

# Overview

## Climate Change and Social Protection (CCASP) Research Initiative

### July 2022

---

#### Goal

**The goal of the Climate Change and Social Protection (CCASP) Research Initiative is to support a major shift of ambition, vision, and urgency in social protection and climate policies and programmes in the Global South to address the large-scale socio-economic challenges that are likely to arise from climate change in the medium to long term. We aim to do so by:**

- Understanding the implications of climate change for social protection,
- Understanding the existing evidence and potential role of social protection to contribute to managing climate change,
- Creating a knowledge base of effective policy and programme options on social protection and climate change and promoting cross learning, and,
- Creating synergies and learning between the climate change and social protection communities

The CCASP-Research Initiative (CCASP-RI) will improve our understanding of the social protection and climate change intersection, and strategically consolidate learning to inform and stimulate the expansion of social protection systems that can protect populations from the worst impacts of climate change, globally.

#### Rationale

**Accelerating climate change is reshaping the socio-economic risks the world is facing, and is likely to lead to significant social, economic and political disruption.**

The most recent IPCC report identifies widespread impacts already taking place across a range of human systems, including water scarcity and food production systems (with adverse effects on agricultural production, livestock health and productivity, and fisheries), health and wellbeing systems (including impacts on infectious diseases, malnutrition, mental health and displacement), as well as cities, settlements and infrastructure systems including damage to key economic sectors (IPCC, 2022).<sup>1</sup> Combined with environmental degradation, these impacts are likely to result in an acceleration of labour market disruption and

---

<sup>1</sup> IPCC, 2022: *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E.S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, B. Rama (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press.

livelihoods loss in the coming decades which, unchecked, will result in mass impoverishment and migration. Unless ambitious action is taken, climate change will increase the depth and scale of poverty across the world, reducing wellbeing among the poor and non-poor and making new groups vulnerable, affecting societies as a whole with negative impacts on education, health and food security.

**There is now a short window of opportunity to engage in the strategic planning of responses for this accelerating crisis, but current measures are not sufficiently at scale or sustainable.** The current reliance on ex-post emergency response and humanitarian action is unsustainable in light of an increased burden of climate related disasters (IFRC, 2019).<sup>2</sup> In addition, climate change adaptation measures to date have not been significant in terms of scale or scope, and so far fail to demonstrate an impact on risk at scale (Berrang-Ford et al., 2021)<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, the transition to a climate-resilient future will require compromises and bold greenhouse gas mitigation policies, some of which can adversely impact the poor and vulnerable. So far, however, climate change mitigation policies do not systematically consider these social dimensions.

**Social protection has the potential to play a key role in addressing some of the challenges arising from climate change, as part of a Climate Resilient Development (CRD) approach, as recognised by the IPCC (IPCC, 2022).** Social protection refers to the set of public measures that a society provides to protect its members against economic and social distress caused by the absence or a substantial reduction of income over the lifecycle<sup>4</sup>. Social protection policies can reduce vulnerability to climate change, support those who are adversely affected by it, and underpin the transition to a climate-resilient future. Social protection has the potential to contribute to the management of climate change by reducing overall poverty and vulnerability, serving as a response to shocks, and contributing to climate resilience development policies, including both climate change adaptation and mitigation.

**Innovation and experimentation linking social protection and climate change has taken place over recent decades, but these initiatives are mostly small-scale and fragmented, and have not been systematically evaluated or assessed in depth.** Currently most social protection responses linked to climate change focus on 'shock responsive' or 'adaptive' social protection initiatives, and are small in relation to the magnitude of the challenge. A limited number of initiatives have attempted to integrate social protection and climate change more directly, but overall, the impact of these isolated initiatives on resilience, adaptation and mitigation has not been systematically assessed, nor their potential for replication and expansion. As a result there has been little learning and cross-fertilization within and between the social protection and climate change communities.

**It is now increasingly evident that social protection can only play a significant role in managing climate change if the challenges are addressed strategically and at scale;**

---

<sup>2</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2019. The Cost of Doing Nothing: The Humanitarian Price of Climate Change and How It Can Be Avoided. IFRC, Geneva. <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2019-IFRC-CODN-EN.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Berrang-Ford, L., Siders, A.R., Lesnikowski, A. *et al.*, 2021. A systematic global stocktake of evidence on human adaptation to climate change. *Nat. Clim. Chang.* 11, 989–1000. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-021-01170-y>

<sup>4</sup> ILO, 2004. <https://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/download/newsletter/2004/spring-e.pdf>

**this would require a major shift of ambition, vision and urgency in current social protection thinking globally.** While recent innovations have started to explore the use of social protection as a response to specific covariate shocks, there is a need for a more comprehensive conceptualization of social protection as a response to the mass economic and social transformations that climate change will bring about. This will require both considering poverty through a climate lens as well as the role social protection might have in supporting climate change adaptation as well as the transition to more sustainable, green economies.

**Two major factors limiting progress on this agenda are the limited investment in consolidating learning, assessing and evaluating approaches, and the disconnect between the climate change and social protection communities.** To this end, building evidence through a program of research and practical guidance which brings together both the social protection and climate change communities is critical to ensure a vision for future provision is underpinned by a solid knowledge base, accessible to both climate and social protection actors.

**Investment in the Climate Change and Social Protection (CCASP) Research Initiative will contribute to addressing these challenges by both bringing together the climate and social protection communities and helping fill this evidence gap. It will thus help inform the strategic provision of social protection to address the challenges arising of climate change, including the need to plan for large-scale provision.**

## Overall Initiative Description<sup>5</sup>

The CCASP Research Initiative has the objective of bringing about strategic policy and programmatic changes at the intersection of social protection and climate change to support climate resilient development, both nationally and internationally with a focus on the Global South. It aims to support national governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, academia, and civil society to develop and expand social protection provision to manage the socioeconomic dislocation resulting from climate change. Its thematic areas of focus are on understanding the implications of climate change for social protection needs, the potential role of social protection to help manage climate change, and how to enable more effective policy and programmatic options for adaptation, mitigation, and overall climate resilient development. It aims to do so by:

- **Knowledge:** creating, gathering, consolidating and sharing knowledge around CCASP's main areas of focus
- **Guidance:** providing practical guidance to policy-makers and practitioners, with a focus on the Global South.
- **Advocacy and Exchange:** advocating in global and national fora for increased linkages between social protection and climate change, and promoting dialogue and exchanges between the two communities.

---

<sup>5</sup> The following institutions were consulted in the development of this initiative and contributed valuable ideas and inputs; AFD, DFAT, DIE, FCDO, GIZ, IIED, ILO, INTPA, ODI, RCCC, STAR Facility, the University of Manchester and USAID. The CCASP-RI Task Team bears full responsibility for the final content of the note.

During the initial phase of work CCASP will conduct an initial mapping of programmes, initiatives, and actors in this space; define research questions and objectives.

Integration between the social protection and climate sectors is at the heart of the CCASP initiative, supported by a participatory, consultative, and interdisciplinary dialogue and research. The Initiative will focus on exchange, dialogue, and consultation both as a way to map existing knowledge as well as to advocate for further linkages between social protection and climate communities. As such, CCASP's approach will entail linking climate scientists with social policy actors, as needed, to address the key research questions. In addition, the Initiative will actively promote learning and dialogue between actors in the climate and social protection sectors, including those working in related disciplines on issues such as climate policy, programming, and financing, migration, demographics, climate modelling.

### **Working Research Questions**

The Initiative will initially explore two key issues: i) future social protection needs arising from climate change, and ii) lessons from current experience. These will serve to guide the development of knowledge and guidance on the future contribution of social protection to managing climate change.

Future needs: Extreme and slow onset events arising from climate change will increase poverty, vulnerability and undermine human capital and resilience, all having important consequences for increasing needs for social protection. In addition, the transition to a green economy will require significant investments in social policies to both support groups affected as well as to incentivise climate-friendly behaviours. There is a need to model future demand for social protection based on an assessment of the socioeconomic impacts of climate change under different scenarios, taking into account temporal, spatial and contextual factors. Understanding future social protection demand would include needs arising from more frequent and extreme shocks, but also in adapting to gradual changes, and transitioning to more sustainable livelihoods. It will be important to identify the implications for social protection across a range of interventions, including the need for social assistance, social security, as well as possibly, other non-income-support measures (e.g. social services, economic inclusion, etc.).

Current experiences: Countries are starting to experiment with approaches that link social protection to climate-related objectives, and some experiences and practices have been developed over the last decade. However, knowledge is dispersed, fragmented, and mostly anecdotal. There is a need to identify and document existing initiatives and innovations attempting to develop social protection as a response to climate challenges, including programming, policy, research and evaluation activities. First, it is important to map initiatives and understand the scale to which these activities are happening, their challenges, and successes. In addition, it is key to make information and evidence accessible to a community of policy makers and practitioners in the climate and social protection sectors. CCASP will aim to synthesise these learnings, and promote and support programme evaluation and reflection in order to inform future programming.

The working research questions are:

1. What are the implications of climate change for future social protection?

2. What experiences of linking social protection and climate change already exist and what can we learn from them?
3. How can social protection contribute to climate change adaptation, mitigation, and overall climate resilient development? (including in combination with interventions in other sectors)

These questions will be further elaborated during the initiative through joint discussion with the social protection and climate change communities.

There are a number of related areas that the CCASP research initiative will link to, and inform, but that will not be within the primary scope of this research. One of these areas is the exploration of financing options for social protection, including domestic resource mobilisation and international financing (climate financing, disaster risk financing, etc). Other initiatives exist that aim to explore these financing issues, and CCASP will seek ways to collaborate and exchange with them. In addition, while CCASP will have a focus on understanding demand for social protection in the context of different climate scenarios, the Initiative will not focus on conducting in-depth climate or poverty modelling, but rather will connect with others working in this space and use existing information.

## CCASP Initial Work Programme Description

### Objectives

The objectives of the initial work programme are to understand and document the CCASP landscape.

### Outputs

- Conceptual framework for Climate Change and Social Protection (CCASP): Creation of a conceptual framework linking climate change and social protection which can be used to link the two areas of work theoretically and also inform and integrate future programming design and appraisal across the climate change and social protection communities. This will include an initial typology and critique of CCASP approaches.
- Initial scoping of future demand for social protection: Review of existing literature to provide a working analysis of the medium term implications of climate change for social protection - taking into account the temporal, spatial and socio-economic distribution of impacts. This will entail developing links with the IPCC and other key actors from the different institutions modelling these issues.
- Initial mapping of programmes, initiatives, actors and lessons learned: Identification of key programmes, initiatives and actors active in this field. This includes a preliminary mapping, by region, of current programmes attempting to integrate climate change and social protection, as well as other actors and initiatives working on relevant issues (in Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean). This will also include the initiation of outreach across the social protection and climate change communities to establish linkages and a basis for collaboration across different entities working in this area.

- Verified future research questions: Identification of major challenges and evidence gaps relating to CCASP in both the social protection and climate change communities, and the issues to be explored in future research, drawing on the priority issues articulated by developing country governments, programme implementers and the major development partners.

### **Activities**

- Literature review: multi-stage, snowballing, and semi-systematic.
- Key Informant Interviews (KII)
- Participation in range of climate change and social protection fora to introduce initiative and identify and connect with key actors and initiatives
- Convening of international and regional consultation events (range of fora including workshops)

### **Institutional arrangements**

The Research Initiative is led by two senior researchers who co-lead the CCASP-RI Task Team, in partnership with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre (RCCC), and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

A Steering Group will strategically guide and shape the CCASP initiative and provide direction and support to the research design and development of subsequent work. The SG will consist of representatives from ODI, RCCC, and IIED and the CCASP Leads. The SG members are also responsible for bringing in inputs from other experts in their institutions. The members of the SG commit to dedicate staff time to participate conceptually and practically in the initiative.

### **Timeline**

The first phase of the CCASP will take place between April and December 2022.