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***Reasons to be cheerful: How ILO analysis of social transfers worldwide augurs well for a basic income (with some caveats)<sup>1</sup>***

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**Disclaimer: The author conducted the original research for this project as a consultant for the International Labour Organization. However, the responsibility for opinions expressed in this paper rests solely with the author and dissemination does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Organization of the opinions expressed in it. Moreover, while the author now works for the International Social Security Association, the same disclaimer applies to this institution also.**

# **Abbreviations**

**CCT** Conditional Cash Transfer(s)  
**CSG** Child Support Grant  
**ILO** International Labour Organization  
**ISSA** International Social Security Association  
**STs** Social Transfers(s)  
**UCT** Unconditional Cash Transfer(s)

## Introduction

In 2008, the ILO launched a major macro 'study of studies' that focused on systematically assessing a large number of papers and evaluation reports<sup>2</sup> on tax-financed social transfer programmes [STs] operating worldwide. In total, 62 programmes from 30 developing countries were analysed. These STs reach between 300 and 350 million beneficiaries (excluding the new social security provisions for the unorganized sector in India). This study was originally conceived as a means of contributing to the ILO campaign on the global extension of social security.

The study manifests principally through the ILO's new online *Matrix on the effects of social transfers* (2009). The matrix contains a systematised database of all the primary source data on the effects of STs.<sup>3</sup> The matrix allows the user to search for the impact of programmes by effect (i.e. child labour effect), impact on specific groups (i.e. children), type of benefit (i.e. pensions, child benefit), category of programmes (i.e. targeted, conditional etc) and geographic region. Essentially, it contains the key conclusions from all the studies analysed by the ILO matrix. The matrix presents both the effects delivered by tax-financed programmes as well as their limitations on a number of micro-economic and social dimensions.

The significance of this macro study of studies resides in the fact that over the last fifteen years, large scale STs have emerged as a core component of poverty reduction strategies. ST programmes show considerable diversity in objectives, design, and institutionalisation. They have the potential to reach a large proportion of the poor and extreme poor in developing countries and can thus make a significant contribution to global poverty reduction. Owing to the recent introduction of STs, research on their impact and effectiveness is only just beginning to provide a comprehensive knowledge base; hence the importance of this macro assessment of their impact.

In light of the recent emergence of STs this paper is tasked with bringing together and outlining the current knowledge on the effects of STs in such a way that is pertinent to all those interested in the basic income. The relevance is based on that fact that the ST programmes analysed broadly correspond with the logic of the basic income. For example, like the basic income, STs are non-contributory and tax-financed, and a considerable number of STs are unconditional and universal (across certain groups). Consequently, the study might enable us to deduce and anticipate the kind of effect that a basic income could be expected to deliver also. This anticipatory/predictive function is important as barring the pilot basic income scheme in Namibia and various sublimated versions of the basic income logic, no fully-fledged basic income currently operates anywhere in the world. Detractors, proponents and neutral observers of the basic income should therefore use the findings of the ILO matrix to better understand the impact of STs, and because of their similarities, the potential consequences of the basic income proposal also. Thus, this study of studies is the most comprehensive one to-date on the effects of STs, and this paper can thus make an important empirical contribution to discourse on the basic income.

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<sup>2</sup> In total 126 documents were studied and these are included in the annex at the end of this document.

<sup>3</sup> The author of this paper was a member of a team that performed the research that constituted the content of the ILO matrix. The ILO matrix project was supervised by Philippe Marcadent. The data contained in the matrix is discussed in a more analytical fashion in the new ILO book: *Social security for all: the guide through challenges and options* (2010a) and in a working paper entitled: *Effects of non-contributory social transfers in developing countries: A compendium* (2010b).

The findings of this ILO study, in general, show positive impacts on poverty, health and nutrition, the social status of recipients (notably for women), economic activity and entrepreneurial small scale investments (notably in agriculture). Additionally, significant adverse effects on labour market participation are avoided and there is evidence of good operational effectiveness. Thus, in this paper it is argued that in spite of the ontological<sup>4</sup> differences between the basic income and some STs, a basic income could be expected to deliver similar outcomes to the STs covered by the ILO matrix. But of course this depends on the design, generosity and extent of coverage.

The structure of this paper is the following. Section one presents the findings of the ILO matrix study in a systematic way in the form of a table and illustrates the documented effects of the STs that have been analysed and presents them through various dimensions and sub-dimensions. Section two presents some important caveats and knowledge gaps that must come to inform and temper any interpretation of the results of the ILO matrix presented in section one. Section three indicates briefly how far the matrix results can be used to support the basic income and what kind of effects the basic income could be expected to deliver. Ultimately, how the matrix results can be used to support the argument that a basic income would deliver similar results depends on two further areas of exploration: the conditional and the targeted nature of the STs analysed. Thus, in sections four and five, the paper explores how pivotal these two factors are in determining the effects identified in the matrix.

## **Section 1: The findings of the ILO matrix on tax-financed social transfers**

The ILO's matrix was developed to help support decision making and dialogue within ministries of planning and finance, mainly in developing countries. It was reasoned that if the numerous effects of tax-financed STs (intended/unintended) could be systematically documented, it might help inform national policy makers about the outcomes that could be realistically expected from STs and therefore guide the development of their social security systems. Likewise, all those interested in the basic income might wish to utilise the findings of the matrix for a similar goal, and guide and inform their argumentation on the basic income proposal.

During the design process of the matrix, there was relative flexibility on the criteria employed to decide which programmes should be "in" or should be "out" the scope of the focus of the study. However, all the STs programmes covered are totally or partially tax-financed and all are non-contributory. However, the heterogeneity of schemes that provide child benefits for example is very high, and the programmes selected in the matrix do not give a complete insight into the diversity of actually existing schemes for this particular benefit group. In addition, a number of programmes, but not all, could be considered as social assistance interventions. This reflects what was found and not a deliberate choice, and of course the evidence documented in the matrix and in the compendium is not exhaustive neither in terms of the number of programmes covered nor the effects that are considered. Additionally, as section 2 shows, it is important to point out that the matrix is not without its methodological limitations.

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<sup>4</sup> Meaning the difference in terms of the very nature (being) of the basic income and STs.

## Results

Below, an overview of the impacts of these transfers is given. To present the overall findings in an intelligible and rigorous manner, the results are summarised in a table, and organised by the impact on a variety of micro-economic and social dimensions and sub-dimensions. Four impact dimensions are given and within each impact dimension there are a number of impact sub-dimensions. In the columns the impact of STs in the impact sub-dimensions are documented. By and large, programmes had a positive effect. However, occasionally other results were also observed, such as: a 'clear negative effect', 'no effect' or 'effect unclear'. Nevertheless, the latter outcomes were rare. Naturally, some sub-dimensions featured more programmes producing results. This was mainly because more ST programmes were tailored to address this particular dimension as an integral programmatic objective. For example, the sub-dimension of 'Income level and stimulation of consumption' featured a large number of programmes having an impact. This is because as a large number of STs are oriented to boosting and stabilising household income.

The effect of a programme within an impact sub-dimension was calculated by analysing the conclusions of all of the studies focusing on that programme, and then a point was awarded for the overall effect of the programme. To calculate the overall effect within one of the sub-dimensions below, it was necessary to tally up the effects of a programme in that particular dimension. By doing this, a general picture of a programme's effect could be ascertained. An illustrative example of this methodology would be if in the sub-dimension of 'child labour' a programme was considered by the papers studied in the matrix to exhibit three positive effects and only one negative effect, the overall results were achieved by awarding (by rounding up) the programme a positive score of 'one'. When there were an equal number of negative and positive effects a point was awarded for the column 'effect unclear'. On a few occasions, some programmes displayed 'no evidence of an effect', even though they were evaluated for an effect in one of the impact sub-dimensions. By employing this methodology it was possible to give a picture of the overarching effect of the programme within the given impact sub-dimensions.

As a pointer for reading the table, for the sub-dimension of 'Educational Attainment' nine programmes were reported to have delivered positive effects and one programme produced an effect that was unclear.

In truth, this was not a difficult process as virtually all the programmes delivered positive results, either because studies did not consider negative results or because the programme did not generate any negative results at all or any that could be uncovered by the scope of the research. Since this is more a qualitative study of studies rather than a quantitative one, in order to evaluate the studies on programmatic effects, points were awarded for the overall effect in one of the given sub-dimensions below.

Table 1 clearly shows that STs in general seem to deliver positive effects. This is illustrated by the significantly higher scores in the 'clear positive effect' column for all but five of the sub-dimensions. Those sub-dimensions where the overall positive impact cannot be discerned are highlighted in grey. The difference between the number of programmes that positively effect various sub-dimensions and those that have a 'no', 'negative' or 'unclear' effect is so large that putting aside the methodological limitations (see section 2) and the fact that not all programmes have been analysed worldwide, one can still reasonably conclude that STs have a clear positive effect on a number of dimensions of human existence and the social worlds they inhabit.

Thus the interpretation of the ILO matrix study advanced in this paper leads to a fairly resounding conclusion: *a majority of the social transfers studied clearly generate a range of positive effects in terms of enhancing human development, supporting the full utilisation of productive capacity, enhancing and stabilising consumption and facilitating social cohesion and inclusion.*

**Table 1. Summary of the ILO matrix: Effect of tax-financed social transfers**

<b>Impact dimension and sub-dimensions</b>	<b>Number of programmes with a clear <i>positive</i> effect</b>	<b>Number of programmes with a clear <i>negative</i> effect</b>	<b>Number of programmes with <i>no</i> evidence of effect</b>	<b>Number of programmes where <i>effect is unclear</i></b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1. Enhancing human development</b>					
Adult preventive health	1	-	-	1	2
Child labour	6	-	2	2	10
Child preventive health	7	-	-	-	7
Drop-out rates	4	-	-	1	5
Educational attainment	9	-	-	1	10
Maternal preventive health	3	-	-	-	3
Reduction in the worst forms of child labour	1	-	-	-	1
School attendance	12	-	-	-	12
School enrolment	13	-	-	-	13
<b>2. Supporting the full utilisation of productive capacity</b>					
Employability	1	-	1	2	4
Employment creation	4	-	1	2	7
Reduction of informality	-	1	-	-	1

Participation in the labour market	5	2	-	2	9
Productive activities	15	-	-	-	15

### 3. Enhancing and stabilising consumption

Food expenditure	4	-	-	-	4
Income inequality	4	-	2	-	6
Income level and stimulation of consumption	20	-	1	3	24
Income stability and consumption smoothing	5	-	-	-	5
Long-term effects on income and consumption	5	-	1	-	6
Nutritional level	10	-	2	-	12
Satiation	3	-	-	-	3

### 4. Facilitating social cohesion and inclusion

Empowerment	14	-	1	2	17
Intra-household relations	4	-	-	1	5
Social capital and solidarity	4	3	-	-	7

What can be discerned from the study is that social transfers in general show positive impacts on poverty, health and nutrition, the social status of recipients (notably women), economic activity and entrepreneurial small scale investments (notably in agriculture), and thus have avoided significant adverse effects on labour market participation of the poor populations they serve. On the impact on entrepreneurial behaviour in recipient families, the studies that were analysed found that many families used part of the cash transfer to invest in small-scale agricultural activities, including the purchase of livestock. Thus, these families sought to create sources of income that should also provide some degree of protection from future economic shocks, particularly food price crises. In Namibia, for example, the universal old-age and invalidity pensions have stimulated markets for locally produced goods and services. In developing countries, just as in industrialized countries, STs have demonstrated

their capacity to act as economic and social stabilizers at times of crisis as per the *Bolsa Familia* in Brazil (ISSA, 2009) and one-off STs in Australia (ISSA, 2010) during the recent financial crisis.

However, in the areas of adult preventive health, reduction in the worst forms of child labour, employability, reduction of labour market informality and social capital and solidarity, the effect of STs is less obvious, either because there is no actual effect or due to limited research on the subject.

Having identified these generally positive results, it is also hoped that users of the table will be responsible and recognise that this table can clearly be politicised and misused if not accompanied with the appropriate caveats and qualifications (see section 2). Potential users are also encouraged not to stay merely within the confines of the table but delve deeper into the nuances behind the table. The table is really an invitation to the reader to explore the matrix more thoroughly, and form their own conclusions.

In light of the results presented in the table above, it can be supposed that a basic income could deliver similar effects in some instances. Consequently, the results in the table can be used to support both the extension of social security in general and certain, but not all, aspects of the basic income proposal. However, before the repercussions for a basic income are discussed in detail it is necessary to explore a number of important caveats and knowledge gaps in the next section. This will also help determine the extent to which the table can be used to support the case for the basic income.

## **Section 2: Methodological caveats and knowledge gaps**

In spite of the positive results of the study, to qualify the matrix findings it is necessary to lay down some important methodological caveats and identify some key knowledge gaps.

### **General caveats**

The reader should bear in mind that the programme evaluations covered by this study do not represent an exhaustive list. Rather the study covers those that were easily accessible online and Anglophone. There were also some problems in finding original sources online. This problem reflects the perils of relying on secondary sources and perhaps the lack of rigour employed by other researchers when it comes to referencing. In light of this, this ILO matrix study cannot be considered as a truly comprehensive one, though the studies used are probably representative and give a good overview.

Moreover, the findings in the table do not give an indication of the different scales of programmes. Some programmes are large thus the effects are larger and more extensive, and some are small and consequently have smaller effects. For example the Brazilian *Bolsa Familia* programme covers some 46 million people, whereas the Mongolian Cash for Herders programme covers just 2,349 people. It thus stands to reason that their effects cannot be considered to be of the same order of magnitude.

Ultimately, the findings in the table are the result of a subjective chain of interpretation open to human error. For example, this chain of potential bias consists of the surveyed individual's account of their subjective experience, the interpretation of authors making the programme evaluations and, of course, the interpretation of those involved in compiling the ILO matrix study. Thus, in acknowledging all of this the analysis presented in this paper can only be considered as indicative of the effects of STs.

## **Key knowledge gaps**

It is also important to recognise that the matrix possesses knowledge gaps in its intended scope and is limited by general knowledge gaps that exist outside of its specific scope. These data gaps may in part be due to a real lack of data, along with the inevitable project constraints that constrict the amount of time that can be devoted to uncover such knowledge.

### ***Effects on non-beneficiaries***

To date research on the effects of STs seems to have focused on identifying their poverty reduction and prevention effectiveness for actual or potential beneficiaries. Less is known about the wider effects of STs on non-beneficiaries and the local economy, except for a few studies considering labour supply among beneficiary households. This is a significant lack as it is quite plausible to assume that the receipt of STs by beneficiaries are likely to have an effect on those who share the same household (as demonstrated by the impact of social pensions) but more than this, possibly by those who occupy the same economic locales, where there is a highly permeable relationship with cash entering households and its subsequent circulation in local economies.

Moreover, it is important to recognise that not all effects on non-beneficiaries are likely to be positive. It is quite possible that STs could produce new forms of social exclusion, disrupt traditional coping mechanisms, and possibly render the vulnerable even more vulnerable. One can also reason that STs can lead to the empowerment of one group whilst resulting in the disempowerment of another; they may act as disincentives to other groups; or, they may create infrastructure for some groups and not others, therefore consolidating existing inequalities. One can also imagine that social tensions and antagonisms between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries could be provoked by ST programmes, especially when it comes to geographical targeting.

### ***Prevalence given to quantitative measure vs. qualitative measures***

In quite simple terms most research on STs focuses on their quantitative effects. This perhaps reflects an empiricist research bias and political preference in institutional and governmental circles for 'hard' data and a further bias that quantitative data is somehow more authentic. This lack is a concern as the qualitative effects of STs (i.e. social bonds, capabilities and human empowerment), may have a lot more to say about the well-being of people than quantitative measures. The World Health Organization echoed this contention when it stated that mental and neurological disorders are all but absent from the analysis of international development (see: Chambers, 2010; WHO, 2008).<sup>5</sup> Invariably, analysis of the qualitative effects of STs has tended to rely on anecdotal references.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Outcome measurement (measure of intended outcomes) versus impact assessment***

Another knowledge gap that typically affects any attempt to capture the outcome of STs is that researchers capture what they set out to capture. There are substantial costs involved in data collection; therefore spreading the evaluative net further and wider can be difficult. The problem with a narrowed evaluative process is that the unintended effects of STs (both positive and negative) and the general impacts are not picked-up.

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<sup>5</sup> The World Health Organisation estimates that mental and neurological disorders are the leading cause of ill health and disability globally, but there is an appalling lack of interest from governments and NGOs.

<sup>6</sup> Although some interesting work undertaken by the Institute of Fiscal Studies on the Colombian conditional cash transfer *Familias en Acción*, demonstrates that rigorous scientific measurement of the qualitative impact of STs is possible and generates pertinent results.

### ***Macro economic data on the impact of social transfers on economic growth***

Disaggregating the precise effect of STs on economic growth is difficult and would be an important venture to understand this relationship better. After all, one can imagine that large scale ST programmes that attempt to address inequality may have a significant effect on economic performance in general. There may be significant positive microeconomic effects, but there may be a more negative macro economic impact when disincentives for investment exist when STs are tax-financed. Simply studying the effect of STs at the household level only cannot capture these kinds of impacts. There is not enough space here to deal with the various theories exploring the redistributive effect on growth of STs, but it is a complicated relationship not reflected in this ILO study.<sup>7</sup>

To summaries this section, while there are knowledge gaps both inside and outside the scope of the matrix, it can be maintained that the study still gives a very good insight into the effect of STs. This evidence will serve to enrich and further the debate and understanding of the impact of STs and the possible effect of the basic income.

## **Section 3. To what extent does the ILO study support the basic income proposal?**

This section attempts in a very brief fashion to directly relate the matrix findings documented in the table in section 1 of this paper with the basic income, and consider the contention that these findings can be used to advance the case for the basic income proposal.

Thus far this paper has cautiously suggested that the findings in the ILO matrix study augurs well for the basic income, by suggesting that it too can be expected to deliver a number of similarly positive effects. However, the message perhaps ought to be little more mixed. The possibility that the findings of this ILO study can be used to argue that a basic income could generate similar effects can only be sustained up to a certain point. In this section it is argued that the table is better able to provide data that supports unconditional and universal transfers for children and the elderly (essentially a basic income for the young and the old). However, empirically, it becomes more problematic to maintain this assertion for the active population groups. The main reason for this is that a significant number of the STs analysed above focus on active population groups, and they are conditional and targeted (based on behaviour and income/wealth) and therefore one might suppose that their effects are related to the conditional and targeted mechanisms. However, we can refer to the findings of the pilot basic income that has recently taken place in Namibia to plug this empirical unknown. This supposition is taken up more thoroughly in sections four and five below.<sup>8</sup>

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7 For example, to give a flavour of differing theories, what follow are two classical standpoints: (1) *Progressive redistribution may promote growth*: Efficiency is increased by addressing credit market imperfections by redistributing capital from capital-rich enterprises or individuals to capital-poor and credit-constrained people. (2) *Redistribution limits growth*: A certain degree of exclusion is useful to the "system" because the 'fear of falling' encourages those who are not excluded by the system to interpellate (interiorise) the dominant social values and therefore reproduce the prevailing socio-economic order; a mechanism that encourages labour market participation by those who would otherwise be idle which in turn impacts on growth. In a reductive sense, these two theories reproduce the logic of the 'carrot and stick' approach as two possible methods for activating individuals and stimulating growth.

<sup>8</sup> In January 2008 a two-year pilot basic income was launched. All residents below the age of 60 years received a basic income grant of N\$100 per person per month (one hundred Namibian dollars: about US\$12), without any

## **Effects of social transfers for children and elderly support the case for the basic income**

The findings on the effects of STs on children and pensions, clearly affirms the logic that a basic income can have positive effects. This is because a significant number of the STs that are analysed for these two vulnerable groups were unconditional or universal across these groups and therefore share a strong ontological similarity with the basic income. The social pensions that were evaluated in the studies analysed by the ILO matrix, were not based on previous activity or earnings of the elderly, and are therefore essentially a basic income for the elderly. Likewise the Child Support Grant [CSG] which is still unconditional, in spite of recent (unsuccessful) attempts to introduce some conditional elements to the programme, demonstrates the important results on human capital formation of the young and their future prospects. For example, the CSG is thought to impact on a child's future height when adult and their subsequent earnings. According to Agüero *et al*, 'the gains in the monthly South African wages from an increment in height of 2.1 per cent would be between R190 and R262' (2007, p. 19). Arguably, we could expect a basic income to do the same for children also. In fact, the Namibian pilot scheme seems to indicate that this is a real possibility, given that the number of children malnourished fell from 42 per cent to 17 per cent of the population and children's weight for age improved to such an extent that from a low base it came to nearly match the world average. Given the connection between height and future earnings, one could assume that this would improve the future income earning prospects of children living in households receiving a basic income, provided there are sufficient labour market opportunities (Citizen's Income Trust, 2009).

Thus to a large extent social pensions and a number of other unconditional transfers support the expectation that a basic income could generate similarly positive social and micro-economic effects as those identified in the ILO matrix.

## **Effects of social transfers for the active population delivers a mixed message for the basic income**

The expectation that a basic income could deliver similar effects for the active population group as those STs analysed in the table above is problematised for a number of reasons. Firstly, apart from the pilot basic income in Namibia there are no studies on the impact of a basic income on active population groups simply because there is no fully-fledged basic income that actually covers active population groups, with the exception of the Alaskan Permanent Fund.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, the STs analysed in the ILO study differ from the basic income in an important ontological sense because they are conditional and targeted. Thus, it is difficult logically and empirically to deduce/extrapolate with any certainty that the effect of a basic income would be the same as a conditional and targeted STs.

Having said this, if it is accepted that the benchmark findings of the Namibian do permit us an insight into what expectations we can have with regard to the performance of the active population group, advocates of a basic income may feel more optimistic. For instance, according to the evaluation of this pilot basic income, its impact on the productive capacity

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conditions being attached. The grant was given to every person registered as living there in July 2007, whatever their social and economic status. The grant covered 2000 individuals spread across two villages.

<sup>9</sup> And this differs from the standard proposed version of a basic income in that it is an annual dividend, therefore one wonders how far it can replicate the income smoothing nature of those STs that are paid monthly.

of the active population group was promising. The study found that economic activity rose, especially among women. In addition, own account work saw the largest increase, and particularly the tending of vegetable plots and the building of latrines, both of which increased the community's health. The pilot scheme also seemed to stimulate more micro-economic activity with new shops opening. These findings are important as they provide evidence that a basic income does not act as a disincentive, whereby the working population withdraw from the labour market or productive activity (see Basic Income Grant Coalition, 2009; Citizen's Income Trust, 2009). This is of great significance, as this tends to be one of the biggest concerns of policy makers and governments with regard to STs to the active population.

Having said this, one must also be cautious about using the Namibian pilot scheme as absolutely conclusive evidence on the potential effect of a basic income on the active population. This concerns centres on the fact that the Namibian scheme was applied in a specific cultural context and there are of course limits to how far pilot schemes can shed light on fully fledged schemes. Thus when developing any argumentation on this matter, it is necessary to remain mindful of the questionable validity of the link between the pilot programme and an actually existing basic income along with the chances of replicating the effects of the pilot programmes on a larger scale.

Nonetheless, in spite of the promising evidence of the pilot study in Namibia, it is still important to understand better those concerns about using the findings of the ILO matrix to justify any arguments that a basic income could produce similar effects. Thus, it is first necessary to address the conditionality versus unconditionality question; a debate that has preoccupied discourses on the basic income for the last twenty years. The following section attempts to consider how pivotal is the conditional aspect of STs in contributing to the positive effects identified in the ILO study? Does conditionality make the difference? If conditionality is not the overriding factor, then perhaps this permits us to more readily suppose that the unconditional and universal nature of the basic income could deliver similar results to those documented in the ILO matrix.

## **Section 4: How pivotal is conditionality in contributing to the results of the ILO matrix? <sup>10</sup>**

In the proceeding discussion the importance of the conditional aspect of STs as a general mechanism is considered in order to gauge how critical conditionality is in determining certain outcomes. However, because of the complexity of the conditionality debate it is important to clarify now, rather than leave it to the conclusion of this section, that the precise role played by conditionality in delivering positive outcomes is not clear.

### ***Promote attainment of developmental objectives***

One key argument advanced for preferring conditional to unconditional cash transfer schemes is that conditions act as a strong incentive for families to invest, in particular in the health and education of their children. Conditionalities also constitute a stimulus, if not an obligation, for public authorities to invest in relevant services when their availability and quality is not satisfactory (i.e. if parents are to satisfy the conditionality of vaccinating their children the requisite services must be in place). In practice, conditional cash transfers

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<sup>10</sup> Please note that sections four and five of this paper are modified versions of text extracted from the ILO book *Extending social security to all: A guide through challenges and options* (2010). These sections are a collaborative effort written by the author of this paper, Philippe Marcadent and Luis Soares.

[CCTs] have demonstrated good outcomes that tend to confirm such assertions, although still relatively little research has been documented to date.<sup>11</sup>

That said, unconditional cash transfers [UCTs] can also deliver favourable human development outcomes. For instance, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development has argued that "cash transfers do not need to be made conditional on school attendance to impact on children's education" (DFID, 2005, p. 14). Likewise, the old-age pensions in Brazil have helped to increase school attendance and there is evidence that the cash paid through the Namibian pension scheme has ultimately been spent on children's education in spite of the absence of conditions (ILO, 2010). Thus, it cannot be automatically assumed it is the conditionalities themselves that are pivotal in satisfying human development goals. However, the conditional element arguably helps improve the acceptability of STs directed to the poor. Conditionalities evidently improve the political acceptance of schemes, because they reflect the social ethic of reciprocity - that benefits for the poor, as much as other members of society, should be balanced in some way by responsibilities. Proponents for conditionality would argue that without such measures STs may not ever become concrete social policy, and conditionality is the necessary compromise.

### ***Conditionalities and human rights***

Another argument launched in favour of conditionality is that it can be important in achieving human rights by binding not only the beneficiaries, but also the public authorities, to create the necessary conditions (i.e. basic services availability) for their fulfilment. This is why CCTs are now presented as a vehicle of co-responsibility. For example, as per the discourse supporting the *Bolsa Familia* programme in Brazil. It is beyond the scope of this paper to carry out any extensive review of supply-side benefits, but it suffices to say that CCTs tend to expose the limits of existing basic social services and can play a valuable role in encouraging their upgrading. As will be discussed further, CCTs can act to signal an alarm when additional services are lacking. Having said this, it does not logically flow that this capacity is exclusive to CCTs. One imagines that with the right administrative and consultative processes being in place, the 'alerting mechanism' could also be factored into UCT programmes also.

There is good reason to argue however, that conditionality may be detrimental to the satisfaction of human rights. This is because the fulfilment of conditions may not entirely depend on the beneficiaries, but also on the availability and quality of the basic social services. The non-existence of such services implies the exclusion de facto of a group of people in need of access to the right of social security. This situation, it is argued, is particularly dramatic in areas deprived of social services and where, traditionally, vulnerability is also higher. Furthermore, the opportunity costs of meeting conditions of CCTs may penalize the most vulnerable who are least able to meet such conditions. Additionally, it is argued that the responsibility of fulfilling conditionalities falls solely on the individual/household, and as a consequence CCTs implicitly convey the idea of "deserving" and "non-deserving" poor. While such a pre-conceived view might tend to facilitate the political and social legitimacy of the CCT, it is clearly detrimental to a human rights

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11 Evaluations of the Mexican CCT *Progresá*, which assessed the impact of imposing education-related conditions on school enrolment and attendance, show a significant effect. For example, De Brauw and Hoddinott found that on average children in households that did not receive the monitoring forms are 7.2 percentage points less likely to enrol in school (2008, p. 1). Furthermore, "When children were making the transition to lower secondary school, the impact was even larger, while there was no measurable impact on children continuing in primary school. The impact is even more pronounced among households with illiterate heads" (Ibid.).

perspective. Rights are universal in character, and cannot be based on supposed “deservingness”.

Standing would also argue that the aforementioned features of conditionality violate two ethical principles that ought to inform social policy. Firstly, CCTs threaten to contravene *The [Rawlsian] Security of Difference Principle*, whereby a policy or institutional change is just or valid if it reduces (or at least does not worsen) the insecurity of the least secure groups in society (ILO, 2004, p. 16). Secondly, CCTs could breach *The Paternalism Test Principle*, which suggests policies and institutions are just if they reduce the controls limiting the autonomy to pursue occupation of those facing the most controls, and are just if they do not impose controls on anybody that are not imposed on the most free groups in society (Standing, 2002, p. 200). In other words, a social policy cannot be deemed ethically sound and pro-human rights if it imposes obligation on some that it does not on others and if it worsens the situation of the most insecure groups in society. Clearly, there is considerable scope for criticising conditionality in terms of its potential violation of these two principles and its paternalistic tendencies. Thus the potential of CCTs to guarantee ethical social policy and fulfil human rights is not assured.

Furthermore, in assessing the role of conditionalities, it is essential to consider the way public authorities enforce them. In reality, lack of compliance can have different effects in different programmes. It can be the trigger for a punitive approach leading to the exclusion of the beneficiary. Equally, non-fulfilment can also be understood as having the aforementioned ‘alarm function’ of revealing the vulnerability of individuals. This sheds light on the balance – or the lack of it – between the solutions provided and the needs of the beneficiary. This can create a “feedback loop” in which further inquiry leads to progressively improved solutions. This feedback mechanism can be seen in the *Bolsa Família* programme, which has recently, has been integrated with the Child Labour Eradication Programme. Approximately 450,000 families have been identified as including children who are working, and in 2008 the programme addressed the needs of 875,000 children (Ananias de Sousa, 2009). This change has led to particularly close monitoring of the benefit condition that families ensure their children’s attendance at school. This, and the other “conditionalities” of the programme are not, in fact, seen as (necessarily) punitive, but as indicators, the non-fulfilment of which can serve to identify cases of vulnerability and facilitate a better understanding of families’ needs in terms of the utilization of services (Ibid.). Programmes that contain an in-built ‘alarm system’ are especially germane in child labour situations, where the non-fulfilment of a child labour conditionality may bring attention to when and where children are labouring. However, to reiterate the point once more, one can reason that this does not have to be an exclusive trait of CCTs; UCTs could be made to possess this property also provided the right provisions are put in place.

The existence of conditionalities can strengthen the bargaining power of some household members (de Brauw and Hoddinott, 2008), thereby facilitating the fulfilment of their rights and promoting their status within the household. This aspect can be particularly important for women and children as they traditionally occupy subordinate positions within the household. Such conditionalities might also work to overcome stigma-inducing effects otherwise associated with welfare payments (de Brauw and Hoddinott, 2008). Finally, recent findings in behavioural economics show that “myopic households often undertake actions that can reduce their own long-term welfare (...) Conditionality offers a constraint that limits the adverse effects of this myopia” (Ibid.). In other words, CCTs may provide a safeguard against poor-decision making inconsistent with human development goals or, arguably, with the best interests of household members, and in the case of the paper, against the interests of children. Again, this begins to venture into the domain of paternalism.

### ***Poor people's agency and CCTs***

Thus far, the discussion has been somewhat tilted in their favour of CCTs, however CCTs can also have a number of drawbacks in terms of human development objectives. If, for example, a household fails to satisfy a conditionality on health, it might be excluded from other developmental benefits encompassed within the same CCT(s), such as reduced poverty and improved nutrition. The goal of human development would hardly be served and strengthened by "punishing" households through suspension or being expelled from the programme for unfulfilled obligations, when those who would suffer directly are likely to be children, rather than those who must actually fulfil the obligations. Conversely, some argue that because CCTs strengthen access to health, education and better income, they promote poor people's "agency", along with facilitating options for families inserting children into child labour activities. In addition, the existence of conditionalities can strengthen the bargaining power and status of women and children within the household. On the other hand, and as a more general criticism, some see CCTs as representing a form of mean-spirited paternalism, showing little faith in the poor to know what is best for them and their families. As Künnemann *et al.* (2008, p. 16) have argued, CCTs in this sense are "freedom constraining", depriving "the poor of the freedom to take the appropriate decisions to increase household welfare". This view is echoed by Samson *et al.* who point out that there is a strong argument against conditional transfers because "the imposition of conditionalities may unnecessarily undermine household autonomy and presumes that the poor will not make rational choices that improve their livelihood" (2006, p. 12).

This debate on the importance of conditionality is unlikely to be settled in the foreseeable future. Clearly, CCTs have become a promising new means to reduce poverty and improve human development outcomes, however one does not have to logically conclude that such outcomes are the sole preserve of the conditionality mechanism, and rather one may suspect that the overarching motivation for conditionality are for reasons of political acceptability and to satisfy the 'paternalist twitch' of governments and policy makers (Standing, 2002: 208). Thus given the uncertainty of how pivotal CCTs are determining the positive effects above, this means there is still some considerable scope for arguing that a basic income could deliver similar outcomes in the absence of conditionalities.

## **Section 5: How pivotal is programme targeting in contributing to the results of the ILO matrix?**

Targeted STs are common, thus it is important to understand how essential the role of targeting is in affecting the outcomes of STs. If the effects of STs are heavily dependent on targeting then this does not bode so well for a basic income. However, if targeting is not an overarching factor in determining the possible effects of STs, then the matrix findings could be used to guide our expectations about the possible effects of a basic income.

The emergence of large-scale social assistance programmes in developing countries, within the context of poverty reduction, has brought the debate on targeting based on "resource" (income or wealth) conditions to the foreground. This debate is driven by a number of considerations which include affordability, costs, effectiveness, income inequality, values, rights, employment trends and political support. Some elements of this debate are presented below.

Targeting based on individuals' personal status can be carried out in a number of ways:

- *means-testing*,<sup>12</sup> although this requires high-quality data that is not available in many countries and may be expensive to put in place, but may be approximated by “proxy” means-testing methods;
- *geographical targeting*, whereby transfers are provided to everyone living in areas where there is a high incidence of poverty;
- *community-based targeting*, which uses community structures to identify the poorest members of a community or those eligible according to agreed criteria;
- *categorical benefits* provided to those recognized as belonging to a specific vulnerable category of the population (e.g. indigenous people);
- *self-targeting* such as in work programmes that offer a below-market wage, based on the logic that poor individuals only will choose to opt into the programme.

Targeting is found in many tax-financed programmes providing old-age pensions, child benefits and benefits to those in the working age population who may be unable to sustain themselves through paid work. It is often introduced in addition to other conditions to access benefits such as age (i.e. old-age pensions), place of residence (for example rural programmes) or behaviour (for instance school attendance).

Explicit arguments to support targeting are related to affordability, efficiency and income equality. Quite simply, it is argued that because targeted programmes have a lower number of beneficiaries than universal programmes, they are less expensive and more sustainable. By focusing income redistribution on the poor, targeted interventions in theory<sup>13</sup> create the same poverty reduction outcome with fewer resources and, for that reason, are more efficient. For the same reason, targeted interventions are also seen as more powerful tools for reducing income inequalities than universal redistribution mechanisms.

By way of a brief digression on the question of affordability, it is important to recognise that the spread of ST programmes does not carry a definitive argument about the affordability of a basic income, as most STs are categorical and targeted and cover a small number of the population, and the level of benefits are invariably below the subsistence level. In fact STs often account for less than 0.5 per cent of national GDP expenditure. Thus the analysis of STs in the ILO matrix does not provide an insight into the affordability of the basic income, as typically the basic income is articulated as providing a cash transfer above the level of subsistence and across all population groups.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, comparative analysis on the affordability question is difficult. However, this is not to imply that the affordability of a basic income has to be understood as an insurmountable impediment or that the evidence presented by STs cannot play some role in advancing the case for a basic income.

For proponents of the basic income, it is important not concede too much ground on the affordability issue, since what is affordable can often be a question of priorities in low

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12 Proxy means testing provides an alternative form of individual assessment, employing more easily observed indicators of well-being that serve as proxies for income, or wealth indicators associated with poverty.

13 It is supposed here that well-targeted interventions will cover the same number of poor people as universal ones and with a similar amount of benefits.

14 Invariably, the basic income has been articulated at three levels of generosity, and most proponents fall somewhere between levels two and three. (1) *A basic income below subsistence*: This would require the individual to perform full-time work to satisfy basic survival and post-survival needs, and this BI would merely make a contribution to the fulfilment of basic needs. (2) *A basic income for the satisfaction of basic needs*: This would satisfy the basic needs of the individual, and in order to satisfy post-survival needs/desires the individual would still have to top-up their BI with waged-work; either full- or part-time. (3) *A basic income sufficient for a liveable income*: This would give an individual the resources for satisfying basic needs and to some extent post-survival needs/desire. It may even facilitate the option of withdrawing from wage-labour (i.e., granting the right/option not to work or to work less). Most probably it is only an option in high income countries.

income countries and, as Monbiot argues, money always seems available to terminate life but never available to preserve it (Monbiot, 2003; 2007). Equally, a number of thinkers would argue that in high income countries, the possibility of introducing a societal-wide basic income is merely a matter of shifting fiscal and public policy priorities.

The powerful arguments outlined above have played, and continue to play, a major role in the widespread implementation of means-tested or similarly-targeted programmes throughout the world. In spite of this, their conceptual basis has been challenged in a number of aspects. Several areas of criticism can be distinguished.

Firstly, some of the arguments in favour of targeting de-link one intervention, the targeted programme, from the broader context of social and fiscal policies. Thus the influence of this context on income distribution and inequality in a society is not given the consideration it merits. While the preference for universalism tends to be related to a strong concern for equity and for progressive taxes, the preference for targeted intervention is generally represented in a set of policies and guided by ideology where equity is less prominent and tax less progressive.<sup>15</sup> This argument is advanced by authors such as Mkandawire (2005). He concludes that “levels of equality are higher in societies pursuing universalistic policies than those that rely on means-testing and other forms of selectivity” (2005, p. 6). In the same vein, Korpi and Palme (1998) formulate what they call “the paradox of redistribution:<sup>16</sup> the more we target benefits on the poor only, and the more concerned we are with creating equality via public transfers, the less likely we are to reduce poverty and inequality” (Ibid.).

Secondly, the arguments put very simply as above fail to consider the dynamic character of poverty. At any given date, a large proportion of those who are presently poor were not poor in previous years, as demonstrated by table 2 below. This table shows the dynamic and fluctuating nature of poverty. It shows how large numbers of people are “sometimes poor” compared to “always poor” in a given period of time. This means that people can be poor, escape poverty and become non-poor; and likewise, large numbers can be non-poor and then fall into poverty for a whole host of reasons.

**Table 2: Percentage of households who are: always poor, sometimes poor, never poor<sup>17</sup>**

		<b>Always poor</b>	<b>Sometimes poor</b>	<b>Never poor</b>
<b>China</b>	1985-1990	6.2	47.8	46.0
<b>Cote d’Ivoire</b>	1987-1988	25.0	22.0	53.0
<b>Ethiopia</b>	1994-1997	24.8	30.1	45.1
<b>India</b>	1976/76-83/84	21.9	65.9	12.4
<b>Indonesia</b>	1997-98	8.6	19.8	71.6
<b>Pakistan</b>	1986-1991	3.0	55.3	41.7
<b>Russia</b>	1992-1993	12.6	30.2	57.2
<b>South Africa</b>	1993-1998	22.7	31.5	45.8

15 In relation to this first observation, it should be noted that a means-tested programme with a very redistributive design and effective implementation may achieve limited redistribution if spending is low or is financed through regressive taxation.

16 This “Paradox” is described in the “classical” literature on poverty, although challenged by several authors.

17 While the data for this study was collected some time ago, the essential point that this table conveys is unchanged - that a large proportion of people fall in and out of poverty.

<b>Vietnam</b>	1992/93-97/98	28.7	32.1	39.2
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	1992/93-1995/96	10.6	59.6	29.8

Source : Cited by Kalanidhi Subbarao, Risk and Vulnerability Assessments: Concepts and Methods; Workshop on Social Protection for the Poor, ADB, October 2002.

Thus, targeting transfers on the poor only does not by any means prevent poverty, and the dynamic aspect of poverty means that in any given period, there can be much larger numbers of the newly poor than might be anticipated, dealing with whose needs can lead to levels of associated administrative costs considerably higher than expected when compared with more universalistic interventions. More generally, as Krishna (2007) has stated: "Controlling the generation of new poverty is – or should be – an equally important objective of poverty reduction ... By focusing resources upon those who are already poor; it [targeting] directs attention away from others who are falling into poverty".

Thirdly, the arguments above, which centre on the particular efficiency of the targeting programmes, are general statements that have been strongly challenged in the context where the share of the poor population is high (with the result that any "savings" resulting from targeting are likely to be low), and the implementation of targeting is costly and difficult, leading to both important inclusion and exclusion errors; such scenarios are typical in low-income countries. More generally, it is argued that not all methods of targeting are suited to all kinds of benefits, or have the same effectiveness regarding inclusion/exclusion errors; statistical and administrative demands are very divergent. And, in the end, the same is true of costs.

The issue of the cost of targeting is an area in itself for debate and it is argued that some methods can be unduly costly. The case of means-testing presents an example in which the cost of implementing the targeting method can come to represent a high share of the total cost of a programme. This arises because identifying the poor accurately, where there is a lack of reliable population data (and data systems), and updating this information, is very complex and costly. Nevertheless, some programmes have been able to implement targeting through proxy means-testing at low cost.<sup>18</sup> It has been noted generally that, the more efficient the targeting mechanism is (in terms of reduced inclusion error), the more expensive it is likely to be and the more it may be associated with exclusion errors. In summary, it is impossible to assess the costs of targeting without reference to the inclusion and exclusion errors generated. This is stated succinctly in the conclusion of an Asian Development Bank study which states that: "With relatively high level of leakage the expectation is that in practice most targeting measures have been high-cost means of transferring benefits to the poor" (Weiss, 2004).

Finally, some argue that targeting costs should take into account not only direct administrative costs of implementation, but also the indirect costs to programme participants. This means that programmes with low administrative costs (as is often the case with self-selection methods), can still be very expensive when the costs incurred by participants are considered. Some examples relate to the cost of time spent, transportation, loss of other income opportunities, fees (and sometimes bribes) required for acquiring the necessary documentation, the possibility of stigma, the erosion of self-esteem and community cohesiveness, and the potential undermining of informal support networks.

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<sup>18</sup> The Mexican conditional cash transfer programme *Oportunidades* is a good example of a targeted programme which presents relatively low inclusion error and low administrative costs (including targeting): less than 4 cents per invested peso (SEDESOL, 2009).

Arguably, these costs may even limit the potential positive effects of the STs documented in the ILO matrix.

Another controversial area surrounding targeting is its possible exclusion effect. On one hand, those in favour of targeting point out that the programmes minimize exclusion because their design makes them more sensitive to the specific needs and capacities of the poor. This design sensitivity, it is argued, is perhaps more prevalent than in universal programmes where the design is based on a "standard household". On the other hand, others remain critical of this argument,<sup>19</sup> and argue that targeting increases exclusion by setting conditions (relating to income or wealth) which are difficult to assess, by generating direct and indirect costs for potential beneficiaries, or by being too demanding for implementation by local institutions.<sup>20 21</sup>

While this discussion is by no means exhaustive, two final remarks bring this subsection to a conclusion.

It is important to bear in mind the technical complexity and the heterogeneity of experiences in targeted schemes and their empirical outcomes. It is these characteristics that have fuelled, and promise to prolong, the debate on targeting according to personal resources or status. It is also true that this debate is inextricably linked with political factors. Beyond the purely technical issues, politics and ideology have influenced the relative inconclusiveness of the debate on the relevance of targeting, and fundamentally set the context for the questions of whether to introduce resource-based targeting and the definition of resource thresholds that define who is or not eligible. These questions themselves reflect, to an important extent, different value systems, and the power that different actors in the broad political arena may have to promote their values and interests.

It appears that targeted programmes have enjoyed an enhanced social legitimacy during the last decade, perhaps because they are perceived as fair, in the sense that they claim to address those most in need and, by doing so, can contribute to the reduction of existing inequalities. The suspicion exists, meanwhile, that the process of defining eligibility for benefits does not always meet appropriate standards of independence and transparency.

Finally, in this area, as with many other aspects of social protection, each choice entails its own advantages and disadvantages. It is important to consider these advantages and disadvantages, not in isolation, but in a comprehensive way. As shown above, improving some aspects may have negative effects on others. The debate on targeting based on conditions relating to income, wealth or other resources invariably tends to detach the discussion from specific programme objectives, their context of implementation and the characteristics of beneficiaries. Targeting is no more than a tool whose relevance and design should first be assessed according to its contribution to those objectives. Regarding the objective of poverty reduction, effective targeting programmes have proven to have very positive outcomes as illustrated by some of these studies contained within the ILO matrix. Nevertheless, they should neither be considered as the only means of transferring income efficiently to the poor, nor as sufficient to fight poverty alone. Thus, in short, the

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19 Mkandawire, for instance, argues that the myopia that underpins the rationality of targeting is also quite arrogant in that it presumes that a standard prototype of the poor exists.

20 Local institutions may have a restricted capacity to apply some targeting methods and for that reason they have a limited capacity to be able to deliver benefits.

21 Having said that, it should also be underlined that exclusion comes about for reasons other than targeting or universalism, such as potential beneficiaries being poorly informed about benefits, the difficulty of accessing benefits due to the non-availability of banks or mail services in some areas, geographical isolation, discrimination and stigma, and so on.

door for using the matrix findings to inform expectations on the impact of a basic income remains open.

## Conclusion

In sections four and five, a general dissection of conditionality versus unconditionality was performed along with a consideration of the importance of targeting. While the merits of conditionality and targeting were highlighted, so were some of their problems, and significantly, it was not clear that conditionality and targeting were absolutely crucial to achieving certain human development goals nor for producing the positive effects that have been identified in the ILO matrix. A similarly ambivalent conclusion on the role of conditionality is made by Gabel and Kamerman who state that researchers have not been able to attribute with absolute certainty the causality between effect and the conditional mechanism, because of the difficulty in disentangling the effects of the policy from other elements (i.e. the state of labour market for example) (2008, p. 18). Thus in light of this ambivalence, the ILO matrix study still bodes well for those who wish to argue that it could be used to support a basic income, provided the right caveats and limitations accompany any such argument. This possibility persists in spite of that fact that STs differ ontologically from the basic income.

While the conditionality and targeting that characterise many of the programmes analysed in this ILO study raise some doubts as to how far we could expect a basic income to produce similar outcomes, the findings of the matrix still support the *gradualist position* on the possible transition to a fully-fledge basic income, if not the 'big bang' overnight conversion. This is because conditional and targeted approaches have been touted as necessary pre-cursors for achieving the goal of full societal-wide basic income coverage. For example in Brazil, Suplicy has argued that the *Bolsa Familia* is one of the first steps to a full societal wide citizen's basic income in the country (2006). This is because conditionality and targeting tend to be more politically acceptable, because the behavioural demands synonymous with the receipt of cash from conditional transfers contribute significantly to human development objectives. Likewise, it is supposed that targeting is more resource-efficient and therefore fair because targeted programmes assist the most vulnerable and demonstrate prudent governance. Moreover, from an affordability perspective it is tricky to use the ILO findings on the effects of STs to develop the case for a basic income, without qualification. This is because a basic income is likely to be more costly as a result of its higher generosity and more extensive coverage.

Having said this, in the vision of the basic income gradualist, the greater political acceptability synonymous with conditional<sup>22</sup> and targeted transfers could help cultivate a political and public culture more receptive to the entry of a fully-fledged basic income at a later stage.<sup>23</sup> Strategically-speaking, this means that the matrix can still be used to advance the cause of the basic income. Although such a utilisation does imply that in order to obtain some of the effects generated by STs, the basic income has to be linked with other complementary measures that facilitates opportunities to access social services and

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22 The reason for this acceptability is that conditionality conforms to the social norm of 'reciprocity' whereby in a kind of social contract type relationship the recipient adjust his behaviours in such a way that is acceptable to the social state and the rest of society.

23 The Trojan horse argument is a recurrent theme within the basic income discourse and reflects an awareness that in order for the basic income to be implemented a full-frontal advance is unlikely to deliver the best results, but rather it must be smuggled into the political mainstream in a more palatable form so as not to upset the politically squeamish.

depending on ones' view as to the role of the basic income, access to the labour market as well.

The evidence contained in the matrix can be used to support claims for a universal unconditional cash transfers across specific population groups (i.e. children and the elderly). However, while it cannot be sustained that the study supports without question unconditional universal cash transfer (i.e. basic income) for active population groups, neither does it unequivocally rebuff such a possibility. Perhaps this ambivalence can be overcome by making reference to the results of the pilot basic income scheme in Namibia that demonstrates similarly positive results to those documented in the ILO matrix table across an entire community including the active population. Moreover, this study notes considerable positive effects in labour market participation and productive capacity, widely touted to be the Achilles' heal of the basic income proposal. This linking of the matrix and the findings of the Namibian case study perhaps helps bridge the 'unknown' empirical dimension in the ILO study, whereas previously, the results of unconditional universal cash transfers (across all population groups) were difficult to determine given that hitherto none have really existed. One senses that depending on context, that combining the results of the table and the Namibian case study can be used to justify the expectation that the basic income could produce similar effects also. Moreover, the matrix findings seem to support the gradual movement towards a fully-fledged basic income. This is because conditionality and targeting can play a role in legitimising and establishing a culture of receptivity that would pave the way for a fully-fledged basic income to come later. Nevertheless, one must also recognise the methodological limitations of using the findings of a pilot scheme to understand a fully-fledged and society-wide basic income.

Clearly, the findings of the ILO study make an important contribution to the contemporary understanding of STs especially as a social and macro phenomenon. However more research is needed need to discern the impact of conditional and unconditional transfers on active population groups as this appears to be an empirically less certain area. It is also the more problematic ground upon which the basic argument is being waged. Therefore it is in the interests of all supporters to understand the impact on the active population group better in order to develop the promotional discourse of the basic income accordingly and, of course to really know what a basic income is likely to entail.

Currently, the overall trend with regard to government preference and the preference of major international institutions (i.e. the World Bank) seems to be shifting toward conditionality and targeting and this poses some concerns for those oriented to building momentum behind universal and unconditional cash transfers. The political prospects of a basic income type proposal would be better if the trend were to rolling back conditionality and targeting, rather than them being hardened and applied more vigorously as seems to be the case. Having said this, this is not anything new with regard to the basic income proposal. These two features have always been an issue and the clash between paternalism (conditionality) and resource prioritisation (targeting) with unconditionality and universalism is likely to persist within the discourse and implementation of social transfers.

The ILO matrix confirms what many have suspected already, that STs have a number of positive and micro-economic and social effects. The matrix also offers proponents of the basic income reasons to feel optimistic that it could produce similarly positive results. Hopefully this paper serves as an invitation to explore the matrix further and better understand the role of STs and the potential consequences of a basic income.

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