was no indication of a close partnership with WFP, as seen in

other countries. Beyond such donor coordination, the evaluation's portfolio analysis found that the World Bank supported project-specific partnerships in 27 percent of the countries, most frequently with WFP (for example, for delivering cash transfers). This is evidence of third-party implementation and similar arrangements taking root.

Strong partnerships and coordination mechanisms were often funded by trust funds. The evaluation found several examples of successful trust fund–supported partnerships, donor coordination on ASP, and joint learning initiatives, including in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nepal, and the Sahel. In the Sahel, the World Bank and WFP have a structured collaboration in four out of the six countries—one of the ways in which SASPP has benefited from a dedicated trust fund (World Bank 2023d).

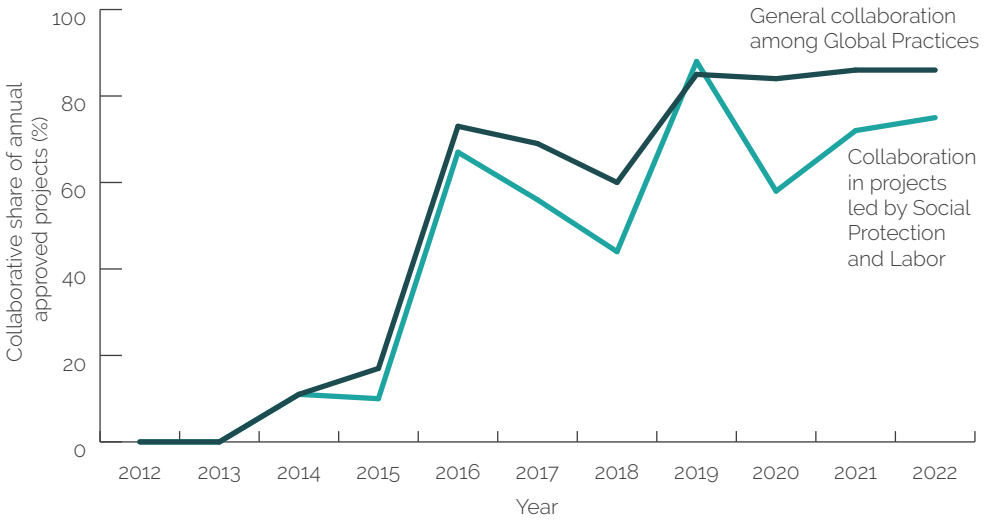
The presence of specialized SP staff in-country enabled successful partnerships and promoted ASP work. IEG's evaluation of SSN suggested that "it is critical to have specialized [SP] staff in a country who have both political economy knowledge and the ability to move dialogue on [SP] forward by having good working relationships with members of government and other stakeholders" (World Bank 2011, 66). The evaluation's case studies found the same. In Burkina Faso, key informants highlighted the positive impact of extending the team's presence and adding a humanitarian post funded by SASPP. This led to better integration of the World Bank's work on ASP and stronger alignment with other shock response efforts in the country. In contrast, in the Dominican Republic, the absence of World Bank technical staff in the field was seen as a limitation by some partners and government counterparts, despite generally good collaboration within the ASP group. They noted that this lack of presence reduced opportunities for coordination and World Bank technical oversight.

Challenges and Enablers from Cross-Sectoral Collaboration Within the World Bank

Internal collaboration between SP and other World Bank sectors engaged in emergency response has been improving. The inherent multidisciplinary nature of emergency response requires coordination and collaboration primarily among three Global Practices within the World Bank: Finance, Competitiveness, and

Innovation; Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience, and Land; and Social Protection and Labor. Figure 4.1 shows that the share of projects with collaboration across these Global Practices increased over the evaluated period.

Figure 4.1. Cross-Sectoral Collaboration over Time



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Internal collaboration is more often focused on developing digital payment systems than on ensuring reliable financing. The evaluation portfolio indicates that 43 percent of the projects led by Social Protection and Labor in the evaluation portfolio were co-led by Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation. Of these, 95 percent focused on strengthening regular programs, including payment systems. For example, the World Bank collaborated with the government of Mozambique to establish digital payment systems as part of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2016–22). However, only 27 percent of projects co-led by Social Protection and Labor and Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation focused on DRF. Several DRF strategies connected with SP, such as in Ecuador, Jamaica, the Philippines, and Tonga, whereas DRM diagnostics or DRF strategies in Guatemala and Panama show limited references to SP. In Ethiopia, the Country Climate and Development Report excludes any recommendations related to SP (World Bank Group 2024a), even as some of its underlying analytics (for example, on climate and DRF) would have naturally suggested it.

Effective coordination and collaboration on SP and DRM interventions are not always achieved despite the shared goals of both (Cubas et al. 2022). The stress tests in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Sahel reinforce this finding. The stress test in Latin America and the Caribbean highlights that "given that [SP] and DRM are the cornerstones of ASP systems, it is imperative for the World Bank to maintain and strengthen their alignment for higher impact" (Tisei and Ed 2024, 93). Achieving greater coherence will require close collaboration, but the evaluation portfolio also suggests that only 14 percent of projects led by Social Protection and Labor were co-led by Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience, and Land (the Global Practice that houses DRM). Stakeholder interviews further reveal that these collaborations were mostly driven by the need to operationalize projects. The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, for example, mandates the involvement of different sectors in their proposals, according to interviews, to access trust fund grants. More recently, we see the use of DPF, including CAT DDOs to foster cross-sector collaboration within the World Bank.

Several structural factors make collaboration between DRM and SP challenging. The World Bank links units' budgets to tasks mapped to those units, which creates adverse incentives for cross-unit collaboration (World Bank 2021b). Moreover, DRM and SP each operate with their own internal logic, intervention types, counterparts, and resources. Each Global Practice operates with limited resources, which restricts its ability to draw on specialists from other practices, unless trust funds are available. At the country level, governments often place DRM and SP under different ministries, fostering siloed work. Some World Bank strategy documents mirror this distinction; for example, in Colombia and Mozambique, DRM and SP are placed under separate objectives in the country program strategies, potentially leading to differing focuses and priorities. DRM and SP also have differing perspectives: DRM tends to focus on a spatial approach to crisis, whereas SP views them through a livelihood lens and their impact on people, according to staff interviews. IEG's 2011 SSN evaluation found similar barriers to cross-practice collaboration (World Bank 2011). Time will tell if the recent prominent featuring of ASP in Bank Group corporate documents—for example, on crisis response and food security—will result in a more joined-up approach.

[1] The government reduced spending on fuel subsidies in 2023, resulting in a ratio of SSN to commodity subsidies of about 0.27 (World Bank 2023d).

5 | Conclusions and Recommendations

The objectives of ASP are to build household resilience to covariate shocks and to improve the responsiveness of SP systems after a shock. These objectives are to be achieved by preparing existing SP systems to respond promptly to shocks and by connecting SP, DRM, and climate change adaptation to build resilience. All of this makes sense in a world where shocks and crises are increasing in frequency and severity and have become commonplace in some countries and where the humanitarian response system is stretched beyond its capacity. The World Bank has so far focused on enhancing social assistance programs' ability to respond to shocks, a meaningful subset of these objectives and a logical extension of the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice's business line in strengthening SSNs.

Overall, this evaluation finds that ASP remains a highly relevant focus area for SP and that the World Bank contributed to making SP systems more adaptive to shocks. The World Bank made substantial contributions to building countries' capacity to deliver safety nets for both routine purposes and shock response. However, the performance of these systems during shocks was often inadequate in coverage, timeliness, and adequacy because of limited financing, political economy challenges, and institutional shortcomings.

The World Bank provided valuable knowledge and financing contributions that strengthened SP systems. It produced useful data, concepts, frameworks, and technical tools that enriched global and national deliberations, fostering a shared understanding of ASP. Its ASP framework and stress testing tool are useful for understanding how to build SP systems with adaptive elements but less useful for helping staff navigate countries' political and institutional constraints. The World Bank has expanded its financing for SP systems sharply, effectively using contingent and emergency financing instruments to boost its support for ASP in responses to shocks. This expansion in commitments is testimony to unprecedented political recognition of the effectiveness of SP for shock responses. The Bank Group's expanded

Crisis Preparedness and Response Toolkit, approved in February 2024, offers even further options for fast disbursing financing to countries.

Looking back on IEG's 2011 SSN evaluation, the World Bank has made substantial progress on three of the four recommendations: support to institutions and systems, expanded engagement in low-income countries, and building safety nets that can help countries respond to shocks. It has made limited progress on the monitoring and evaluation recommendation, continuing the practice of reporting basic counts of program beneficiaries (table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Progress on Implementing Recommendations from *Social Safety Nets: An Evaluation of World Bank Support, 2000–2010*

2011 IEG Evaluation	Management Response	2024 IEG Findings
Recommendation 1: Engage during stable times to build SSNs that can help countries respond effectively to shocks.	Management agrees that this is a desirable direction and one on which the [World] Bank can act.	The World Bank made substantial progress. It significantly increased its engagement to build country capacity to use safety nets as a shock response. However, shock responses often failed to deliver timely and adequate responses, although more mature social protection systems performed better in slow-onset than in sudden-onset shocks.

(continued)

2011 IEG Evaluation	Management Response	2024 IEG Findings
Recommendation 2: Support the development of SSN institutions and systems. The [World] Bank can further accelerate institution building, particularly in LICs, where capacity constraints are often severe and the building blocks for SSN administrative systems may need to be built from scratch.	The [World] Bank will engage in this work…[by] assisting countries to establish the "building blocks" of administrative capacity. These would include a targeting mechanism so programs reach the right beneficiaries, payment, and management information systems, and [M&E]. This work is already prominent in SSN operations and can be readily tailored to help in all country settings.	The World Bank made substantial progress. It supported core social protection systems in the vast majority of high-risk, low- and lower-middle-income countries and in situations of fragility, conflict, and violence. However, there is room to pay closer attention to countries' institutional landscape and foster stronger political commitment to ensure sustainability of social protection programs and use for shock response.
Recommendation 3: Increase SSN engagement in LICs…to develop SSNs that will protect their poorest and prepare for shocks. Depending on the country context, these may include improving country capacity, adapting SSN programs to the institutional environment, improving poverty data and analysis to identify the particularly vulnerable groups, and [ensuring] donor coordination for SSNs.	This is also a desirable direction, one that is highlighted in the social protection and labor strategy.	
Recommendation 4: Improve the results frameworks of [World] Bank–supported SSN projects. Project objectives need to be defined more precisely, monitorable key performance indicators need to be better aligned with those objectives, and accompanying M&E arrangements need to track their performance.	Management fully appreciates this recommendation. [An] internal review shows a positive trend: more recently approved projects have better results frameworks. However, there are also notable areas in which task teams can do better: formulating project development objectives and aligning monitorable indicators along the results chain.	The World Bank made limited progress. The results frameworks for the assessed operations insufficiently measured key social protection outcomes. IEG's 2011 findings on the use of "crude data on the number of people who have participated in the program, an exclusively process-related indicator that offers no insight into whether the program has had the required SSN impact" (World Bank 2011, 29) remain fully relevant today.

Sources: Independent Evaluation Group; World Bank 2011.

Note: IEG = Independent Evaluation Group; LIC = low-income country; M&E = monitoring and evaluation; SSN = social safety net.

SP systems too often delivered inadequate shock responses. Available evidence suggests that most countries expanded their safety net programs to respond to some type of shock, but these responses often fell short on indicators of timeliness, coverage, and adequacy. Countries especially struggled to quickly add nonbeneficiaries during crises, often reaching less than 10 percent of eligible affected populations. Programs' delivery systems faced issues with targeting, data interoperability, precrisis financial planning, and other constraints. Beyond the individual programs, countries faced challenges from limited financing, political disinterest toward SP, and institutional fragmentation that held back ASP's effectiveness. That said, more mature SP systems tended to offer more robust shock responses.

Challenges remain in integrating SP with DRM and climate change adaptation. Linking SP to DRM and climate adaptation involves cross-sector and cross-agency collaboration, which presents additional challenges compared with preparing SP systems to respond quickly to shocks. Consequently, ASP has not yet facilitated a shift away from humanitarian assistance to a systematic, country-owned approach. During shocks, ASP is often provided alongside humanitarian assistance, resulting in stronger burden sharing with humanitarian actors, improved coverage, and sometimes increased adequacy of benefits, but it can only play this role if it is funded by additional external resources. Furthermore, ASP has yet to demonstrate its effectiveness as a key component of climate adaptation strategies beyond vertical top-ups during lean season. ASP's origins in the Sahel were tied to the goal of enhancing household resilience to climate challenges. Despite this ambition, capacity and financing constraints have hindered the scaling of resilience-building activities, such as "productive inclusion" programs, in the region. To expand ASP's role in climate adaptation, significant efforts will be needed to address these institutional and financial barriers.

The World Bank has not set explicit targets for its ambitions with ASP. It has contributed to improved systems, scaled-up programs and shock responses, and, according to the Bank Group Corporate Scorecard, "has supported ASP systems in approximately 80 countries, covering a range of settings, and by 2030 aims to reach half a billion beneficiaries" (World Bank Group 2024b, 5). However, this goal is for regular SSN programs, and the World Bank has not set targets for adaptive responses, consistently measured key performance

criteria for ASP, or calibrated the size and role of ASP in relation to DRM. This matters. While overambition with respect to ASP can do harm because overstretched SP systems perform badly, it may not always make sense for the World Bank to support multiple modalities and delivery systems for postdisaster assistance in the same country.

Integrated approaches to risk management have been hampered by political dynamics and fragmentation across and within government agencies:

- Weak ministries: ASP is typically managed by politically weak ministries that lack the influence and resources to drive systemic changes without donor support.
- Silos among ministries, agencies, and the World Bank Global Practices.
- Political backing for in-kind aid: DRM institutions and food security agencies responsible for in-kind assistance have strong political support because such aid is highly visible during emergencies, unlike cash transfers, which mainly benefit poor people and are less politically appealing.
- Untargeted subsidies: Subsidies for food and energy serve powerful political interests and continue alongside ASP, with SP ministries lacking the leverage to repurpose fiscal resources used for subsidies.
- Humanitarian assistance alignment: Although ASP's prominence has raised expectations for better alignment with government systems, funding flows have not changed, as humanitarian donors rarely channel money through government systems.

Recommendations

This evaluation makes the following recommendations to prepare SP delivery systems for faster and more comprehensive coverage after shocks and to ensure that performance in delivering shock responses is systematically measured:

1. Continue investing in system building and expanded coverage, focusing on program elements that serve both regular and shock-responsive functions. This could include the following:

- Data and information systems:

- Expanding the coverage of social registries to include vulnerable populations, beyond existing beneficiaries, in both urban and rural areas.
- Linking EWSs with SP systems, with preidentified protocols and thresholds to trigger SP responses during shocks.

- Predictable finance:
  - Developing and implementing national DRF strategies that include prearranged funding mechanisms, such as contingency funds and insurance schemes, for more timely financial resources for ASP and to complement the World Bank's emergency financing.

- Leveraging more programs for shock response:
  - Preparing social insurance, economic inclusion, and labor market programs to contribute to shock responses, aiming for more comprehensive coverage.

2. Strengthen coordination between client government SP and DRM agencies, improve partnership with humanitarian agencies, and enhance internal collaboration within the World Bank for shock response. This could include the following:

- Client governments:
  - Supporting mechanisms for collaboration on shock response between clients' SP and DRM agencies, grounded in improved understanding of agency mandates. The stress test tool could be updated to include recommendations for cross-sector collaboration.
  - Ensuring the continuity of SP assistance in FCV contexts to foster social cohesion and mitigate some of the adverse effects of conflict, including for forcibly displaced populations.

- Humanitarian agencies and partners:
  - Strengthening the World Bank's collaboration with humanitarian actors, especially on data, risk analysis, programs, and financing.
  - Enhancing cooperation with partner organizations to allow flexibility and continuity of support in fragile contexts, for example via third-party implementation.

- World Bank internal:
  - Improving internal collaboration among World Bank teams from SP, DRM, and the Prosperity group on EWS, delivery systems, and financial preparedness. Consider incentivizing such collaboration through joint decision-making about trust fund allocations.

3. Enhance the measurement of SP systems' effectiveness in responding to shocks by setting performance targets, monitoring system performance with dynamic stress testing, and using the insights to guide future investments.

- Performance targets:
  - Define performance targets for shock preparedness and response that depend on SP systems' maturity. This could extend ongoing data collection for the Bank Group Corporate Scorecard on the reach of safety nets to also include coverage, timeliness, and benefit adequacy.
- Monitoring:
  - Collaborate with partners to conduct periodic stress testing to monitor progress toward strengthened SP systems for shock responses. This would render the existing stress testing tool more dynamic and more collaborative.
- Learning over time:
  - Use this performance data for knowledge sharing across countries and for discussions of investment priorities, resource needs, and levels of ambition.

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APPENDIXES

Independent Evaluation Group

How the World Bank Supports Adaptive Social Protection in Crisis Response

Appendix A. Methods

Scope and Questions

The evaluation covered project approval FY 2012–22, and the focus was on country-level social protection systems and responses. The 10-year period allowed the evaluation to capture evidence of effectiveness from the closed portfolio of lending projects with social protection activities. The period aligns with the World Bank's 2012–22 social protection and labor strategy and a particular interest in studying the World Bank's approach to adaptive social protection (ASP) since its inception in the Sahel.

The evaluation team took a consultative and modular approach to engagement. It engaged with World Bank management and project teams, operational support and Country Management Units, and technical experts to discuss sampling considerations, analyses, share preliminary findings, and receive feedback.

The evaluation aimed to answer two questions:

Evaluation question 1: To what extent has the World Bank support for ASP been relevant?

To answer this question, the evaluation included three subquestions:

- Evaluation question 1a: To what extent has the World Bank supported ASP elements in countries where vulnerability to covariate shocks is higher?
- Evaluation question 1b: To what extent has the World Bank incorporated ASP elements into its social protection support, and to what extent are these aligned with good practice and evidence of what works?
- Evaluation question 1c: To what extent is the World Bank ASP framework a realistic model in different settings?

Evaluation question 2: How effectively has the World Bank supported ASP outcomes (timeliness and adequacy of social protection response) in client countries?

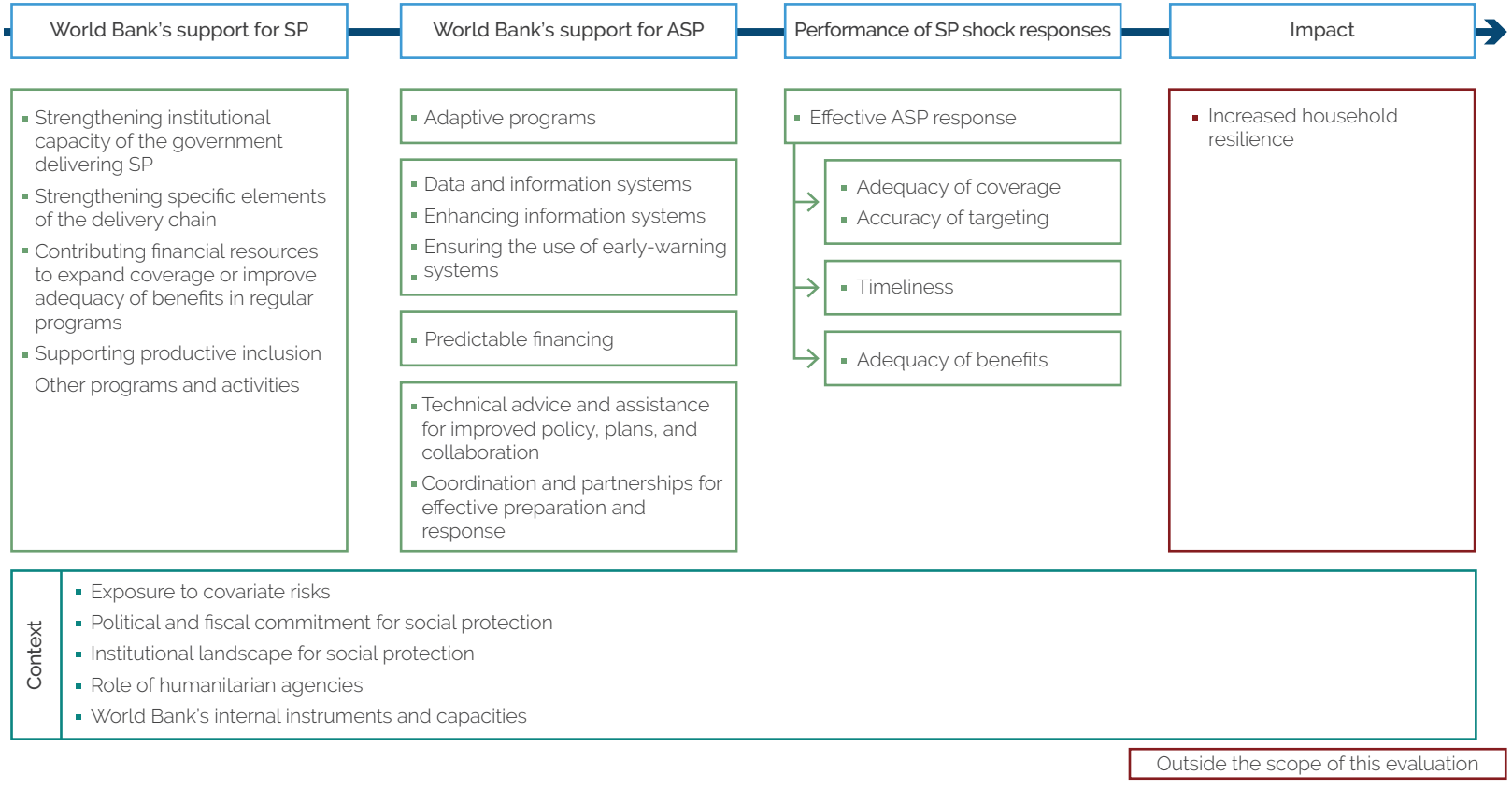
To answer this question, the evaluation included two subquestions:

- Evaluation question 2a: How effective has the World Bank's support been for ASP practices and activities?
- Evaluation question 2b: What has worked to achieve successful ASP outcomes in client countries? What factors explain success, and what was the role of the World Bank?

Conceptual Framework

The evaluation adopted a theory-based approach. It developed a detailed conceptual framework to guide its understanding of the World Bank's contributions to ASP in client countries. The framework was developed by consulting the building blocks from the World Bank's ASP framework—programs, data and information, finance, institutional arrangements, and partnerships (Bowen et al. 2020); structured literature review; a review of relevant Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) evaluations; and consultations with ASP experts. Figure A.1 is a simplified version of the team's more detailed conceptual framework.

Figure A.1. Conceptual Framework



Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: ASP = adaptive social protection; SP = social protection.

Defining Key Outcomes

As figure A.1 shows, the evaluation focused on timeliness, coverage, and adequacy of shock responses. The team's definitions for these outcomes (presented in chapter 3) built on "Social Protection Responses to COVID-19 in the Global South: Tracking Matrix" and a methodological note on "Social Protection Responses to COVID-19 in the Global South: Online Dashboard" (IPC-IG 2021a, 2021b).

Timeliness. For sudden-onset shocks, timeliness is defined in terms of the number of days between the shock (hurricane, earthquake, and so on) in the country and the implementation of social protection responses (excluding subsidies). For example, for COVID-19, in many cases, it is possible to count the number of days between the first COVID-19 case (World Health Organization declaration), or government declaration of an emergency, and the provision of new or scaled-up social assistance measures. Where available for World Bank–supported programming, the case study authors reviewed either the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth's database (IPC-IG 2021b) or government or media publications that mentioned the date of the first payment, date at which applications and registration started, or the date of budget disbursement. In addition, where possible, the case study authors reviewed response timeliness for vertical expansions to existing beneficiaries and horizontal expansions to new beneficiaries. For slow-onset disasters, the date of the shock is less exact, making assessment more complex, and the case study authors relied on various sources to determine when the crisis was considered sufficiently serious in different areas to require additional assistance. This is the case of lean season assistance in the Sahel, for example, where governments establish clear timelines for assistance (June, July, August).

Coverage. Measuring coverage relates to the proportion of people (or households) covered by programs as a proportion of the population affected by a shock. In the case of this evaluation, coverage expansions refer to the inclusion of previously uncovered individuals (or households) either through the expansion of an existing social protection program or a new intervention. Calculations are often difficult to make because of a lack of available, up-to-date, and accurate data on how program expansions relate to particular

shocks. The World Bank–supported programs tend to report cumulative beneficiary numbers without necessarily having an annual breakdown or connecting these annual beneficiary numbers to the numbers of people affected by particular shocks.

Adequacy. For social assistance, two key dimensions of adequacy are the value of transfers and the duration of transfers. The case study authors also assessed whether the monetary value of programs had increased relative to inflation. Duration is typically measured in months (although this was rarely measured or made available). In some cases, the team could consider the comprehensiveness of the assistance package to address the multidimensional needs of affected populations—that is, whether additional components are added, such as for health needs, livelihoods support, psychosocial support, addressing violence against women and girls, disability inclusion, and so on.

Methods Used

The evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach to answer key evaluation questions.

Structured Literature Review

The evaluation team conducted a structured literature review to identify good practices and evidence with respect to ASP, to assess the comprehensiveness of the World Bank ASP framework, and to understand what works and in what context more broadly. The review identified literature on ASP published in English, including both formal and gray sources. It focused on peer-reviewed scholarly sources (books, journal articles, and theses); gray literature from well-respected research institutes and think tanks; and reference documents from other international organizations with ASP-related projects, with the aim of exploring additional adaptive features emphasized by these organizations. The review used expert judgment to select and prioritize literature. Available stress tests were also reviewed to help understand levels of social protection maturity, and the evaluation team conducted various consultations and interviews with global social protection experts inside and outside the World Bank. Together, these helped put findings from

a more focused portfolio review and the case studies in context and answer the evaluation questions about the relevance of the World Bank's ASP framework and intervention areas.

Portfolio Review and Analysis

The evaluation team conducted portfolio analysis across 70 high-risk countries for both lending and nonlending support. For lending support, 67 out of the 70 countries had relevant social protection content, according to IEG's manual review of project documents, and for advisory services and analytics (ASA), 51 countries had relevant content on social protection or disaster risk financing.

The evaluation's portfolio included all lending operations where the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice is either a leading or contributing Global Practice. Lending operations consist of 202 projects in 67 high-risk countries and $52.6 billion in commitments approved between FY12 and FY22, which were manually reviewed and characterized against foundational, adaptive, and dual-use social protection interventions. This included identification of foundational social protection and ASP intervention areas in project development objectives and project components for investment project financing and Program-for-Results operations and development policy financing prior actions, an assessment of investment project financing and Program-for-Results results framework indicators and reported results achievement, and identification of project- and indicator-level factors of success and challenge. In addition, for a randomly selected 50 projects, gender-related activities were identified from Project Appraisal Documents using concepts defined in IEG's evaluation on gender equality over the past 10 years (World Bank 2024).

For ASA, the evaluation team (i) conducted a targeted keyword search to identify a purposive sample of 141 ASA addressing ASP,[1] which accounts for $141 million in total cumulative expenditures, and from which specific activities were reviewed in the country case studies; (ii) conducted a separate manual review of ASA to identify World Bank support to disaster risk financing;[2] and (iii) identified and reviewed ASA tied to lending operations.

The total number of ASA covered by the evaluation is 189 and accounts for $184 million in cumulative expenditures.

Country Case Studies

The evaluation team conducted six country case studies with in-country field visits and five desk-based case studies, selecting the countries by pursuing variation across cases using the following criteria: strength of World Bank engagement (including total engagement, emergency engagement, length of engagement, and coverage of social protection areas) and social protection maturity, exposure to shocks, political and institutional context of the country, income level, fragility status, and region. The team also considered logistical considerations. The selected countries were divided into two groups:

- Field-based case studies: Burkina Faso, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Mauritania, Mozambique, and Nepal.
- Desk-based case studies: Ethiopia, Jamaica, Lebanon, Pakistan, and the Philippines.

The evaluation team also selected 2–5 shocks to study in greater detail in each country, resulting in 34 shocks reviewed across cases (table A.1). The selection criteria led to nonrepresentation of the Europe and Centra Asia region, however, that has been represented in the portfolio.

Table A.1. Priority Shocks in Case Studies

Country	Sudden Onset	Slow Onset (Drought)	Forced Displacement: Internal displacement	Forced Displacement: Refugee influx	Pandemic	Other
Burkina Faso		Recurrent lean season	Internal displacement			
Colombia	Hurricane Iota and landslide Mocoa		Internal displacement	Venezuelan migration		
Dominican Republic	Hurricane Fiona					Dajabón border closure and San Cristóbal
Ethiopia		Drought	Internal displacement			
Jamaica	Hurricane Matthew					
Lebanon				Refugee influx		Port of Beirut
Mauritania		Recurrent lean season		Refugee influx		
Mozambique	Cyclones Idai and Kenneth	Drought				
Nepal	Earthquakes Gorkha and Jajarkot					
Pakistan			Internal displacement			
Philippines	Typhoon Rai (Odette)					

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: Shaded cells indicate the shocks that were covered by the evaluation. This is not an exhaustive list of all covariate shocks experienced by the countries during the evaluation period.

The team developed a protocol for the field-based case studies that covered the conceptual framework and evaluation questions. The team tested and refined the protocol in Colombia and then used it in the other cases. A shorter and less comprehensive protocol was also developed for the desk-based cases. Each of the case studies conducted document review of sources internal and external to the World Bank.

The field-based case study protocol outlined a systematic approach for conducting country case studies, assessing the effectiveness, timeliness, and adequacy of ASP interventions from 2012 to 2022. The protocol was informed by established case study methodologies and research, incorporating insights from the Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19 Expert Advice Service and academic frameworks on case study evaluation. It provided a structured case study format, requiring cases to follow an inverted pyramid structure, in which key findings were presented first, followed by supporting evidence. The document emphasized transparency in data limitations, ensuring that evaluators acknowledge constraints in available information. The protocol established a rigorous evaluation methodology, defining key indicators and identifying data sources, including World Bank project reports, external literature, and international databases (for example, the Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity, INFORM Risk Index, and the Social Protection Floor Index).

A stakeholder mapping tool was incorporated to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered. In line with the protocol, for the field-based case studies, the team conducted key informant interviews with World Bank staff (task teams, country management, and other experts); government counterparts, such as senior civil servants and social protection experts in relevant ministries; development partners; implementing partners from civil society and humanitarian actors; universities; and think tanks. The desk-based case studies had far fewer interviews and consequently less rich evidence.

Semistructured interviews were conducted involving a sequential purchase of information approach (Raimondo 2023), starting with broad open-ended questions on the factors that facilitated or hindered the materialization of the outcomes of interest, followed by structured questioning on the subset of variables of interest.

The case studies mapped project intentions against the building blocks, analytic clusters, and intervention areas; identified internal and external enabling and disabling factors; used rubrics to understand the levels of progress and strength of evidence, in some cases; and were reviewed multiple times by the evaluation team.

The team performed comparative cross-case analysis by mapping evidence of performance in shock responses to (i) shock types and (ii) enabling factors and hindrances.

In addition to the country case studies, the team conducted a more targeted review of World Bank support to the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program, given its importance in pioneering the concept of ASP.

Global Interviews with Partners

The team carried out semistructured "global interviews" outside the case studies, with respondents from partner agencies and academia. These interviews focused on eliciting the respondents' views on the evaluation questions.

World Bank Internal Expert Consultations

The team conducted several consultations with World Bank staff in social protection and disaster risk management. These consultations focused on validating the evaluation methodology, eliciting respondents' views on an emerging hypotheses, and ensuring that the results resonated with operational realities.

Country-Level Analysis of Responses to COVID-19

The team used the "Social Protection Responses to COVID-19 in the Global South: Tracking Matrix" produced by the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth to estimate country-level measures of the characteristics of countries' ASP responses to the pandemic. The rationale for using these data was to assess social protection responses to the only shock during the evaluation period that was common to all countries and the extent to which those responses were related to the World Bank Group's engagement. This matrix aimed to include all social protection responses to COVID-19 in the Global South (Beazley et al. 2021; IPC-IG 2021b). The data set included information

for 589 responses. There were responses from 121 countries, of which 53 matched the countries targeted in this evaluation.

Triangulation and Quality Assurance

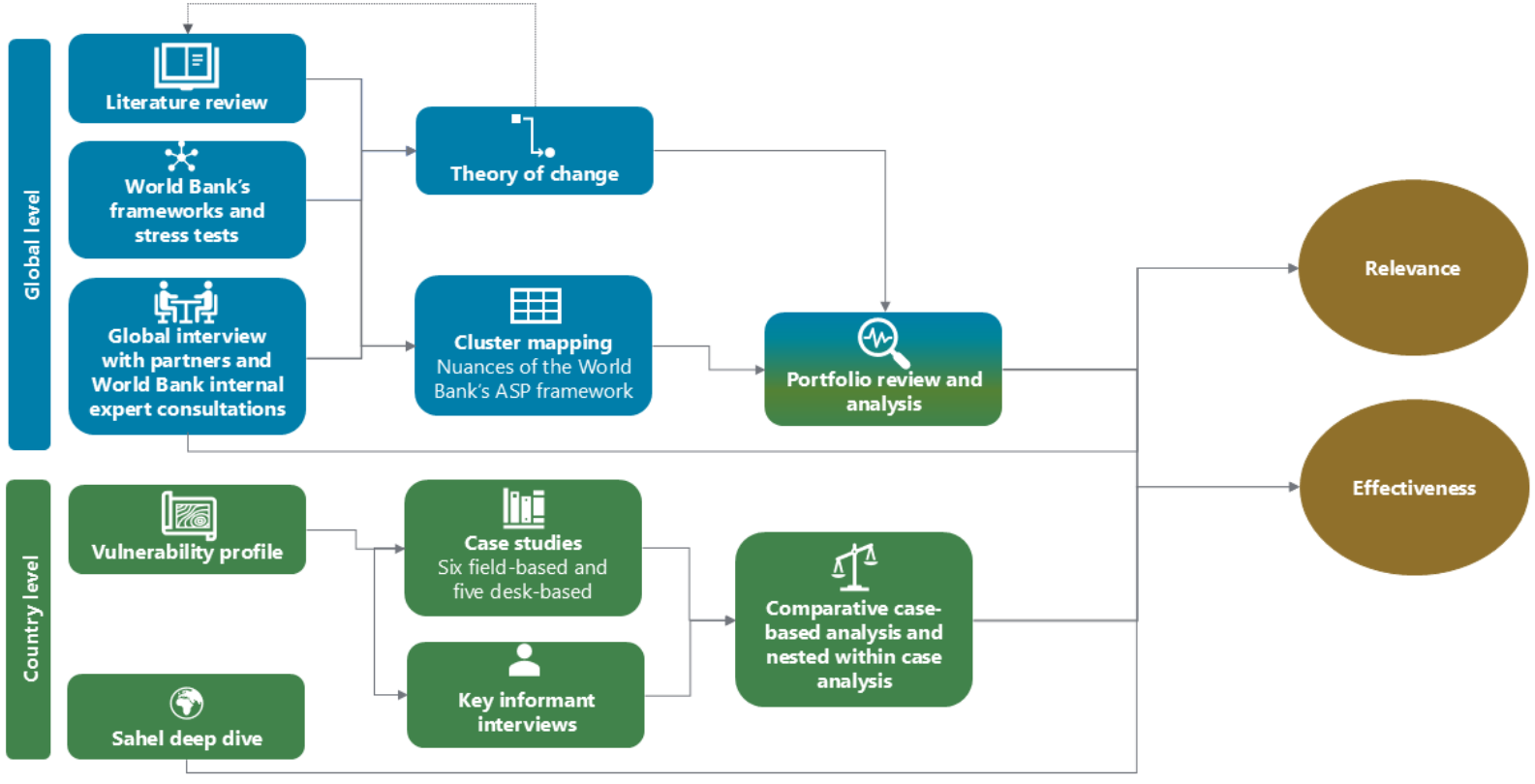
The team systematically triangulated the evidence and mapped it to the evaluation questions (figure A.2):

- Its triangulation within the case studies emphasized drawing on multiple sources of secondary data (all cases) and primary data (field-based cases) and considering the "probative value" of evidence—that is, the extent to which evidence makes a particular explanation better or worse.
- Its triangulation across the case studies covered revision of the theory of change, factors of effective shock responses, and comparison across shock types.
- It also triangulated between global interview informants and country case study informants.
- Many of the final findings resulted from triangulation among the portfolio, the case studies, and the literature review. For example, the team looked for ways to ensure findings from both the portfolio analysis and the case studies on similar topics. It also considered portfolio and case study findings taking into account the literature review's findings on good practices.

The evaluation team ensured evidence quality and integrity in multiple ways:

- The portfolio review ensured that more than one evaluator coded the data and that there was at least one reviewer of those data.
- Weekly team meetings provided regular opportunities for collective sensemaking and analysis.
- The evaluation team organized two analysis workshops to identify emerging key messages.
- The draft report underwent IEG's standard quality enhancement process with multiple discussions of emerging findings and a comprehensive peer review of the draft report.

Figure A.2. Methods and Triangulation



Source: Independent Evaluation Group.Note: ASP = adaptive social protection.

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[1] Two types of ASA were identified: (i) ASA with sign-off years between FY12 and FY22, containing the following keywords in at least one of the project names, development objectives, and deliverable names: "adaptive social protection," "adaptive," "strengthening systems," "stress test," "sahel," "saspp," "shock respons," and "shock-respons," and (ii) ASA led by Social Protection and Labor with sign-off years between FY12 and FY22, containing the following keywords in at least one of the project names, development objectives, and deliverable names: "disaster," "drf," "drm," and "hazard."

[2] This second ASA review was done on ASA signed off during FY12–23 and led by either Social Protection and Labor; Macroeconomics, Trade, and Investment; Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience, and Land; and Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation.

Appendix B. Portfolio Review and Analysis

This appendix documents portfolio identification strategies and portfolio review protocols used in the evaluation and provides descriptive analyses of these portfolios that complement the evidence presented in the main report.

Portfolio Identification

The evaluation's portfolio identification strategy involved several considerations that simultaneously informed the screening criteria for including and excluding projects and advisory services and analytics (ASA). This section unpacks these considerations, criteria, and their links.

Several considerations justify the importance of including projects and ASA with social protection involvement in the portfolio. First, the evaluation's cluster framework, developed by the evaluation team (see table 1.1) and based on the World Bank's adaptive social protection (ASP) framework's building blocks, is inherently tied to social protection and its emphasis on safety nets. Second, the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program contributions to World Bank financing support in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal involve social protection by definition and ensured the inclusion of relevant financing operations in the Sahel; they also provided additional conceptual guidance on ASP support (for example, through the *Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program: Annual Report—Fiscal Year 2022*; Coudouel et al. 2022). Finally, consultations with Social Protection and Labor staff helped identify important ASP projects from management's standpoint. Consequently, the evaluation includes projects with the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice as the leading or contributing Global Practice. This approach allowed the evaluation to capture (i) safety net interventions irrespective of what theme codes they were tagged with; (ii) projects and ASA that supported both regular and adaptive safety net programs, since both are important for building ASP systems; and (iii)

cross-sector collaboration, an important feature when responding to shocks and building ASP systems.

Conversely, the evaluation also included select projects and ASA with limited social protection involvement given the following reasons. First, the shock-responsive nature of ASP justified the importance of adding World Bank emergency response financing instruments irrespective of social protection involvement, including development policy operations with a catastrophe deferred drawdown option, and projects with the Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC). Projects with CERC and CERC activations for social protection purposes were identified through portfolio review or shared by Social Protection and Labor, and only CERCs activated for social protection were analyzed. Second, consultations with Social Protection and Labor staff also informed that World Bank financial and ASA contributions to preplanned risk financing and risk layering and to collaborations between Social Protection and Labor and Disaster Risk Management came primarily from non–Social Protection and Labor Global Practice. Collaboration was also potentially important in projects and ASA financed by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. These inputs led the evaluation to augment the portfolio with projects and ASA that did not necessarily involve social protection.

These elements also informed the evaluation period and choice of financing source. First, the evaluation covers projects approved and ASA initiated during FY 2012–22 that were active or closed by the final date of data extraction (April 2, 2024). The evaluation chose this period because it (i) allowed covering World Bank ASP support to the Sahel through the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program and (ii) added two years of project approvals before the Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program's launch (in 2014), capturing possible support leading up to the launch and increasing the number of closed operations for the analysis. Second, the evaluation considered all International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Development Association, and recipient-executed trust fund projects above $5 million approved within this period, which allowed it to focus on World Bank financing. The $5 million threshold guaranteed availability of documentation across countries at different income levels. The evaluation also reviewed previous Independent Evaluation Group

evaluations that assessed ASP at the portfolio level within the FY12–22 period, specifically *Reducing Disaster Risks from Natural Hazards: An Evaluation of the World Bank's Support, Fiscal Years 2010–20* (World Bank 2022), which offered a cross-checking mechanism to evaluate the relevance and usefulness of the portfolio identification strategy.

A final and important consideration is country coverage. The evaluation focuses on 70 high-risk countries (presented in figure B.1), with high risk defined as a country having high risk of humanitarian crisis likely to require international assistance due to it having a high risk of exposure to at least one of the following types of shock: (i) multiple types of shocks, (ii) hazard and exposure shocks (natural disasters and conflicts), and (iii) natural disaster shocks (earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, tropical cyclones, droughts, and epidemics). The multiple types of shocks category is an aggregate that includes shocks from the hazards and exposure category, a vulnerability category (socioeconomic and vulnerable groups), and a lack of coping capacity category (institutional capacity and infrastructure capacity).[1] A country also qualifies as being high risk if it is part of the Sahel, or if it is a non-high-income small state. This definition aligns with country-level information on exposure to different types of risk from the INFORM Risk Index 2023 (European Commission 2023) and incorporates feedback from counterparts in the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice on an initial list of high-risk countries identified by the evaluation team.[2, 3] Overall, applying this criterion allowed focusing the portfolio on countries in which ASP was suspected to be more relevant and made the evaluation's scope relatively more manageable.

In the specific case of ASA identification, three subsets are important to distinguish and describe. The first subset of ASA includes activities identified through text mining that focus on ASP. The text mining exercise used targeted keyword searches on activity names, development objectives, and deliverables and had two stages. Keywords for the first stage included "adaptive social protection," "adaptive," "strengthening systems," "stress test," "sahel," "saspp," "shock response," and "shock-response" and were applied to all ASA initiated between FY12 and FY22, regardless of the lead Global Practice. This stage sought to capture cross-sectoral support to ASP. The second stage used the keywords "disaster," "drf," "drm," and "hazard" but only applied them to activities initiated in FY12–22 led by Social Protection

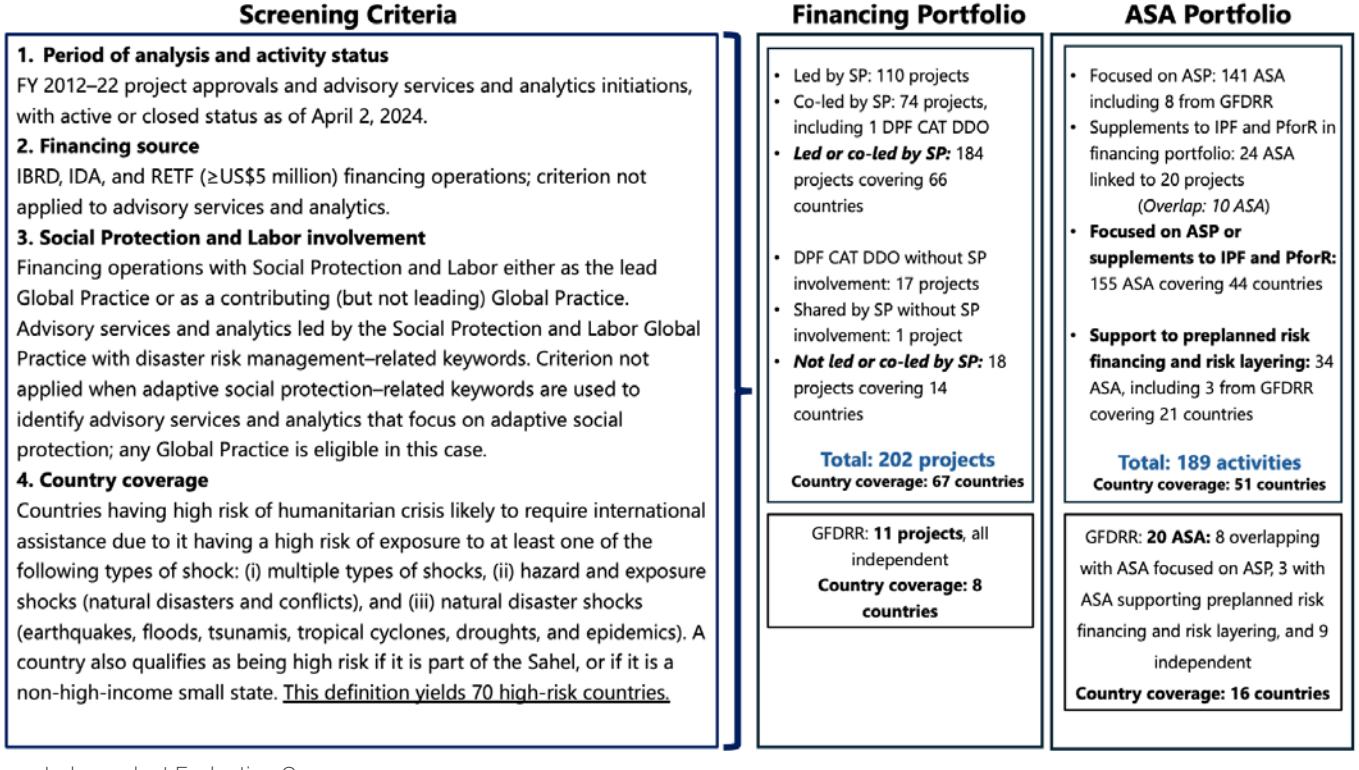
and Labor. This stage sought to capture support to disaster risk by the Social Protection and Labor Global Practice.

The second subset includes ASA tied to the investment project financing (IPF) or Program-for-Results (PforR) in the financing portfolio. These ASA were identified during the portfolio review of financing operations. If a project had a tied ASA listed in the Operations Portal, it was flagged and linked to the project.

The third and final subset is ASA supporting preplanned risk financing and risk layering, which typically originate from specific Global Practices including Social Protection and Labor; Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience, and Land; Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation; and Macroeconomics, Trade, and Investment. These Global Practices may provide such support with or without Social Protection and Labor involvement, and disaster risk financing (DRF) support is typically provided through collaboration among these four Global Practices. Thus, identification of this ASA subset was done through text mining by applying keyword searches. The keywords were selected based on two main questions: (i) To what extent was ASA support for DRF provided to high-risk countries? and (ii) To what extent did ASA support for DRF include a social protection dimension? Three related subquestions were also defined: (i) Has the World Bank provided support for DRF? (ii) Has the World Bank prepared a DRF diagnostic? and (iii) Have countries prepared a DRF strategy? The keywords used for the identification were "disaster," "disaster risk," "disaster risk finance," and "disaster risk finance strategy" for the first subquestion; "disaster risk finance diagnostic" for the second subquestion; and "disaster risk finance strategy" for the third subquestion. The exercise also helped identify collaboration among Global Practices, including Social Protection and Labor.

Finally, false positives were manually removed before determining the final portfolios. Figure B.1 and table B.1 summarize the output of the final identified portfolio used in the evaluation.

Figure B.1. Portfolio Identification Strategy



Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: The final number of countries in the portfolio subsets is lower than the original 70 high-risk countries because some did not have relevant interventions (Azerbaijan, El Salvador, and Timor-Leste) or did not meet the criteria for the ASA portfolios (Bhutan, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Eswatini, Guatemala, Iraq, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Panama, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Tonga, Ukraine, and the Republic of Yemen). The ASA subset supporting preplanned risk financing and risk layering was based on an initial list of 63 high-risk countries, not the final 70; therefore, 7 additional countries (Bhutan, the Comoros, Eswatini, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Timor-Leste) are underrepresented in this subset. The ASA subset supporting preplanned risk financing and risk layering is the only subset to include initiations up to FY23. The GFDRR-related projects and ASA are separate from the overall financing and ASA portfolios because they were not analyzed against the cluster framework or identified based on any of the ASA identification criteria. They account for 31 operations (11 projects and 20 ASA) out of 121 activities originally shared by GFDRR; the 31 activities were selected because they took place in high-risk countries. ASA = advisory services and analytics; ASP = adaptive social protection; CAT DDO = catastrophe deferred drawdown option; DPF = development policy financing; GFDRR = Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery; IBRD = International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; IDA = International Development Association; IPF = investment project financing; PforR = Program-for-Results; RETF = recipient-executed trust fund; SP = social protection.

Table B.1. Evaluation Portfolio Country Coverage

Region	Evaluation Portfolio Countries
Eastern and Southern Africa	Burundi; Comoros; Congo, Dem. Rep.; Eswatini; Ethiopia; Kenya; Madagascar; Mozambique; Somalia; South Africa; South Sudan; Sudan; Tanzania; Uganda
Western and Central Africa	Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; Congo, Rep.; Mali; Mauritania; Niger; Nigeria; Senegal
East Asia and Pacific	Cambodia; China; Fiji; Indonesia; Marshall Islands; Micronesia, Fed. Sts.; Myanmar; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Solomon Islands; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Viet Nam
Europe and Central Asia	Albania; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Kyrgyz Republic; Tajikistan; Türkiye; Ukraine; Uzbekistan
Latin America and the Caribbean	Brazil; Colombia; Costa Rica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; Guatemala; Haiti; Honduras; Jamaica; Mexico; Panama; Peru
Middle East and North Africa	Djibouti; Egypt, Arab Rep.; Iraq; Lebanon; Yemen, Rep.
South Asia	Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; India; Nepal; Pakistan; Sri Lanka

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Portfolio Review

The evaluation team manually reviewed and classified the following three dimensions of the portfolio:

1. World Bank engagement, captured through subproject-level activities. Such activities were identified in project documents and mapped against the cluster or subcluster categories from the cluster framework (in the case of projects and operations-tied ASA) or classified through text analysis (in the case of ASA focused on ASP and ASA supporting preplanned risk financing and risk layering).
2. Results framework indicators, including intermediate and project development objective (PDO)-level indicators. The evaluation categorized these indicators using a two-level taxonomy: (i) broader level outcome areas included 10 categories that refer to social assistance, labor market, and social insurance programs, and (ii) more granular level outcome types included 20 categories that refer to actual outcomes, including 5 ASP outcomes and 15 non-ASP outcomes.

3. Factors of success and challenges behind indicator achievement in closed projects, which were identified based on text extraction and analysis from Implementation Completion and Results Reports (ICRs) and Implementation Completion and Results Report Reviews (ICRRs).

This section unpacks each of these dimensions, describing the coding protocols and text analysis procedures (text mining and generative AI) used to analyze each of them. All manual coding conducted in these exercises involved at least one coder and one reviewer, and the method for intercoder reliability consisted of iterative discussion between the coder(s) and reviewer(s) until agreement was reached. The number of coders assigned to each task was dependent on its magnitude. For example, classification of financing operations against clusters and subclusters required three coders because it involved large numbers of projects, categories, and subcategories, whereas classification of ASA tied to projects required only one coder because it involved only 24 ASA.

World Bank Engagement

A total of 202 financing operations and 24 ASA tied to IPF and PforR were manually classified against the cluster and subcluster categories of the cluster framework (table 1.1). The classification centered on parent projects, based on content in IPF and PforR Project Appraisal Documents, development policy financing (DPF) project documents, ICRs, ICRRs, and project papers of additional financing approved up until the date of data extraction of April 2, 2024, and on ad hoc reviews of restructuring papers. Similarly, the review process of ASA tied to IPF and PforR consisted of extracting evidence text from Concept Notes, Activity Completion Summaries, and Operations Policy and Country Services portal activity summaries and then mapping it to subcluster categories.

Out of 141 ASA that focus on ASP, 85 were manually classified according to type of support based on development objectives and activity description text available in the Operations Portal. The classification was done through a "bottom-up" approach, in which the input text was read and reread until arriving at the final taxonomy. The final taxonomy of focused support included four categories: (i) integrated support for strengthening ASP systems; (ii)

diagnostics and assessments; (iii) support for improving specific shock-responsive elements; and (iv) dialogue, coordination, or strategies. Box 2.1 defines each of these categories, and box B.1 illustrates them with examples.

Box B.1. Advisory Services and Analytics Focusing on Adaptive Social Protection: Examples Under Each of the Four Categories in the Final Taxonomy

Integrated Support for Strengthening Adaptive Social Protection Systems

Project: P156093, Design of Adaptive Social Protection Interventions, Niger, FY15
Focus: Improve evidence base and foster policy dialogue on adaptive social protection systems in Niger Activities:

- Poverty and vulnerability analysis
- Design of adaptive tools and instruments for resilience
- Learning from innovative approaches

Diagnostics and Assessments

Project: P167768, Evidence for Building Madagascar's Social Safety Net, Madagascar, FY18 Focus: Generate evidence to help harmonize, coordinate, and scale up Madagascar's social safety net system. Activities:

- Social protection expenditure analysis
- Impact evaluations of the main safety net programs
- Promoting evidence-based policy dialogue in social protection

Support for Improving Specific Shock-Responsive Elements

Project: P176473, Developing an Evidence-Based Adaptive Safety Net in Haiti, FY21
Focus: Build an evidence base to inform the design and improve the delivery of a shock-responsive safety net targeting female beneficiaries in households with small children and persons with disabilities in Haiti. Activities:

- Analyze the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable households

(continued)

Box B.1. Advisory Services and Analytics Focusing on Adaptive Social Protection: Examples Under Each of the Four Categories in the Final Taxonomy (cont.)

- Produce evidence on the impact of a safety net targeting female beneficiaries
- Gather evidence on constraints and opportunities for digital payment modalities
- Build capacity and disseminate knowledge among social protection stakeholders

Dialogue, Coordination, or Strategies

Project: P155074, Social Risk Management and Disaster Risk Management Program, FY15 Focus: Mainstream disaster risk management into the social protection sector. Activities:

- Country program to mainstream disaster risk management into World Bank operations
- Facilitate the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and technology between Japan and developing countries

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Generative AI (mAI, the World Bank Group GPT) was used to analyze specific corpuses of text with the objective of preparing thematic summaries and taxonomies. The team did this for identifying targeting mechanisms (box 2.2 in the main text), types of safety nets (figure 2.4), and climate-sensitive programming (figure 2.7) and for generating various exploratory summaries on ASA tied to projects, gender support in ASP, and results framework indicator outcome area definitions. The evaluation team used the manually coded and vetted data for the financing operations and ASA to feed into generative AI for creating these summaries and taxonomies. The output was then reviewed with manual spot-checks against the original manually coded and vetted data, ensuring reliability and quality. Generative AI was used to achieve efficiency because the purpose was specific, data were preprocessed manually, and thus the risk of hallucination was considered lower. Box B.2 describes the procedure for arriving at the climate-sensitive programming taxonomy.

Box B.2. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Creating Climate-Sensitive Programming Taxonomy

Evidence text for financing operations mapped to the program adaptive social protection building block clusters (regular programs and institutional support, and adaptive programs) was saved in a Word document named "programs_cluster1a1b_activitytext" and then used to identify a taxonomy of climate-sensitive programming with the help of generative AI. The evidence text included in the document was linked to the specific project code and country to which it provided evidence for. Based on this input, the procedure applied to arrive at the final taxonomy was as follows.

Initial prompt: "Can you provide a summary of areas related to climate change and/or climate change adaptation based on the 'programs_cluster1a1b_activitytext' document?"

Second prompt: "The document has project codes such as 'P118826.' Can you count and list the project codes that apply to each of the seven items that you listed in your last response related to climate change and climate adaptation?"

Final output by mAI (figure BB.2.1), World Bank Group GPT:

Figure BB.2.1. Final Output by mAI

Updated Climate Adaptation Project Code Mapping

	Links Between Social	Shock-Responsive and	Climate-Adaptive Infra	Promoting R
1	P118826	P124015	P124015	P124045
2	P124015	P127328	P127328	P127328
3	P129524	P128534	P132634	P128534
4	P133597	P129524	P133597	P130328
5	P150430	P133597	P145699	P132634
6	P150754	P143915	P147212	P133597

The project codes have been successfully mapped to the climate adaptation-related categories. I've displayed the mapping in a table for your review. Let me know if you need further analysis or details about the mappings!

(continued)

Box B.2. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Creating Climate-Sensitive Programming Taxonomy (cont.)

This output was spot-checked by the evaluation team by cross-referencing listed projects under each category in the taxonomy against the original vetted text databases constructed for the evaluation. The original seven areas produced by the model were considered appropriate after these spot-checks were conducted; thus, no additional prompts were used to refine the taxonomy (table BB.2.1).

Table BB.2.1. Final Categories and Project Count

Category	Projects (no.)	Share of Projects (%), *N* = 202
Promoting resilience and livelihood diversification	42	21
Shock-responsive and adaptive safety nets	36	18
Climate-adaptive infrastructure development	30	15
Gender-focused climate adaptation	30	15
Climate-sensitive program design and targeting	25	12
Links between social protection and climate adaptation	22	11
Climate-smart agricultural practices	20	10

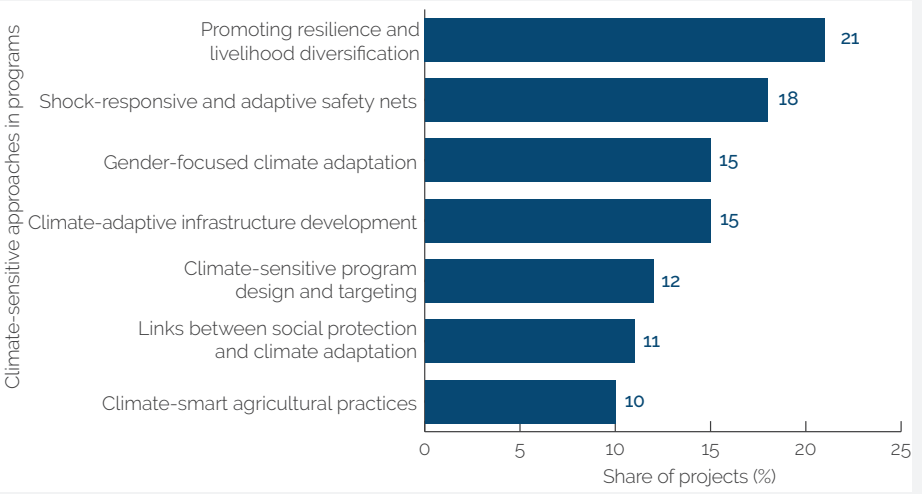
Example of evidence text excerpt tied to a project and classified as "shock-responsive and adaptive safety nets": "P152057 2019 Honduras 1.5. This proposed additional financing (AF) is in response to the government of Honduras's request to scale up the Conditional Cash Transfer Program's coverage financed by the parent project to address the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which have been compounded by climate change-induced natural disasters, in particular Tropical Cyclones Eta and Iota, which made landfall in Honduras in November 2020."

Final step: The final output provided by mAI was downloaded as an Excel spreadsheet and processed to arrive at figure 2.7 (repeated as figure BB.2.2).

(continued)

Box B.2. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Creating Climate-Sensitive Programming Taxonomy (cont.)

Figure BB.2.2. Climate-Sensitive Programming



Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: All exercises using mAI were conducted between November 2024 and January 2025. At the time, mAI used enterprise-approved versions of generative AI tools developed in partnership with Microsoft OpenAI and Google.

Results Framework Indicators

As part of an effort to assess the measurement gap of key outcomes of social assistance programs and to get an overall picture of what is measured in the portfolio's investment operations, the evaluation team developed a two-level taxonomy and mapped indicators against it. The first, broader level is outcome areas and includes 10 categories that refer to social assistance, labor market, and social insurance programs. The second, more granular level is outcome types and includes 20 categories that refer to actual outcomes, including 5 ASP outcomes used in the evaluation and 15 non-ASP outcomes. The evaluation team coded this taxonomy by first mapping indicators to 10 outcome areas, followed by mapping indicators to 20 outcome types.

The evaluation team also coded the achievement of PDO-level indicator targets for closed projects. This exercise relied on information from ICRs and

ICRRs and consisted of assessing whether intended targets were met or not, subject to sufficient information being available.

Both coding tasks—outcome measurement and outcome achievement—were conducted manually by the evaluation team. Through iteration and quality checks, the Independent Evaluation Group arrived at a full taxonomy of outcome areas and outcome types, including targeting achievement for PDO-level indicators.

The evaluation focuses on indicators mapped to 2 of the 10 outcome areas—regular programs and adaptive programs—and consequently on ASP outcome types (reach of beneficiaries, coverage of beneficiaries, adequacy of benefits, accuracy of targeting, and timeliness) that are linked exclusively to these two outcome areas. Box B.3 shows the full taxonomy of outcome areas and outcome types.

Box B.3. Full Taxonomy of Outcome Areas and Outcome Types in Results Framework Indicators

Outcome Areas

Access to basic services: Outcomes measuring the availability, quality, and impact of essential services such as health, education, water, sanitation, infrastructure, and social services in communities. They include metrics on health service availability, improved water sources, sanitation, road infrastructure, and social service access. It also measures community and economic development through improved infrastructure and workdays generated and addresses the needs of special focus groups such as women-headed households, refugees, persons with disabilities, and older persons. These indicators help assess the effectiveness and reach of projects aimed at enhancing basic services and infrastructure.

Access to health and social services: Outcomes measuring the availability, use, and quality of health and social services, focusing on coverage, infrastructure, and disease management in health services, as well as access for vulnerable populations, community- and home-based services, and support for education and economic empowerment in social services. They also assess compliance with service standards and beneficiary satisfaction, including specialized services such as mental health hotlines

(continued)

Box B.3. Full Taxonomy of Outcome Areas and Outcome Types in Results Framework Indicators (cont.)

and rehabilitation. These indicators evaluate the effectiveness, reach, and impact of programs, ensuring that they meet population needs and adhere to standards.

Adaptive programs: Outcomes measuring the effectiveness and reach of programs designed to respond to various shocks, such as economic crises, climate-related disasters, and health emergencies. These indicators measure the number and demographics of beneficiaries, the timeliness and satisfaction with support delivery, the expansion and coverage of safety nets, and the establishment of responsive systems and strategies. They help assess the impact, efficiency, and inclusiveness of adaptive programs in addressing the needs of affected populations.

Cash plus programs: Outcomes measuring the effectiveness of cash transfer programs supplemented with additional services, covering food security, nutrition, health, education, social care, and community engagement. They assess improvements in household food security and nutrition, child immunization and antenatal care, school attendance, receipt of social care services, older adult care, and completion of training programs. Additionally, they evaluate community engagement satisfaction, participation in behavior change activities, and the functionality of citizen facilitation centers. These indicators ensure that cash transfer programs lead to sustainable improvements in beneficiaries' overall well-being.

Disaster risk management: Outcomes measuring the effectiveness of strategies aimed at reducing disaster risks and impacts. They encompass the integration of climate risk assessments into planning and resilience projects, the efficiency of early-warning systems and response times, and the education of citizens, officials, and professionals on disaster resilience. These indicators also measure the direct and inclusive benefits to communities, including women and vulnerable groups, the implementation of macroeconomic modeling and disaster risk financing strategies, the development of resilient infrastructure and conservation measures, and the strengthening of community engagement and institutional capacity for disaster preparedness and response. These comprehensive metrics ensure thorough assessment and enhancement of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

(continued)

Box B.3. Full Taxonomy of Outcome Areas and Outcome Types in Results Framework Indicators (cont.)

Institutional strengthening: Outcomes measuring the capabilities and frameworks of institutions to effectively deliver services, implement policies, and manage systems. This includes establishing legal and institutional frameworks, operationalizing systems such as the foundational identity system, conducting capacity-building activities, implementing monitoring and evaluation systems, managing data, integrating public and private sector partners, and conducting awareness and training campaigns. These outcomes provide a measure of the institutional environment for sustainable development and improved service delivery.

Labor market programs: Outcomes measuring the effectiveness, reach, and impact of labor market programs through metrics such as beneficiary satisfaction (disaggregated by recipient status, citizenship, and gender); female participation in various programs; support to micro, small, and medium enterprises and women-led small and medium enterprises; and the provision of unemployment benefits. They also track employment outcomes for subsidy beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups, and the success rates of technical and vocational education and training program participants in finding jobs or pursuing further education. Additionally, these indicators assess the number of job opportunities created and the participation rates in various labor market programs, providing valuable insights for program performance and future improvements.

Productive inclusion programs: Outcomes measuring the effectiveness of programs that seek to integrate vulnerable groups into economic activities by assessing resource restoration, access to improved agricultural infrastructure, and financial support for business plans. They evaluate training completion in business preparation, the establishment and sustainability of businesses, and participation in economic programs. These indicators also focus on female participation, gender sensitivity training, access to microcredit, reported income increases, and community impact through mixed participation in productive activities and functioning savings and loan associations. Overall, they ensure the reach, effectiveness, and sustainability of initiatives aimed at economic integration and capacity building for vulnerable populations.

(continued)

Box B.3. Full Taxonomy of Outcome Areas and Outcome Types in Results Framework Indicators (cont.)

Regular cash transfer programs: Cash transfer–related outcomes measuring timeliness of payments, use of digital payment mechanisms, and beneficiary targeting, typically focusing on vulnerable or low-income households. Outcomes in this category also include the effectiveness and efficiency of grievance redress mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Social insurance programs: Outcomes measuring the performance and coverage of social insurance programs. These indicators include the percentage of beneficiaries whose records are uploaded into centralized databases, the volume of health insurance transactions, the timeliness of benefit payments, the synchronization of information systems, the number of certified staff using electronic systems, the incorporation of eligible household members into national health insurance programs, the biometric registration of civil servants and pensioners, and the implementation of unified identification systems. These indicators help assess the efficiency, inclusivity, and effectiveness of social insurance schemes.

Outcome Types

Adaptive social protection outcomes:

- Adequacy of benefits
- Coverage
- Reach
- Targeting accuracy
- Timeliness

Nonadaptive social protection outcomes:

- Access to finance, credit, or savings
- Access to services
- Capacity building

(continued)

Box B.3. Full Taxonomy of Outcome Areas and Outcome Types in Results Framework Indicators (cont.)

- Disaster risk management system strengthening
- Education system strengthening
- Employment outcomes
- Enhancing information systems
- Health system strengthening
- Institutional capacity strengthening
- Policies, plans, strategies, or regulations
- Quality of services
- Size of service delivery
- Social protection system strengthening
- Support to infrastructure
- Use of services

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: Outcome area definitions were generated using mAI, World Bank Group GPT, based on indicator name text linked to each of the outcome areas and manually spot-checked.

The evaluation created flags for shock-responsive indicators and resilience outcomes. Shock-responsive indicators capture responses to shocks or emergencies, measuring the effectiveness and responsiveness of systems and programs during and after shocks (events such as climatic disasters, economic crises, and health emergencies). Examples include the provision of benefits, timeliness and effectiveness of responses, impact of awareness campaigns, infrastructure improvements, efficiency of financial disbursements, and use of data collection tools for better targeting.

Resilience outcomes measure the ability to cope with shocks and manage future risks (Bowen et al. 2020; del Ninno et al. 2018). They assess the

ability of individuals, communities, and systems to withstand, adapt to, and recover from economic shocks, natural disasters, and social disruptions. Examples include outcomes supporting economic resilience (for example, access to savings groups, bank accounts, microcredit programs, and employment opportunities); community assets and services (for example, improved infrastructure and access to basic services); consumption smoothing (for example, cash transfer reach and coverage); health and nutrition services (for example, immunization, equipped health facilities, and nutrition services); and climate resilience (for example, climate risk reduction interventions and landscape resilience).

Factors of Success and Challenge in Closed Projects

The evaluation also identified factors of success and challenge behind PDO indicator achievement in closed IPF and PforR. Factors were identified through manual review of the "Key Factors that Affected Implementation and Outcome" and "Lessons and Recommendations" sections of ICRs and the "Lessons" sections of ICRRs. Factors were flagged as (i) positive (success) or negative (challenge) and (ii) generic to the project's overall implementation success or specific to the achievement of individual PDO indicators in the results framework. The team further categorized factors using a slightly customized version of the World Bank's DeCODE (Delivery Challenges in Operations for Development Effectiveness) taxonomy.[4] The coding was done manually by a single coder with back-and-forth quality checks with the rest of the evaluation team. Identification of factors of success and challenge was done primarily to contrast against factor findings in the country case studies.

Portfolio Analysis

This section presents portfolio descriptive statistics complementing those in the main report.

Basic Portfolio

The final portfolio consists of 202 financing operations in 67 high-risk countries and 189 ASA in 51 high-risk countries (as indicated in figure B.1). Total financing commitments (not exclusive to ASP) are almost $53 billion

with $184 million in ASA expenditures. Almost 60 percent of the financing portfolio was closed at the time of data extraction, including 54 investment operations (IPF and PforR) and 64 DPF, accounting for 41 percent of the total 132 investment operations and 91 percent of the total 70 DPF, respectively. There were IPF in 60 of the 67 countries, DPF in 34, and PforR in 7 (tables B.2 and B.3).

Table B.2. Basic Portfolio Distribution: Financing Portfolio

Lending Instrument	Project Status	Projects (no.)	Portfolio Share (%)	Commitments (US$, millions)	Portfolio Share (%)	Countries (no.)	Portfolio Share (%)
IPF	Active	70	35	17,114	33	49	73
	Closed	52	26	11,079	21	40	60
DPF	Active	6	3	744	1	6	9
	Closed	64	32	20,733	39	32	48
PforR	Active	8	4	2,595	5	6	9
	Closed	2	1	343	1	2	3
Total	Active	84	42	20,454	39	52	78
	Closed	118	58	32,155	61	56	84
	All	202	100	52,608	100	67	100

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Table B.3. Basic Portfolio Distribution: Advisory Services and Analytics Portfolio

ASA Status	ASA (no.)	Portfolio Share (%)	Expenditures (US$, millions)	Portfolio Share (%)	Countries (no.)	Portfolio Share (%)
Active	56	30	83	45	23	45
Closed	133	70	101	55	48	94
Total	189	100	184	100	51	100

Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review.

Note: ASA = advisory services and analytics.

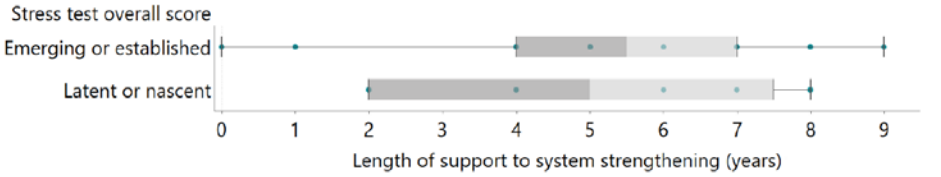
Social Protection System Strengthening

As shown in chapter 2, the World Bank substantially increased its financing support to social protection in high-risk countries during the evaluation period, including support to adaptive features. In this effort, the World Bank's length of engagement was critical for building strong foundations, especially when such engagement focused on strengthening social protection system elements, such as the institutional capacity of governments delivering social protection, specific elements of cash transfer program delivery chains, and data and information structures such as social registries and early-warning systems. The evaluation team noted that the length of engagement in these areas is positively correlated with countries' social protection system maturity as measured by the World Bank's stress test tool in the later years of the evaluation period. Countries with higher social protection maturity had a higher median number of years (up to when maturity was measured) in which they benefited from World Bank support (six years), compared with lower-maturity countries (five years; figure B.2, panel a). However, this shows only a correlation and does not imply causality.

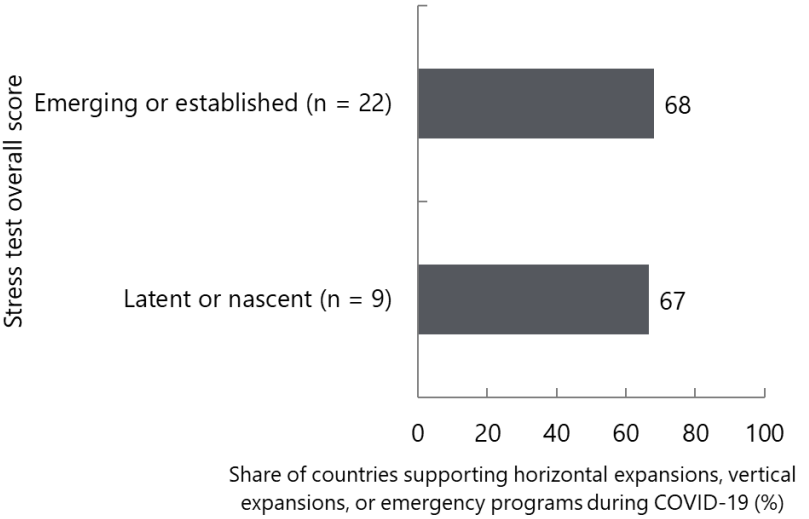
The World Bank also supported adaptive programs for shocks in a high number of countries, regardless of SP maturity. The evaluation's findings show that the World Bank supported adaptive programs (horizontal expansions, vertical expansions, or emergency programs) in two-thirds of both countries with more mature systems and countries with less mature systems, based on stress test scores (figure B.2, panel b). The support was critical given the emphasis the literature puts in strengthening and incorporating system adaptations at each stage of the program chain for building ASP systems (Barca and Beazley 2019 for the Caribbean; Beazley et al. 2019 for Latin America and the Caribbean; Kreidler et al. 2023 for the Sahel; Lindert et al. 2020; OPM 2019 for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries). The literature further provides evidence that countries with more mature systems are more capable of responding to shocks (Beazley and Williams 2021; Ulrichs et al. 2019).

Figure B.2. World Bank Support to Social Protection Systems, Adaptive Programs During COVID-19, and Countries' Social Protection System Maturity

a. Length of support to SP system strengthening



b. Share of countries supported by the World Bank with adaptive programs during COVID-19



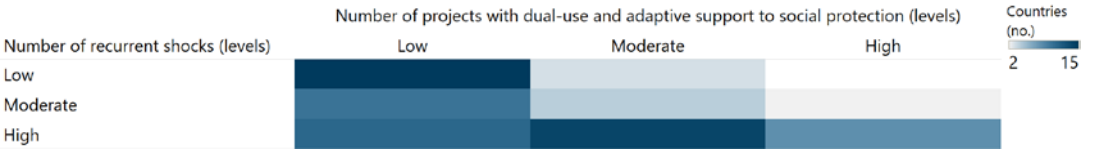
Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: Panel a: *N* = 31 countries with available stress test (maturity) scores and interventions to strengthen SP systems. Panel b: *N* = 31 countries with available stress test (maturity) scores. In panels a and b, stress test (maturity) scores are recorded since 2021. The stress test tool ratings are defined as follows: latent—SP system is weak (in terms of reach and systems) and lacks the adaptive capacity to scale on demand; nascent—SP system is limited in coverage and efficiency but can pilot and integrate some basic adaptive features that allow for a small increase in reach; emerging—SP system has intermediate coverage and has some capacity to expand in response to some shocks but with limited reach; and established—ASP system can cover most needs and respond to many shocks, but some gaps are still identified. ASP = adaptive social protection; SP = social protection.

In chapter 3, the evaluation highlighted that social protection systems performed better during slow-onset, recurrent shocks, compared with sudden-onset shocks, for reasons related to clearer institutional mandates, information systems, and preestablished partnerships. The portfolio suggests that the World Bank placed more emphasis on these countries with high recurrent shock levels. That is, countries with more projects

with dual-use and adaptive support also had more recurrent shock events between 2012 and 2024, including droughts, floods, storms, and landslides (figure B.3).

Figure B.3. World Bank Support to Dual-Use and Adaptive Activities Versus Frequency of Recurrent Shocks in Countries



Source: Independent Evaluation Group, based on financing portfolio data and data from EM-DAT, the International Disaster Database.

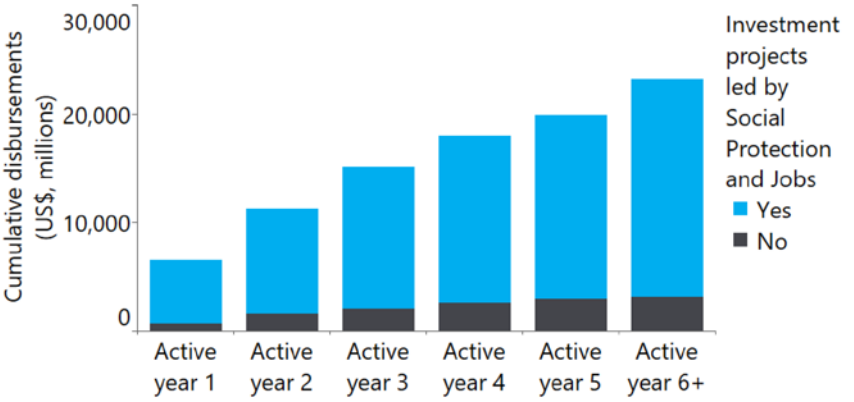
Note: Dual-use and adaptive support levels are as follows: low—0–2 projects (25th percentile or below); moderate—3–4 projects (between 25th percentile and 75th percentile, inclusive); and high—5–9 projects (above 75th percentile). Recurrent shocks include droughts, floods, storms, and landslides and cover events occurring in 2012–24. Recurrent shock levels are as follows: low—1–9 events (25th percentile or below); moderate—10–19 events (between 25th percentile and median, inclusive); and high—20–257 events (above median). The Pearson correlation coefficient between the frequency of projects supporting dual-use activities and the frequency of recurrent shock events is 0.31 and is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. N = 67 countries.

Response to Shocks

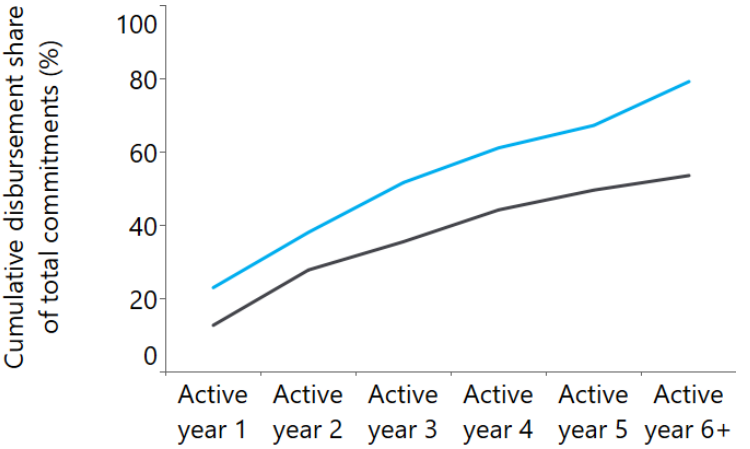
Chapter 3 highlights that the World Bank used its contingent and emergency response financing instruments effectively in the ASP portfolio. These instruments led to faster disbursements for social protection responses from 2018 onward and especially during COVID-19. Figure B.4 shows the same disbursement data broken down by lead Global Practice, demonstrating that Social Protection and Labor–led investment projects disbursed faster compared with investment projects led by other Global Practices within the portfolio.

Figure B.4. Investment Project Disbursements by Project Active Year Since Approval: Projects Led by Social Protection and Labor Compared with Other Global Practices

a. Cumulative disbursements (US$, millions)



b. Share of cumulative disbursements (%)



Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

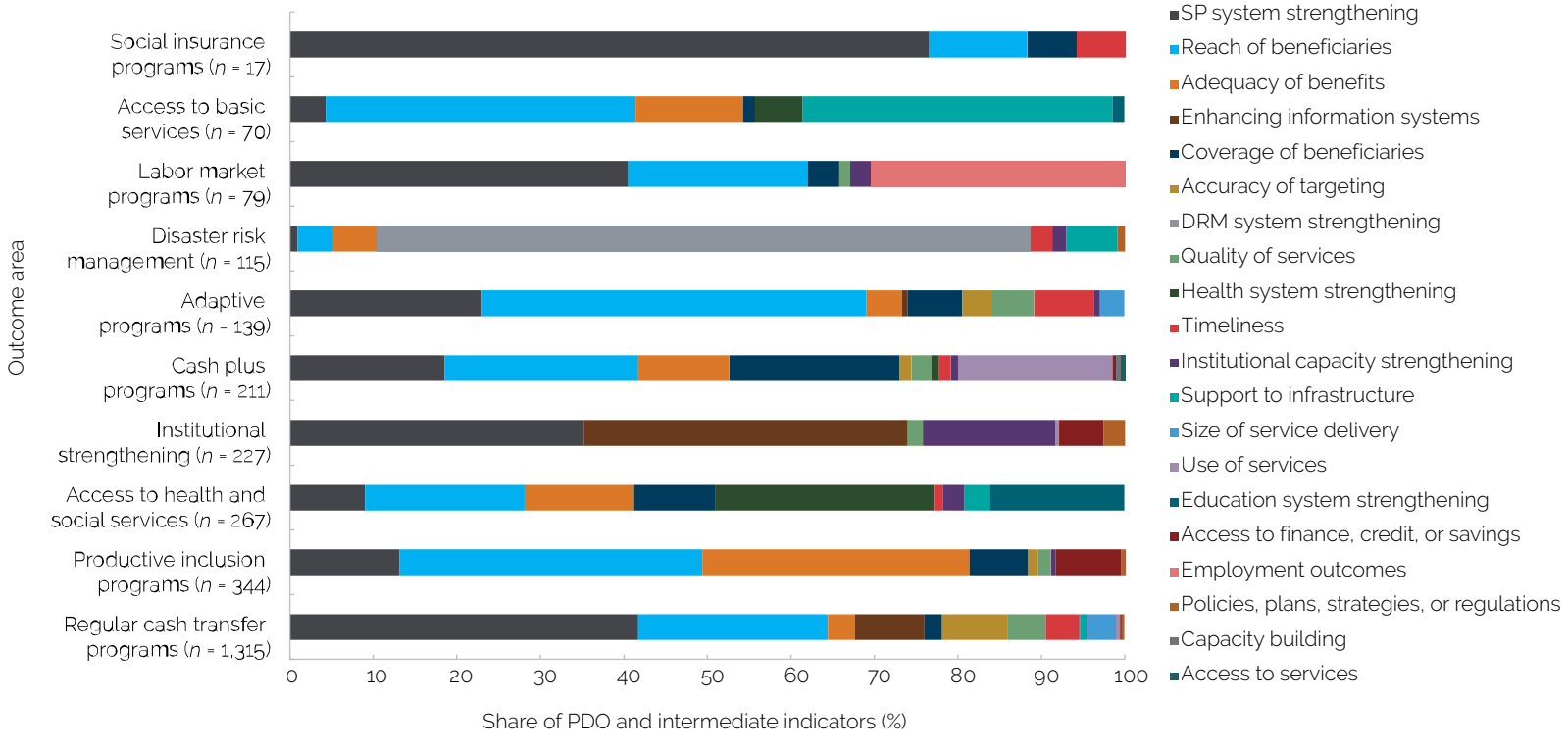
Note: N = 130 investment project financing and Program-for-Results projects with disbursement information available.

Indicators

The evaluation coded 2,784 indicators in IPF and PforR, of which 1,978 were intermediate indicators and 806 were PDO indicators. Out of 806 PDO indicators, 145 were mapped to the two outcome areas of regular programs and adaptive programs and had available information in ICR and ICRR to assess

target achievement. Chapter 3 shows this assessment for ASP outcome types in figure 3.3. Figure B.5 shows the distribution of the universe of 2,784 indicators across outcome areas. It demonstrates that the World Bank mostly measures the outcome areas of regular cash transfer and productive inclusion programs, which account for 60 percent of indicators, and the outcome types of social protection system strengthening and reach of beneficiaries.

Figure B.5. Distribution of Outcome Areas and Outcome Types



Source: Independent Evaluation Group portfolio review

Note: N = 2,784 intermediate and PDO indicators in 131 investment project financing and Program-for-Results covering 63 countries. DRM = disaster risk management; PDO = project development objective; SP = social protection.

Factors

Box B.4 showcases factors of success and challenge identified in investment operations. Some of these factors highlight the deeper findings from the country case studies evidenced in chapter 4, especially challenge factors related to commitment and leadership, and coordination. They also show other types of factors affecting outcomes of both regular and adaptive social assistance programs, such as project design and human resources and operational capacity, as per the DeCODE taxonomy.

Box B.4. Examples of Factors of Success and Challenge Found in Investment Operations

Project design—success factor: Combining support for cash transfer pilots with support for strengthening targeting systems that combine geographical and community-based targeting with proxy means testing can help avoid exclusion and inclusion errors and enable the achievement of coverage targets (for example, Cameroon).

Project design—challenge factor: Overambitious targets can lead to underachievement of targeting accuracy (for example, Tanzania).

Commitment and leadership—success factor: Preexisting government support to strengthening regular cash transfer programs, alongside long-standing World Bank engagement and leadership in social protection, can facilitate program scale-up in response to shocks, including achieving adequacy of benefit targets, measured as the mean income support received with project financing by families as a share of their income at the time of application (for example, Brazil).

Commitment and leadership—challenge factor: Lack of government commitment through nonrelease of necessary contributions for covering operating costs and stipends for beneficiaries can lead to implementation challenges in cash transfer programs, including delays, need for several project restructurings, need to reduce original project development objective targets, and underachievement of coverage targets. Lack of commitment can, in turn, be intertwined with low capacity and the electoral cycle (for example, Nigeria).

(continued)

Box B.4. Examples of Factors of Success and Challenge Found in Investment Operations (cont.)

Coordination and engagement—success factor: Intense community engagement and training can be essential for achieving shock preparedness outcomes from cash-for-work program interventions by allowing communities to choose projects aligned with their needs. For example, the World Bank achieved coverage targets and successful flood mitigation from labor-intensive public works and related subprojects in South Sudan.

Coordination and engagement—challenge factor: Limited coordination and engagement among implementing agencies can pose significant implementation challenges. Inadequate resources and funding may disrupt key activities—such as beneficiary enrollment, recertification, and milestone achievement—ultimately leading to deviations from project objectives and missed coverage targets (as seen in Sri Lanka).

Human resources and operational capacity—success factor: Decreasing inclusion and exclusion errors for better accuracy of targeting can be achieved by allowing programs to rely on trained local staff who better understand the local environment and culture because it increases accountability and supervision of the respective local government authorities, which can be critical for building long-term sustainability. Community targeting uses community-based facilitators who are trained to use locally developed poverty criteria to identify poor households and conduct surveys using the proxy means testing questionnaire. This increases communities' confidence in the program and ownership (for example, Tanzania).

Human resources and organizational capacity—challenge factor: Insufficient technical capacity in Project Management Units and implementation partners can prevent projects from course correcting against implementation challenges when piloting cash transfer programs, hindering the achievement of intended coverage targets (for example, Chad).

Source: Independent Evaluation Group.

Note: These examples were prepared manually and are based on the analysis of factors of success and challenge identified in closed projects.

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[1] More details on the definitions of these categories can be found at European Commission (n.d.).

[2] INFORM is a collaboration of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Risk, Early Warning and Preparedness and the European Commission. The European Commission Joint Research Centre is the scientific lead of INFORM.

[3] The INFORM data were used in the following way: high risk captures countries with either a high or very high level of risk in the multiple types of shocks category, which is already available in the INFORM classification (original levels include very low, low, medium, high, and very high), or with a high level of risk in the hazards and exposure or natural disasters categories, with levels calculated by the evaluation team based on terciles of the cross-country distribution of their corresponding numeric ratings, which range from 1 to 10 (where 10 denotes the highest risk rating). Because the original INFORM numeric ratings for the hazards and exposure and natural disasters categories are based on the geometric mean of their respective components, converting them to levels and using these levels to classify countries implies that a country is included or excluded based on whether, on average, it has a high exposure to natural disasters and conflict (in the case of hazards and exposure) or to earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, tropical cyclones, droughts, and epidemics (in the case of natural disasters).

[4] The DeCODE taxonomy was developed by the World Bank's Global Delivery Initiative in 2016 and focuses on the typical delivery challenges that could affect project performance from design to closing. The taxonomy is comprehensive and well structured, and its validation included a three-pronged iterative process consisting of literature reviews, text analytics, and practitioners' consultations. It is structured at three levels of granularity: 3 clusters, 15 categories, and 52 subcategories.

Appendix C. Field-Based Case Study Findings on the Relevance of the World Bank's Work in Adaptive Social Protection Countries

Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
Baseline		Before the extreme deterioration of the crisis context in 2019, the government and international partners had already intervened during the annual lean season, albeit at much lower levels.A 2016 World Bank stocktaking study found key challenges for a coherent lean season response, such as no harmonized targeting methodology or database, low coverage rates, financial unpredictability, and delays in payments by government and partners.	From the start of the evaluated period, Colombia had a strong SP system with flagship cash transfer and employment programs, such as Familias en Acción, Empleo en Acción, and Jovenes en Acción. The SP system is fully government led and domestically funded.	From the start of the evaluation period, Dominican Republic had a relatively mature SP program, and in 2012, the Progresando con Solidaridad program was created, combining two programs that were already in place. These were the Solidaria program, which consisted of granting conditional cash transfers to improve the income and investment in the human capital of families in extreme poverty, and the Progresando program, which had the function supporting extremely poor families and was under the Office of the First Lady.	A baseline report in 2014 showed that Mauritania had no safety net, had low emergency response capacity and a weak EWS, and had no rapidly scalable programs to respond to shocks. Only 13% of the people affected by the severe drought in 2012 received assistance from the government. Others received assistance from humanitarian actors but with little coordination, little strategic guidance, and no financial predictability.	In 2012, Mozambique operated several regular safety net programs with support from the United Nations agencies but had no shock response mechanism. The World Bank first started by supporting a small public works program aimed at providing a seasonal source of income but not designed to be shock responsive as such. The role of SP in shock response was outlined for the first time in the 2016 revision of the national SP strategy and piloted in 2017.	An International Labour Organization report (Khanal 2013) showed that while the government had expressed commitment to expand SSNs, the fragmented landscape and lack of a comprehensive strategy for SP posed serious challenges. A study by ADB concludes that only 2.3 million people receive any form of SP transfers covering less than 10% of the population (Handayani 2010).	

(continued)

Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
		A review of SSN conducted by the World Bank in 2019 found that only 2.4% of households affected by a shock received support from either the government or nongovernmental organization.						

(continued)

Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
Programs	(Regular) Program and institutional support for the delivering institution	*The country had no SSN and no delivery chain. The World Bank addressed both through continuous support for the PFS and its delivery chain. ǂThe pandemic revealed significant gaps in SP systems and the stress test reiterated the finding (maturity level = nascent).	*Limited support identified in this cluster beyond social registry, possibly because maturity was relatively high. *The stress test confirms the SP system's relative maturity at the end of the evaluated period (maturity level = emerging).	*The World Bank supported strengthening of the delivery chain and increasing coverage of regular SP programs and provided technical assistance to the design of the new umbrella program (Supérate).	*The World Bank has supported the creation of a regular SSN (Tekavoul) since inception and has strengthened the necessary elements of the delivery chain, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the stress test (maturity level of program building block = emerging).	ǂThe World Bank has long focused its support on a small subprogram (public works) with limited geographic presence and limited leverage on strengthening the delivery chain. Cumbersome manual processes delay payments and *the World Bank piloted ways to digitalize them. ǂOther elements such as the management information system or the grievance redress mechanism are insufficiently developed, and the World Bank so far was unable to significantly address these challenges.	*The World Bank has supported the digitalization of the social security allowance delivery mechanism.	A functioning regular SSN is the starting point for effective ASP. *In most of the countries, the World Bank has addressed the need for a functioning delivery chain and for strengthening the institutional capacity of the institutions in charge. ǂIn a minority of cases, structural barriers caused by the overall very low maturity of the SP system continue and remain either insufficiently addressed or not addressed with the right mix of support.

(continued)

Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
	Adaptive programs: contributing to the design of new programs or funding them (vertical and horizontal expansions)	*The country had no shock response mechanism. The World Bank helped addressing this gap through PFS's vertical expansions for the recurrent lean season year on year. ǂThe program is still lacking the ability to horizontally expand, nor can it geographically adjust its areas of operation in case of a shock, mostly because of the lack of an alternative targeting mechanism.	*The World Bank supported the government to vertically expand the regular social assistance programs (for example, Familias en Acción and Colombia Mayor) and launch a new program Ingreso Solidario during the pandemic.	*The World Bank contributed to a coordinated work plan, which informed the design and delivery of the new shock response mechanism Bono de Emergencia.	*The country had no mechanism to use SP as shock response. The World Bank supported the creation of two such mechanisms (Elmaouna and Tekavoul Shock). ǂThe parallel existence of two mechanisms bears potential for tensions and needs to be addressed.	*The use of ASP in shock response was included into the SP strategy in 2016 but was not enacted until the World Bank co-initiated a shock response program that has since been used on several occasions. ǂHowever, it is still unable to respond to needs in a timely and adequate way, and the World Bank was unable to sufficiently improve performance.	*The World Bank supported a horizontal expansion of the Youth Employment Transformation Initiative Project as part of the COVID-19 response; ǂhowever, reach was highly limited.	The World Bank frequently addressed the need for a distinct shock response mechanism within client countries' SP systems. *The World Bank provided technical assistance in all countries studied that addressed this key element and also the need for supporting vertical expansions. ǂIn some countries, the World Bank encountered a trade-off between building the system and responding to the highest needs. *In accordance with its mandate, the World Bank chose to focus on system building.

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
Data	Enhancing information systems' design and functionality	ǂThe country saw the need for a social registry, but competing institutional agendas over its development remained unaddressed for many years—including by the World Bank—until finally *resolved through a prior action in a development policy financing; once this bottleneck was removed, the World Bank started to support the pilot phase of a new social registry.	*The World Bank has been supporting the country's targeting instrument for social programs (SISBÉN). *In 2020, the World Bank helped develop the Single Registry of Venezuelan Migrants and supported interoperability of systems.	*The World Bank strengthened the social registry's capacities through information communications technology (data management, refining targeting processes, technological improvements for poverty mapping, digitalization, mobile devices, and georeferencing systems).	*The country had no social registry, but it was seen as a useful tool to facilitate targeting across different programs. The World Bank has supported the social registry since inception; the usefulness of the social registry is witnessed by 28 user programs. The stress test confirms the positive findings (maturity level of this building block = emerging).	ǂThere is no social registry in the country, and the government is not convinced it needs one. The World Bank's earlier plans to transform the management information system of the public works program into a social registry did not bear fruit.	*The World Bank, through advisory services and analytics, promoted the implementation of a social registry; ǂhowever, this was perceived as "overambitious" by several informants given the state of data and information systems.	A social registry is a key enabler of a timely shock response mostly after a natural disaster, *but it needs time to be built and a relatively more mature SP system to bear fruit. In some of the country cases, the World Bank adopted a gradual approach that was in sync with the countries' needs. ǂContrarily, efforts of the World Bank to establish social registries in countries with less mature systems were overly ambitious or inadequate and have shown few results.

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
	Ensuring the use of EWS information in responses	*A functioning EWS is seen as a key enabler of timely geographic targeting of the lean season support. ǂThe World Bank has several projects supporting the EWS; however, these efforts are not always coordinated.	ǂLimited support identified in this cluster.	*The government introduced a Vulnerability to Climate Hazards Index and linked it with data in the registry. It is informed by Dominican Republic's EWS and was improved in 2021 with World Bank support. ǂHowever, the application of the new procedure was hampered through the way it was introduced.	*The EWS was unable to provide timely food security–related data of good quality. The World Bank addressed this through institutional support and developed a model to earlier predict the geographic areas affected by forthcoming food insecurity, which would have allowed earlier action.	ǂThe EWS is fragmented into several subsystems for different kinds of shocks; the World Bank supports the EWS for flooding and cyclones through DRM projects, but links with ASP are hampered by the legal provisions for ASP and limited intragovernmental collaboration. The former is beyond the control of the World Bank, and the latter did not receive sufficient attention.	ǂThe World Bank has helped set up EWS across the country; however, it has not always complemented efforts for capacity building, limiting operationalization and use of these systems.	EWSs have two functions: to generate data to forecast climatic events and to disseminate the information down to the local level. The first function is more relevant for ASP and is the focus of World Bank engagement especially in countries with recurrent severe lean seasons. The latter is the focus of the DRM practice. ǂThe evaluation found more examples of siloed approaches and only few examples of enabling EWS information to be a useful trigger for shock response.

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
Finance	Securing more reliable and predictable financing	Limited financing has been a major limitation for shock response. *The World Bank has addressed this through additional financing to scale up PFS (both regular program and shock response), ǂbut the government does not contribute. *The World Bank has undertaken diagnostics to promote a DRF strategy, ǂbut the government has not picked this up yet. *The World Bank with other donors is reviewing the Fond d'Appui à la Sécurité Alimentaire, a fund to respond to the lean season.	*The World Bank has used development policy financial support to promote DRF and risk layering; ǂhowever, these are not linked with SP.	*Since 2017, Dominican Republic has established institutional structures for quantifying, pricing, and managing the contingent liabilities associated with climate and disaster risks, linked in part to the first CAT DDO through which the World Bank financed the first DRM development policy loan.	*The country had no functioning financial vehicle to respond to shocks. The World Bank supported it in creating one. ǂA DRF strategy was drafted but has not yet been validated.	*Through DRM projects, the World Bank has supported the government in anticipating costs of shock response and created a financing instrument; ǂhowever, that instrument has not attracted funding from other donors and cannot be used for ASP. Donor funding was insufficiently aligned in the early years. *The World Bank created and administered an MDTF for SP that has addressed this challenge and now facilitates a better alignment of system strengthening efforts.	ǂThere has been limited support for mobilizing domestic financing. *The World Bank has convened funds from different donors by setting up MDTFs for shock response, including for the Gorkha earthquake.	Additional and predictable financing is a key enabler of timely shock response. *The World Bank has addressed this need especially with additional resources from MDTFs. World Bank efforts to mobilize more domestic financing were highly relevant, especially in countries with relatively more mature public financial management practices. ǂHowever, the need to make these resources available for ASP was not always met.

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
Institutional arrangements and partnerships	Advocacy and influencing for improved policy, plans, and collaboration	ǂThe World Bank, with other partners, has been advocating for a structured institutional architecture for SP and more strategic guidance; however, limited progress has been made, and intragovernmental turf battles continue.	ǂWhile projects have tried to enhance collaboration between SP and DRM, the efforts have not been consistent, limiting progress.	*The World Bank supported the Social Cabinet with technical assistance in developing the integrated strategy for ASP. Dominican Republic displays a greater willingness than many other countries to engage in the ASP agenda, ǂbut institutional leadership appears to have waned over the period under study.	*There are examples of effective collaboration across practices ǂbut equally of the lack thereof; The government continues to provide ineffective subsidies as a shock response in parallel to the use of ASP.	ǂSP is by law only a postemergency tool, once the DRM agency has ended its assistance. The World Bank and donors pushed for years for a memorandum of understanding between the DRM and the SP agency but met continuous passive resistance.	ǂDevelopment partners highlight gaps in information exchanges outside of shocks for SP because of institutional fragmentation on the client side.	ǂIntragovernmental competition and overlaps of roles and responsibilities come up as a barrier for ASP across all case studies regardless of the type of shock. The institutional fragmentation on the client's side is a recurrent hindrance that needs to be taken more systematically into account. It is also often mirrored by a siloed approach within the World Bank, and the evaluation team found missed opportunities for stronger collaboration between DRM and Social Protection and Labor to jointly influence better intragovernmental collaboration.

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
	Enhanced coordination and partnerships for more effective preparation and response	The coordination for the lean season assistance was ineffective leading to gaps and inconsistent support. *This has been addressed; the World Bank supports collaborative planning and lessons learning. The lean season assistance needed more coherence and participation of all actors, including the World Bank. *The World Bank changed its approach and became part of a coordinated approach, especially after the World Bank team diversified (humanitarian expert was brought on board in 2021).	ǂLimited support was identified in this cluster; *there is an emerging partnership with WFP, ǂbut other partners note the absence of the World Bank in key coordination forums.	*Key informants noted that there is regular coordination with the Civil Defense Council. *The World Bank supported the Social Cabinet's capacity for coordination, ǂbut there seems to be limited sustainability to these efforts. *There is good coordination within the ASP support group, ǂbut coordination and alignment with emergency relief actors still leaves something to be desired.	The country needed a more organized and structured coordination platform for the lean season assistance. *The World Bank supported the creation of such a platform. Different stakeholders contribute to the lean season assistance. *Mauritania is a strong example of a continued and effective partnership with WFP.	Coordination among development partners was insufficiently institutionalized. *This was addressed through the creation of an MDTF for SP and an ASP working group. ǂDevelopment partners differ considerably in their assessment of the usefulness of ASP; there is no strategic partnership and sometimes competition with key United Nations agencies.	*The World Bank has actively engaged with multilaterals, bilateral donors, and development partners in the country to respond to shocks. ǂHowever, partners highlighted gaps in continued dialogue for strengthening SP systems outside of shocks.	Enhanced coordination and strong partnerships are important enablers of effective shock response as no actor can provide the necessary support on its own. *The World Bank's efforts have shown good results where it paid attention to this aspect by participating in coordination forums, often but not always led by the government, and strategic partnerships especially with WFP were a very useful mechanism. ǂIn some countries, better coordination was hindered by insufficient inclusion of other actors or by diverging views over the strategic vision for ASP.

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
Endline		The country now has a reference initiative for social assistance—the PFS—even though it is not yet a national routine safety net program. The SSN is now regularly vertically expanded during the lean season, in full coordination and alignment with the respective collective planning procedures led by the government. However, it falls short of horizontally expanding, nor can it adjust the geographic areas based on need.	Colombia has increasingly introduced adaptations to SP programs in the face of shocks. The World Bank supported the creation of an emergency cash transfer program (Ingreso Solidario) to reach those who were not already covered during the pandemic. The World Bank also supported the registry for migrants to help Colombia respond to the influx.	The World Bank has supported adapted elements in recent years: developing an emergency cash transfer program (Bono de Emergencia) to alleviate the impact of climate emergencies during Hurricane Fiona in 2021, developing and expanding the social registry (SIUBEN), key for horizontal expansions and a flexible payment system to help poor households deal with climate and other shocks.	The country needed—and the World Bank helped it build—a functioning ASP system. There is now a routine SSN and two shock response programs and a relatively strong delivery chain. The World Bank addressed the strong need for a better information system and addressed some of the needs of EWS. Additional resources from SASPP improved financial predictability to a certain degree. The World Bank addressed the coordination gaps, together with other partners, especially WFP.	The World Bank correctly identified the business case for ASP in the country and the opportunity provided by the revision of the SP strategy to initiate a shock response mechanism. It also correctly identified key bottlenecks in the delivery chain, such as manual payments and the need to add financial resources, especially for shock response. However, the government has still not fully embraced the concept of ASP, and development partners disagree on its relevance and appropriateness for the country.	The World Bank has strengthened foundations of SP delivery, such as digitalization of the social security allowance program and the civil registry. However, the World Bank has not been able to draw systemic links between SP and DRM for shock response because the SP landscape in itself is highly fragmented.	

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Building Blocks	Clusters	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal	Main Takeaway
		Partnerships and coordination have massively improved, particularly since 2021, and additional resources from SASPP improved financial predictability to a certain degree.				The SP system cannot take on an increasing role in shock response because of its limited administrative capacity. It continues running in parallel to—and being overshadowed by—the DRM system.		

Source: Independent Evaluation Group, based on field-based case studies.

Note: * (green text) = positive aspect of relevance; ǂ (red text) = negative aspect of relevance. ADB = Asian Development Bank; ASP = adaptive social protection; DRF = disaster risk financing; DRM = disaster risk management; EWS = early-warning system; MDTF = multidonor trust fund; PFS = projet filets sociaux Burkin-Naong-Sa Ya; SASPP = Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program; SISBEN = Sistema de Identificación de Potenciales Beneficiarios de Programas Sociales; SIUBEN = Sistema Unico de Beneficiarios; SP = social protection; SSN = social safety net; WFP = World Food Programme.

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Appendix D. Case Study Synthesis for Enabling Factors: Field-Based Case Studies

Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
Commitment and leadership	Political will and leadership	ǂPolitical commitment for SP has been affected by deteriorating security situation.	*Political will toward ASP is evidenced by the government's commitment to DRM and response to covariate shocks, such internal displacement and migration.	*Strong political will is evidenced by the establishment of a cabinet to coordinate social policies under the vice presidency.	*Strong political will is evidenced by setting targets for shock response and through financial contributions to the routine SSN.	ǂGovernment verbal commitments on ASP have not been operationalized.	ǂLack of sustained political will to work on SP, coupled with a series of disasters, has led the government (and the World Bank) to be more reactive than focused on preparedness.
	Fiscal space and budgetary contributions	ǂGovernment has not contributed own resources to use SP system for shock response. It continues to provide mostly in-kind assistance through parallel channels.	*The SP system is fully government led and domestically funded.	*Dominican Republic has significantly invested in preparation and adaptation of its social assistance program.	*The government has contributed approximately 34% of the SSN budget.	ǂThe government finances most of the regular SSN, but with low level of public expenditure on public works and the postemergency program.	ǂLow political will is translated into limited fiscal space for SP.

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Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
Human resources and organizational capacity	SP strategies	ǂThe update of the national SP strategy has stalled for several years. The suspension of cash transfers as an assistance modality in some provinces represents a massive blockage.	ǂThe country established the national DRM system, adopted the national policy for DRM in 2012, and implemented a national plan for DRM (2015–25). However, there has been little progress in embedding SP into DRM frameworks.	*Dominican Republic's 2030 National Development Strategy, approved in March 2012, covers SP.	*In 2013, the country adopted the first national SP strategy.	*The social security programs are guided by the SP strategy for 2016–24 (ENSSB II) that foresees a role for SP as a postemergency intervention.	ǂSP has emerged without a legal framework or strategy.
	Institutional capacity	ǂGovernment capacity to implement SSN is weak, especially in more remote conflict-affected areas.	*Institutional capacity is strong as a result of extensive range of programs, widespread coverage, and significant domestic spending.	*Government capacity is fairly high and supported by an interagency group (the United Nations, the World Bank, and the government).	*The World Bank adopted a gradual approach, focusing on long-term sustainability and national ownership and incrementally building complexity of the SP system.	ǂThe national SP institute is relatively weak, with patchy presence across the country and limited decision-making power.	ǂInstitutional capacity is weak because of high turnover of government staff and transition to federalism.

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Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
	Institutional architecture for SP	ǂThe overlapping institutional mandates and fragmentation of existing programs still dominate the current situation.	ǂCoordination between SP and DRM systems is limited, with overlapping initiatives and insufficient articulation of policies and interventions.	ǂDominican Republic has a long history of fragmented programs, and competition among government institutions added to this.	ǂInteragency relationships in the ASP domain are marked by a certain level of tension.	ǂCollaboration among the different institutions—especially DRM and SP agencies—is limited.	ǂMultiple ministries are involved in delivering SP programs, and none of them want to lose autonomy, prohibiting consolidation.
	ASP readiness	*Toward the end of the period, a new national SP program was validated, which is a very important step toward ASP.	*The robust capacity of Colombia's SP systems offers more opportunities for ASP.	*Dominican Republic has a relatively high level of SP maturity and has invested in adaptation of its social assistance for shock response.	*The World Bank, with support from SASPP, laid out a vision for an ASP system and a road map on how to build it. The country now has two shock response mechanisms—one managed by the Food Security Commission and one that is designed as a top-up for the SSN.	ǂThe postemergency program has been tested several times, but performance falls short of expectations, especially with regard to timeliness.	ǂAlthough the World Bank helped digitalize the SP delivery system for the largest social assistance program, the SP landscape is still nascent.

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Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
External resource allocation for shock response	Emergency financing	*World Bank–executed funds (SASSP) improved the predictability for shock response and allowed the project to recruit additional team members and fund additional analytic work.	*World Bank development policy financing and CAT DDOs have enabled the country to build essential foundations for ASP through relevant prior actions.	*CAT DDOs have been used for shock response.	*World Bank–executed funds (SASSP) improved the predictability for shock response and allowed the project to recruit additional team members and fund additional analytic work.	*Through the establishment of an MDTF, significant additional resources were made available for the 2018–22 period financing additional shock response.	*The World Bank mobilized funds for shock response by establishing an MDTF.

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Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
	Presence of a DRF strategy in relation to SP or availability of contingency finances	*To support the government in its ex ante planning of disaster financing, the World Bank developed a DRF diagnosis and recommended a DRF strategy. In addition, together with other partners, the World Bank started the reform of an existing food security response fund, updating its procedures and opening a special window for channeling money to be used for cash transfers in addition to providing in-kind assistance.	ǂWhile Colombia has a DRF policy, it does not explicitly include ASP. The budget for DRM remains inflexible, partly relying on external aid, despite efforts to reduce disaster risk through new financial instruments and protection of public assets.	*Earmarking funding in Dominican Republic for shock response has supported timeliness.	*The World Bank supported the country in setting up a common financial vehicle to enhance ex ante financial planning and optimize the use of public resources through a comprehensive risk financing strategy.	ǂThe government established a national disaster management fund with support from the World Bank. The fund prepositions funding and can flexibly disburse after a disaster occurs. Unfortunately, the fund is not accessible to the SP institution and can thus not be used for ASP.	ǂWith regard to adaptive financing mechanisms to ensure timely response (contingency financing, financial risk layering, or alike), progress has been limited in Nepal.

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Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
World Bank internal factors	Client relationships and partner collaboration	*A task force supporting the social registry led to improved cooperation among stakeholders supporting the lean season since 2021. Coordination has substantially improved with enhanced World Bank expertise (humanitarian expert on the team).	ǂWorld Bank engages little with humanitarian actors and their coordination platforms.	ǂA key disabling factor was the perceived lack of sensitivity by some World Bank staff and particularly consultants they commissioned to produce technical tools or guidance as the former were not in the field. *The ASP group, chaired by WFP, has played a pivotal role for the agenda. It consists of the World Bank, other United Nations agencies, and government officials.	*The World Bank is a recognized convener on the topic of ASP and uses its leverage in an inclusive way. Apart from the partnership with WFP, the World Bank also supported the establishment of a lean season coordination platform that is successful in harmonizing the approach across all groups of stakeholders.	ǂThe World Bank has challenges in its relationship with the government. Government counterparts criticized the World Bank for imposing concepts coming from foreign countries. The relationships with other development partners, though improving, still offer room for improvement. There is also no "privileged partnership" with WFP as observed in other countries.	ǂSensitivities about the relationship between the World Bank and the current members of the ministry have contributed to the dropped component on integrated social registry. At the organizational level, there seems to be coordination among major players, including the European Union, the Asian Development Bank, FCDO, and others. However, this coordination does not trickle down at the working group level because of competition among development partners.

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Category	Factor	Burkina Faso	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Mauritania	Mozambique	Nepal
	Staff capacity and in-country presence	*Having humanitarian expertise on the team enabled systemic integration of the World Bank's work on ASP and strong alignment with other elements of shock response.	*Government actors have lauded the World Bank's technical expertise and the esteemed reputation of its staff.	ǂA lack of presence of World Bank technical staff in-country hindered progress in terms of coordination and oversight of activities downstream in the delivery chain.	*A very committed, strongly motivated, and highly qualified and respected team in the field made the successful engagement possible.	*Interview with partners emphasized the importance of having the team in the field.	*The World Bank team found a balance between having the team in the field and engaging international technical experts.
	Cross-sectoral collaboration within the World Bank	ǂThree different projects provide some kind of capacity strengthening to the EWS, such as technical assistance and infrastructural support. However, there is little awareness of each other's efforts and limited coordination.	ǂDRM or climate change specialists, working on the resilience agenda, do not work with SP.	*World Bank SP and DRM staff have worked well for the pandemic response.	*Collaboration is good, especially with regard to EWS, which is an important source of information for guiding the lean season assistance.	*The World Bank team in the country is aware of the importance of factoring the recurrence of disasters into all aspects of operations. The new emphasis on linking SP interventions with DRM has emerged as the most striking development in recent years.	ǂDRM staff, working on the resilience agenda, have not collaborated with SP.

Source: Independent Evaluation Group, based on field-based case studies.

Note: * (green) = enabler; ǂ (red) = hindrance. ASP = adaptive social protection; CAT DDO = catastrophe deferred drawdown option; DRF = disaster risk financing; DRM = disaster risk management; ENSSB = National Basic Social Security Strategy; EWS = early-warning system; FCDO = Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; MDTF = multidonor trust fund; PFS = project filets sociaux Burkin-Naong-Sa Ya; SASPP = Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program; SP = social protection; SSN = social safety net; WFP = World Food Programme.

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