Objectives

The two-week "core course" is offered by the World Bank’s Social Protection practice aims to provide participants with an in-depth understanding of the conceptual and practical issues involved in the development of social protection systems with a special focus on social assistance or safety net programs. Safety nets are non-contributory transfers provided to people vulnerable to or living in poverty. Transfers can be provided by governments in cash, vouchers or in-kind; they can be universal or targeted, and designed in the context of conditional or unconditional programs. Safety nets are only one of the components of broader social protection systems, which also include insurance-related schemes (e.g. health insurance, crop insurance and pensions) and a range of labor-oriented programs. Such systems protect poor and vulnerable population groups from risk of destitution, link them to essential social services and help them escape poverty.

The core course has been offered for more than ten years with close to 1200 graduates. Over the last decade the interest and activity in social safety nets has experienced a paradigm shift. Globally, there is strong political commitment for social protection as powerful instrument for achieving development goals. The role of social safety nets has been magnified during the recent food, fuel and financial crises. And there is every reason to believe that that role will remain significant going forward, with challenges related to globalization and climate change. A growing number of countries are introducing and expanding safety net programs. Globally, safety nets are currently available in 146 developing and emerging countries, up from 131 in as recently as in 2010, and from just 72 in 2000.

The course builds on the latest developments in safety nets as integral part of social protection systems. The presented material reflects the most recent policy developments, delivery innovations, and research findings by the World Bank and other institutions. It covers recent practical experience in building coherent social protection systems with special focus on safety net delivery worldwide - from high to middle to low income, to fragile states.

Participants will have the opportunity to present and discuss challenging issues concerning social safety net in their own country, and work toward solutions with other participants and experts.

Course Description

As previous core courses, this year course draws from knowledge distilled and summarized for practitioners in the World Bank’s flagship publications ("For Protection and Promotion: the Design and Implementation of Effective Social Safety Nets", “Conditional Cash Transfers: Reducing Present and Future Poverty”). The course also draws on recent global initiatives,

The course adopts a mix of learning methods, including presentations, round table discussions, case studies, simulation games, hands-on computer assisted exercises and group work. It is taught by experts from the World Bank, top research institutions and representatives of other agencies. The course comprises five interrelated and complementary topics: (1) the structure, functions, financing and objectives of social protection and labor policies and programs; (2) the role of social safety nets in social protection system, and assessment of their performance; (3) overview of the main social assistance programs and instruments; (4) experience with implementation systems for effective delivery; and (5) how these vary across countries including by economic conditions, political economy, administrative and implementation capacity.

This year's course has a number of innovative features which distinguish it from previous offerings. First and foremost, first week is devoted to the social protection and labor systems, with a focus on how to use safety nets to strengthen social protection systems through better policy harmonization and reduced fragmentation across projects and delivery instruments. It will also discuss in depth country cases with rapid transformation of safety nets and social policies. It contains in-depth coverage of implementation (including beneficiary registration, payment systems and management information systems) and policy analysis (including performance assessment, design of integrated safety net systems, new developments in activation and graduation programs for beneficiaries).

As a sampling, the course will consider:

• Overview of recent global initiatives in the area of social protection.
• Key elements and functions of social protection systems
• Introduction to social insurance programs
• Introduction to labor market programs and instruments
• Key performance indicators of social protection and labor system
• Patterns and sources of financing for social protection programs
• The role of social safety nets in the architecture of social protection systems.
• Issues of building productive safety nets and promotion of beneficiaries.
• Implementing and reforming safety nets to better support poverty eradication and shared prosperity.
• The tools and methods used to undertake solid diagnoses of the need for safety nets, and determine their size, the specific instruments and program mix, and identification of beneficiaries.
• How safety nets can enhance food security and help build more resilient livelihoods; and how to adapt them to disaster response situations.
• The role played by safety nets during the recent crises and what worked and what did not.
• Designing and implementing cost effective and efficient targeting systems, including setting benefit levels and establishing the necessary support services.
• How to set-up an effective monitoring system and control for fraud, error and corruption.
• Political demands on social safety nets and ways to address political economy challenges.
• How and when should gender considerations be incorporated?

**Target Audience**

This course is designed for policymakers, policy analysts and research staff from Government agencies, civil society stakeholders, NGOs involved in the implementation of safety nets, researchers and trainers from academic institutions, journalists working on issues related to poverty reduction and social protection, and operational staff from the World Bank and from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. As teamwork is important in safety nets programs, we encourage interested countries to nominate teams engaged in the design, implementation or evaluation of safety nets programs.

**E-Learning**

Course participants are highly encouraged to complete the distance e-learning course - "Introduction to Social Safety Nets". The course aims to support capacity building and on-the-job training of policy makers, managers and technical staff involved in safety nets and food security policy and implementation. The course consists of 6 lessons containing interactive step-by-step instructions, case studies, exercises and relevant reading material. Completion of the course is a consideration for participation in the course. The course is available online, download or on CD-Rom.

**Tuition Fee**

The two-week course is offered at the subsidized rate of US$2,500 per participant from World Bank client countries: borrowing countries eligible for the subsidized rate are:

- IBRD ([http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#IBRD](http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#IBRD))
- IDA ([http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#IDA](http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#IDA))
- Blend ([http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#Blend](http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups#Blend))

For participants from international organizations, donor agencies and others, the fee is US$3,500. The fee includes tuition, training materials, medical insurance and other conference costs. The fee is payable by wire transfer only. Participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from Washington, D.C., as well as their hotel and subsistence costs. The World Bank has negotiated a group rate with hotels in the Washington area and participants may benefit from these rates on a first come first served basis.

**Speakers**

The list of speakers includes recognized experts in Safety Nets from the World Bank as well as from other international organizations, academics, private consultants and policy makers from around the world.
Past participants’ course evaluations

The course has been evaluated using several methods including participants’ self-assessment and satisfaction, and a pre- and post-test to assess actual learning gains from the course. It received high marks and has been well appreciated by a varied audience from developing countries, World Bank staff and staff from development agencies, donors and developed countries. Comments from previous years’ participants:

“Comprehensive and diverse expert knowledge and country experiences presented by trainers.”
“The mix of theoretical and operational subjects combined with the exchange of experience with other country was wonderful”
“Drawing on rich experience from different speakers from across the world, country specific illustrations and references in addition to informative content added much value to the learning.”
“The approach in the presentations were provocative and challenging, and the discussions that resulted from undertaking the exercise was very helpful”

Application

Early application is strongly recommended since admission is competitive, space is limited, and the processing time for US visa applications has lengthened. Acceptance is provisional pending evidence of full financial sponsorship and approval by nominating or coordinating agency (if required).


The deadline for registration is October 10, 2014.

Selected recipients will be notified on a rolling basis. Participation is by invitation only, based on acceptance of application, space availability, and payment of tuition fees in full.

Tuition fees are due by November 21, 2014.

Information

Course information updates can be found in the World Bank Safety Nets course website at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/sncc14

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