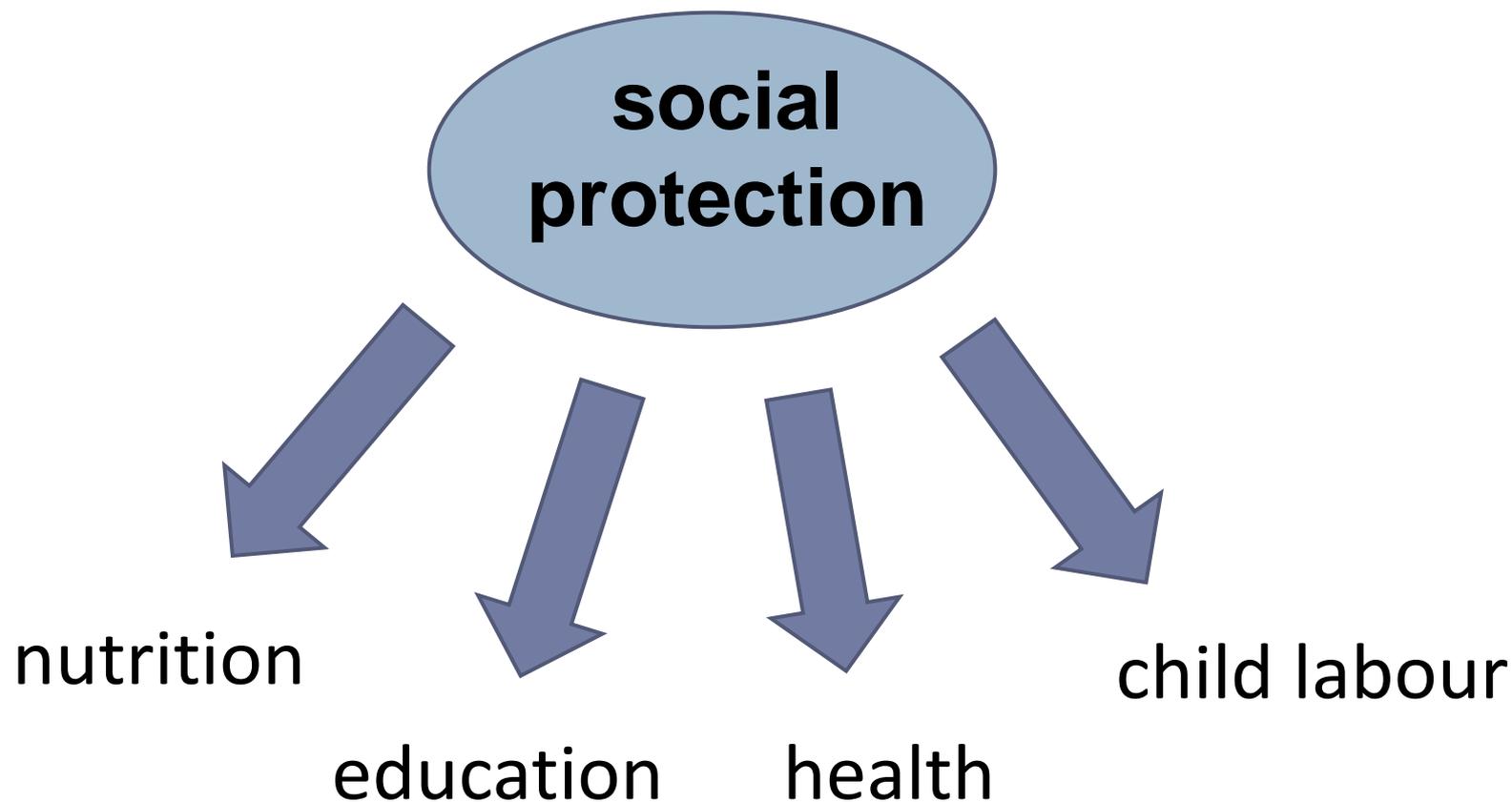


# Researching the Linkages between Social Protection and Children's Care in Rwanda:

Chaste UWIHOREYE, Keetie,  
L. Melbourne July 19<sup>th</sup> 2014

# Positive impacts of social protection

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# Impacts of transfers on care?

Programme type and key features	Family Separation	Child labour	Child marriage	Birth registration	Schooling	Health	Total reports
Human capital accumulation	2	31	5	2	48	10	62
Adult labour		4			1		5
Extracurricular activities		1			1		1
Minimum school attendance	2	26	5	2	46	10	56
<b>Integrated anti-poverty</b>		2			2	3	4
Extracurricular activities		1			2	3	3
Minimum school attendance		1					1
<b>Pure income transfers</b>	1	3			8	6	13
No conditions	1	3			8	6	13
<b>Total outcomes</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>79</b>

Source: Barrientos et al. 2013

# Children without parental care

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- ▶ 12-34% of children in Sub-Saharan Africa live without their parents
- ▶ Underlying causes of loss of parental care and family separation include poverty, illness, migration, emergencies, abuse and neglect (low quality of care).
- ▶ Poverty and lack of means may undermine carers to provide kinship or foster care.
- ▶ Children outside of parental care are at a higher risk of receiving lower quality care.

**>> Role for social protection?**

# Research questions

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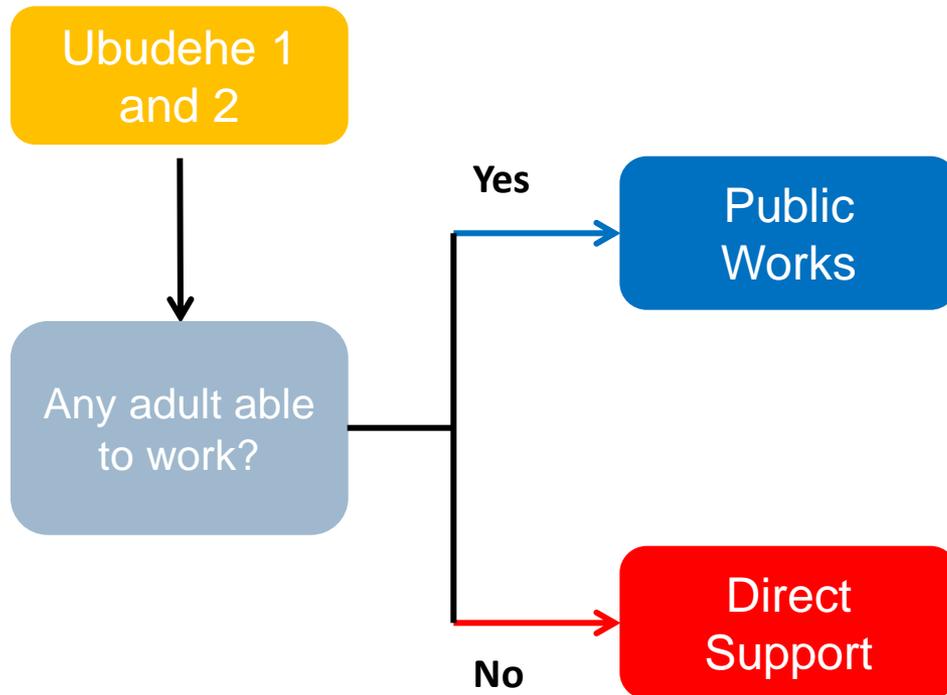
- 1) What are the linkages between social protection and the quality of children's care?
- 2) What is the link between social protection and the loss of parental care or family separation?
- 3) How does social protection influence decisions about foster or kinship care?

# Researching the Linkages between Social Protection and Children's Care in Rwanda



- ▶ Fieldwork sites in Southern Province, Nyanza district: Kibilize sector (1<sup>st</sup> cohort VUP) and Rwabicuma sector (4<sup>th</sup> cohort VUP)
- ▶ Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP)
- ▶ Qualitative study with interviews, group discussions and participatory exercises with VUP staff, programme participants, and community members
- ▶ Includes perspectives from more than 120 adults and 90 children

# Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP)



# VUP and quality of care

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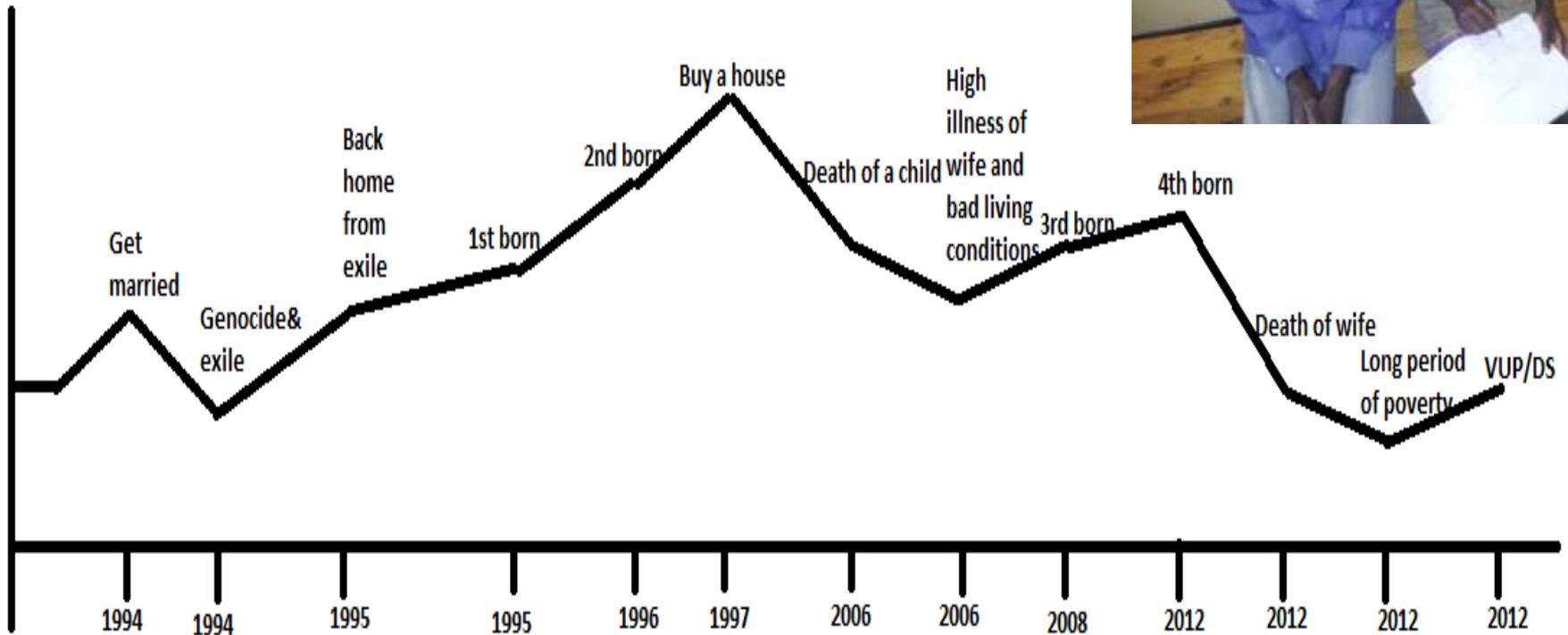
- ▶ Cash transfers improves carers' abilities to meet children's material and non-material needs.

*“We were living in poverty, we were not having a place to stay in, but VUP gave us money, now we have bought iron sheets to build a beautiful home, we get sufficient food, school materials and health insurance.” [K-Ch-DS-F]*

*“The VUP helps to get free from conflict and parents can help each other in caring for their children” [K-Ad-DS-M]*

*“When children find out that you have the means to give them what they want, they also become free and want to discuss with you about their problems, what they need. They also feel free to relax with other children as they have been fed with healthy*

# VUP and quality of care



*“[Participation in VUP Direct Support] empowered my capacity to assure the responsibility of protecting my dependants in the household.”*

# VUP and quality of care

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- ▶ Transfers have spill over effects that lead to positive impacts for children not participating in social protection.

*“When the participants get the money they can give jobs to neighbours who are not participants. This helps them to get the money or any compensation and they can feed their families.” [K-Ad-No-Mix]*

*“It has an impact because it brought the developments activities. The roads which help people to get into relation with others and reach whatever they need easily. For example, the ambulance can reach this place easily and when you have a child who is sick, you have a hope that she will get care as*

# VUP and quality of care

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- ▶ Sensitisation meetings around PW activities have helped in raising awareness about child wellbeing and care.

*“We have learned how to prepare healthy diet. Before we considered that the healthy diet is composed by sweet potatoes and beans, but since we started getting the advice from VUP programs, we can now buy the needed healthy food like fishes and vegetable.” [R-Ad-PW-F]*

*“In my family the children are treated on the same level. We are even sensitized to do so when we finish the work in VUP. They tell us how the good relationship should be in our families and how we should treat our children on the same*

# VUP and quality of care

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- ▶ Effects on quality of care differ between girls and boys, older and young children and biological and non-biological children.

*“Those who are adoptive most of them are like house girls/boys in families where they live and they do all activities: fetching water, cultivating, feeding animals, etc. you can find that those children are in the same age as biological ones but they don’t do the same activities.” [R-Ch-PW-F]*

*“Most non biological children raised in families are not treated on the same level as biological children. The parents give more care to their biological children than non-biological children. Those non-biological don’t study but they stay at home doing the housework.” [R-CHh-PW-Mix]*

# VUP and quality of care

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- ▶ Public works may undermine the quality of care for children.

*“there are parents who choose to sacrifice some children for being able to go to work in VUP. ... these children stay home and are refused to go to school for taking care of his/her siblings.” [K-Ch-DS-M]*

*“[The difficulty is] to spend much time at work and not caring for children and know what they learned at school.” [K-Ad-PWL-*



# VUP and preventing loss of parental care

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- ▶ Transfers can help preventing loss of parental care and support family reunification.

*“... the thing that causes the separation is poverty and VUP has come to solve this problem. It also helped the beneficiaries to have enough abilities to use the money that they are given. The VUP helped families to stay together and think about how they can use the money that they get to develop their lives.” [R-Ad-DS-F-A]*

*“... we know families where children have left before due to the poverty and hunger but after participation in VUP by those families the children came back and they are studying well.” [R-Ad-PW-M]*

# VUP and preventing loss of parental care

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- ▶ Misuse of transfers and care issues following Public Works may contribute to family separation.

*“There comes a time when a parent works in VUP, for instance a father, and after getting paid he got the whole money wasted because of the drunkenness and disputes come from there which leads to a separation.” [K-Ch-PW-M]*

*“[...] There are some parents who go to the VUP and leave their children at home, those children are going to face different difficulties including hunger, therefore they become tempted to leave and go to seek for a better life elsewhere.” [K-Ad-DS-M]*

# VUP and incentivising foster care

- ▶ Transfers provide much needed support in providing foster/kinship care for children.

*“[DS] can have an impact because when you raise adoptive children you have to care for them but when you don’t have means it is difficult. For those who receive support it get easier as they can find means to take care of the children.” [D-A-M-DS- M]*

*“VUP is not the reason that pushes people to care for those children, it is the kindness but VUP as a support it helps you to get means and you can feel that you are able to care for the child who doesn’t have any other family.” [K-CHH-PW-Mix]*



# VUP and incentivising foster care

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- ▶ Transfers can serve as a positive and perverse incentive.

*“There are some people who feel love and compassion towards children who don’t have families or those who are not well cared in the families then you decide to take the child at your household. There other who took those children so they have part of the properties which belonged to the parents of those children.” [R-Ad-DS-F]*

*“On one hand the support is a good thing because it will improve the care of children and the family. On the other hand it would be a bad thing because it can be like a trading business where a parent will take the child so that he can get the money to solve his problem.” [R-Ad-No-M]*

# Lessons learned

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## Positive effects

- ▶ The VUP plays a positive role in improving child well-being and quality of care.
- ▶ The VUP can support family reunification.
- ▶ Transfers can support provision of kinship and foster care.

## Challenges

- ▶ Benefits from the VUP do not benefit all children equally.
- ▶ The VUP Public Works component may compromise carers' abilities to provide high quality care.
- ▶ Misuse of transfers have particular repercussions for children.
- ▶ Transfers as an incentive for foster care could lead to 'commodification' of children.

# Recommendations

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- ▶ Strengthen the link between the VUP and social work or child protection services.
- ▶ Firmly integrate solutions for child care and care responsibilities into the VUP and particularly into its PW component.
- ▶ Use training and sensitisation within the VUP more strategically to address issues around children's care and well-being.