

**Abstract**

This paper reviews the main lessons from existing social protection programmes in low-income countries for the development of social protection in these countries. It is taken for granted that introducing social protection in low income countries is that much harder due to constraints arising from underdevelopment, fragmented political and policy processes, reduced tax base, and weak administrative capacity. The paper examines existing social protection programmes in order to illuminate on the strength of these constraints, and the nature of potential remedies. The paper concludes that the experience of low-income countries shows there are many policy options available to them. It also concludes that while deficits in finance and operational capacity are much less tractable, global partnerships can work effectively to lift these constraints.

**Keywords:** social protection, social exclusion, political constraints, low-income countries

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