Gender sensitive public works: literature review

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Acknowledgements

This paper builds on the insights, literature and case studies from a wide range of colleagues working at the intersect of gender and social protection. I would like to acknowledge this intellectual heritage, which culminated in many of the discussions held during CSW 2019 on the topics of "social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls". I would also like to thank all of those who have read and provided invaluable comments for this paper: my OPM colleagues Rodolfo Beazley and Luize Guimaraes; DFID counterparts Benjamin Zeitlyn, Emmeline Skinner and Roopa Hinton.
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1 Introduction and analytical framework

“There is plenty of evidence that unemployment has many far-reaching effects other than loss of income, including psychological harm, loss of work motivation, skill and self-confidence, increase in ailments and morbidity (and even mortality rates), disruption of family relations and social life, hardening of social exclusion, and accentuation of racial tensions and gender asymmetries.”.

Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom.

1.1 Introduction: objectives, structure and notes on methodology

The terms of reference (TOR) for this study required a “desk based literature review of existing gender sensitive public works and of the impacts of public works programmes on gender relations”. In particular, the review’s primary focus should be on “soft public works and on public works with strategies for developing women’s skills, capacity and opportunities to enter the labour market and find sustainable employment or income generation in the future”.

This study is therefore organised as follows. We start by providing insights on the main barriers and lifecycle risks faced by (young) women accessing the labour market. We then focus on the potential role of public works in addressing these barriers, illustrating the Conceptual Framework that informs this study. The following section then delves into the three main ‘channels’ through which public works impact on women and girls can be enhanced, alongside a fourth – cross-cutting – institutional channel. Evidence from across a wide range of countries is provided, including insights on impacts achieved and mediating design and implementation factors. Particular depth – including light-touch ‘case studies’ is provided for public works that align with the overall objectives above. A final section draws broad conclusions.

The time allocated for this study was relatively short, and the methodology was adjusted accordingly:

- The literature review extensively builds on recent reviews on the topic of gender and social protection (secondary sources), incorporating additional insights and evidence where needed (e.g. new areas of analysis or recent literature).
- In some sections the review goes beyond a primary focus on public works, but does not delve deep into the broad literature on skills development and employability.
- The review also has a primary focus on young women in urban contexts – yet a lack of relevant literature led us to frame the research more broadly and draw implications for this specific group where possible.
- Given the review’s main objective is to inform policy thinking in Mozambique and internationally, the format adopted is not ‘academic’ and prioritises ease of reading/consultation: for example tables and bullets are preferred to long paragraphs, while citations are all acknowledged but not all provided within citation marks with academic rigour.

The main contributions of this review include: an innovative Framework, providing a useful framing for future discussion on this topic; a focus on service-oriented public works and innovative forms of programming for skills enhancement.

1.2 Economic, social and life cycle risks and barriers faced by women

Aligned with the background Papers for the 2019 CSW on gender and Social Protection (Chopra 2018) this paper privileges the understanding of gender equality as recognition and due consideration of the ‘interests, needs and priorities’ of diverse groups of both women and men (UN WOMEN 2001). In particular, we focus on the concept of economic empowerment...
and the potential role of public works programming in addressing young women’s barriers to employment.

As a starting point for the review, this section therefore very briefly outlines the main economic, social and lifecycle risks and barriers faced by women and girls – in line with recent literature¹ (Antonopoulos 2008; Budlender 2008; Kabeer 2008, Holmes and Jones 2010a; Holmes and Jones 2011; ECOSOC 2016; Chopra 2018; FAO 2018a; CSW 2019):

- At the ‘Macro-level’, a fundamental role is played by the ‘care economy’, whereby women carry out a disproportionate amount of unpaid care responsibilities and/or often perform low-wage paid care work with insecure working conditions. This is compounded by sex-segmented and often discriminatory labour markets and regulatory frameworks (frequently including a lack of social insurance functions for child-bearing responsibilities).
- At the ‘Meso-level’, women face a number of economic and social barriers including socio-cultural restricted mobility, physical insecurity, discriminating socio-cultural norms, limited social capital, agency and voice and an inadequate provision of services tailored to their need.
- At the ‘Micro level’, women often have lower levels of education (due to societal norms), less access, ownership and control of household assets, lower bargaining power within the household, lower access to credit – all compounded by significant ‘time poverty’ due to their care responsibilities.

These risks and shocks are experienced differently across the lifecycle – as shown in Figure 1. They are also compounded by a lack of public services (e.g. childcare) and infrastructure. Ultimately, neglecting gender issues can “exacerbate poverty and vulnerability for women and their families” (FAO 2018). Social protection can play an important role in addressing these vulnerabilities along the life-cycle. In this review we focus on youth and working age adults and the specific role of public works programmes.

Figure 1: Women’s lifecycle risks

Source: TRANSFORM (2018) and Antonopoulos (2013). Note: this review only focuses on youth and working age adults.

¹ These issues are discussed in depth across a broad range of literature so this review only provides a summary.
1.3 Our framework for this study

Our framework for this study builds on two strands of literature: the first discussing gender-sensitive social protection (Dejardin 1996; Antonopoulos 2007; Antonopoulos and Toay 2009; UNDP 2010; Holmes and Jones 2010b; Antonopoulos 2013; Ulrichs 2016), the second focusing on the challenges and opportunities of public works programming (Del Ninno et al. 2009; Holmes and Jones 2010a; McCord 2012; Subbarao et al. 2013; Tanzam and Gutierrez 2015; Beazley and Vaidya 2015, Beierl and Grimm 2017).

The framework therefore explicitly focuses on the potential role of public works for addressing women and girls’ barriers to employment and lifecycle risks, while acknowledging the fundamental role played by a wide range of other policies and interventions, both in the realm of social protection and beyond. The framework – represented in Figure 2 – is thus organised into three ‘sections’:

- The first, represented in green, addresses the key barriers to employment and lifecycle risks faced by women and girls – as discussed in Section 1.2 above.
- The second, represented in blue, discusses the potential roles played by public works programming in addressing these barriers. It is organised along three main channels – as discussed in depth in Section 2. We focus primarily on Channels 2 and 3 as these are most innovative and relevant for urban environments and youth.
- The third, represented in yellow, discusses the desired outcomes of public works programming. The extent to which these materialise strongly depends on design and implementation factors, as discussed in Section 3.

For clarity, it is also worth stressing that the term ‘public works’ covers a vast typology of programmes that are very different by design – leading to relatively different impacts. We focus our analysis across the spectrum with a particular focus on those that are provided to play a social protection function, and stress the fundamental difference between (McCord and Slater 2009; Beierl and Grimm 2017):

- Those that offer a single short-term episode of employment with a safety net or social protection objective
- Those that offer repeated or ongoing employment opportunities as a form of income insurance, which sometimes entails a guarantee of employment for all who seek it and/or a focus on chronic livelihood deficits (e.g. ‘Productive Safety Nets’)
- Those that promote the labour intensification of government infrastructure to promote aggregate employment
- Those that enhance employability by improving labour quality
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Key Barriers to female economic empowerment

<table>
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<td>Care economy: care and reproductive roles</td>
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<td>Sex segmented/unequal labour markets and discriminatory regulatory frameworks</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Meso level barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural restricted mobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited social capital, agency, voice,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited/inadequate work opportunities</td>
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<td>Physical insecurity</td>
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<td>Inadequate services</td>
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<th>Micro level barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Skill/educational levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unequal gender division of labour &amp; time poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited bargaining/decision-making power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less control/ownership of HH productive assets</td>
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![Conceptual Framework Diagram](image)

1. Ensuring equitable access to public works jobs & wages
   a. **Addressing women’s labour supply constraints. E.g.:**
      i. Shorter length of the work day, availability of part-time work, flexible working hours
      ii. Maternity leave and alternate direct support
      iii. Availability of a creche/childcare provision & allocated time to feed young children
      iv. Low distance from work site
      v. ‘Female-friendly’ and ‘safe’ work environments
   b. **Ensuring that women are not excluded from jobs**
      i. Explicit targeting of women, establishing ‘targets’/quotas for women and/or giving preferential access to women
      ii. Ensuring female-friendly recruitment and registration
   c. **Ensuring equal pay for equal and comparable work** and that wages effectively reach and benefit women (e.g. addressing ‘household targeting’ and pay)

2. Ensuring design that responds to women’s needs & reduces unpaid work
   a. **Ensuring asset creation that women need:** that reduce women’s burdens, increasing their productivity & resilience (social infrastructure)
   b. **Ensuring service delivery that women need**
      (and often already provide, for free).
      i. **Health:** e.g. Home-based care assistance, mobile clinics, vaccination drives
      ii. **Education:** e.g. Early Childhood Development, school teacher assistants, after-school programmes, food handling for school nutrition/feeding programmes, mass literacy campaigns, sports coaching
      iii. **Cross-cutting & community:** e.g. custodial personnel, community cooking & cleaning, community Garbáža recycling, crime prevention

3. Ensuring a focus on creating hard and soft skills for women
   a. **Ensuring women’s access to semi-skilled jobs and increasing participation as subcontractors/supervisors**
      ➢ Focus on types of jobs that enhance chances of on-the-job learning
   b. **Training in new technical (‘hard’) skills**
      ➢ Focus on local labour market relevance
   c. **Training in ‘soft’ skills**
      ➢ Focus on work readiness, intra-personal/communications, leadership, job search...
   d. **Psychosocial support and mentoring:**
      ➢ Focus on self-esteem, etc
   e. **Linkages to ‘empowering’ complementary services:** e.g. provision of adult literacy classes etc

Source: Authors, drawing on Antonopoulos 2007; UNDP 2010; Holmes and Jones 2010a; Holmes and Jones 2013; Tanzam and Gutierrez 2015; Ulrichs 2016; FAO 2018
2 Making public works more gender sensitive: international experiences

This section is organised along three main channels – reflecting the three main ‘vectors’ through which public works programmes are expected to yield positive impacts (McCord, 2012; Beazley, Morris and Vitali 2016; Beierl and Grimm, 2018):

- **Wage (access to an income/cash)**: access to a sufficient amount of paid employment could help prevent negative coping strategies, while triggering asset accumulation, broader investment in human capital (e.g. health and education) and local economic growth, with longer term impacts.

- **Assets/services**: Depending on the type of asset or service created/provided, these could:
  a) generate direct or indirect income opportunities for beneficiaries and their communities;
  b) shield beneficiaries and their communities against the impact of shocks, while building resilience to future shocks;
  c) improve the quality of, or access to, social services and public assets, and
  d) for women in particular, reduce their reproductive care burdens.

- **Skills**: this can include learning-by-doing on the job; more elaborate training in hard or soft skills that is explicitly linked to the public works activities, and; complementary off-the-job training/activities that are somewhat targeted at public works participants. Potential impacts of these interventions include a) improved market-based employment prospects and/or b) a sustained increase in income from self-employed activities or on-farms activities (as a result of the application of newly learned or upgraded skills).

For each of these, we analyse the specific gender dimensions at play in limiting or enhancing potential impacts (further discussed in Section 3). Where possible, we focus on the particular constraints and needs of urban young women.

We also consider a further crosscutting dimension: the overall institutional set-up of the programme and its governance, affecting the extent to which gender considerations are truly streamlined via shifts in decision-making and representation.

2.1 Channel 1: Access to work - income/cash.

Ensuring young women’s equitable access to public works jobs

This first channel focuses on ensuring women’s access to the wage (income) provided via public works. The discussion will focus on the particular needs of young urban women’s needs where feasible, though the majority of the evidence derives from ‘asset-oriented’ programmes in rural areas. It is organised in three sections: a) addressing women’s labour supply constraints; b) ensuring women are not excluded from jobs (e.g. those that are traditionally considered men’s work), and; c) ensuring equal pay for

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2 This is acknowledging that the total transfer value is equal to the daily wage rate multiplied by the number of days that employment is provided (which varies widely across programmes) minus any other forfeited alternative sources of income (Beierl and Grimm, 2017).
equal and comparable work. Section 3 provides an overview of the impacts of these measures, as well as insights from implementation.

a. Addressing women’s labour supply constraints

There is now a strong body of evidence showing how public works can be designed to ensure that women have equitable access to jobs by addressing gender-differentiated labour supply constraints. This includes efforts to explicitly address the fact that women’s “time and space for participation in paid work is constrained because of unpaid work responsibilities” (UNDP 2010a) while also ensuring a “female-friendly work environment” where women can feel “respected and secure” (FAO 2018). A summary of core design features discussed within the relevant literature (Antonopoulos 2007; UNDP 2010; Holmes and Jones 2010a/b; Subbarao et al 2012; Holmes and Jones 2013; Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015; Ulrichs 2016; FAO 2018) – and frequently implemented across rural and urban public works programmes globally – is discussed in Table 1 below.

Public works design that does not address such factors significantly increase participation costs for women, placing an unfair burden on them, and ultimately hampering access. Evaluations and qualitative assessments of public works programmes in Burundi, Burkina Faso, India, Nepal, and Rwanda – among other countries – have consistently stressed reduced take-up among women linked to a) distance from the work-site, b) inflexible or high number of working hours, c) lack of adequate childcare provisions and addressing of child-bearing roles and responsibilities, and d) safety concerns (Dejardin 1996; Holmes and Jones 2013; Ulrichs 2016; Zaidi, Chigateri, and Chopra 2017; Ghosh, Singh, and Chigateri 2017; Murphy-McGreevey, Roelen, and Nyamulinda 2017).

More generally, it is important that female access to public works is not due to the ‘wrong reasons’: low paying, infrequent and degrading work that men would not accept (as they are more likely to have an alternative). Public works employment should constitute a strong enough deterrent from other last resort jobs, providing a viable choice for income security to women – and ensuring the provision of ‘Decent Jobs’ (Parenzee and Budlender 2016).

Table 1: Strategies adopted to address women’s labour supply constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to addressing gender-differentiated labour supply constraints</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
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| Close location of the work site and explicit addressing of socio-cultural barriers to female mobility | • In India’s MGNREGS, work must be provided locally (within five kilometres of the worker’s residence) (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)  
• Nepal’s KEP Implementation Manual specifies that the work-site should be within one hour’s walking distance of the village (yet evidence shows this was not always the case) (Ghosh et al. 2017) |
| Shorter length of the work day, availability of part-time work, flexible working hours | • In Ethiopia the PSNP allows women to structure their working hours around their family obligations, for example arriving late and leaving early (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)  
• In Rwanda, the VUP offers flexible and part time days and working hours (GoR, 2018)  
• In the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) women are offered the possibility of working half days (Tebaldi, 2016)  
• Similar provisions are made across other World Bank financed public works, for example in Mozambique, Niger and Liberia (Tebaldi, 2016). |
| Availability of a crèche and/or on-site childcare provision | • In India, MGNREGS stipulates that crèche facilities be provided for young children (where there are more than five children under the age of six) (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)  
• In Ethiopia the PSNP provides staffed child care facilities (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015) |
### Gender sensitive public works: literature review

#### Approach to addressing gender-differentiated labour supply constraints

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country examples</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Allocated time (and shade) to feed young children</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• In Rwanda, the VUP has piloted the implementation of mobile crèches at public work sites for children aged 0–24 months. The children receive meals, and women can rotate between road terracing and contribution activities and working in the crèches as care providers (Pavanello et al, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘Female-friendly’ and ‘safe’ work environments reflecting local gender norms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Tajikistan’s Second Public Employment for Sustainable Agriculture and Water Management Project in Tajikistan, the reluctance of some Tajik men to allow women to engage in public works, and the reluctance of some Tajik women to work near men, led to a revision in the programme design. Separate working groups for women were created, and family members were allowed to work in particular areas (IEG, 2014).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Afghanistan, women were allowed to work from home and other socially acceptable locations (IEG, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Mozambique’s Rural Roads Programme (1989-2002) Provincial Gender Units were explicitly responsible for monitoring and addressing issues of sexual harassment (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• South Africa’s EPWP requires contractors to offer separate toilets (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maternity leave and alternate direct support</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• In Ethiopia, PSNP provides direct cash transfers with no work requirements to women who are six months pregnant and nursing (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In the Cash-for-Work Programme in Somalia, lactating and pregnant women were allowed to nominate family members to work on their behalf, but they continued to be the principal cash recipients (FAO, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In India, MREGA offers maternity leave with no financial penalty (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Within the 2018 Social Protection Investment Plan for Rwanda, supported by the World Bank, the VUP is establishing a new nutrition-sensitive Direct Support scheme for extremely poor pregnant women and infants aged 0-2 years (GoR, 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regularity and stability of employment – and decent pay</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Rwanda, provisions are made to ensure VUP participants are offered year-round employment with regular payments that are high enough to alleviate extreme poverty. Participants work approximately 100 days per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This approach is adopted across countries with Employment Guarantee schemes (e.g. Ethiopia, India).</td>
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#### b. Ensuring that women are not excluded from jobs (e.g. that are traditionally considered men’s work).

The gendered nature of work assignments – especially for public works with a focus on infrastructure – may preclude women from accessing public works jobs (UNDP 2010; FAO, 2018). This is only in part explained by physiology, with other more important socio-cultural factors at play, as discussed in Section 1.2. The most common approaches to address these are discussed in Table 2. Some are explicit measures such as the targeting of women, the

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3 For example, as stressed by Holmes and Jones (2010a), “there is often a distinction between ‘heavy’ versus ‘light’ work whereby these definitions are based on cultural norms of work rather than the actual difficulty and physical exertion required for such work”.

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HEART (High-Quality Technical Assistance for Results)
establishment of ‘targets’ and/or ‘quotas’ for women, or guaranteeing preferential access to women. Others are more indirect, such as ensuring female friendly registration processes and gender-differentiated tasks (e.g. acknowledging and addressing physiological differences while not reinforcing gender stereotypes).

Table 2: Strategies adopted to ensure that women are not excluded from jobs that are traditionally considered men’s work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to addressing exclusion of women from traditionally ‘male’ jobs</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Explicit targeting of women</td>
<td>In Bangladesh, the Cash-based Rural Maintenance Programme in Bangladesh explicitly targets divorced, widowed, separated or abandoned women and offers them four years of employment to maintain rural roads (FAO 2018).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Establishing ‘targets’/quotas for women, e.g. especially on infrastructural projects | In South Africa, the Code of Good Practice for Public Works Programmes (Phase II) set a quota of 55% for women, 2% for disabled and 40% for youth aged 18-24. The ‘women’ target was derived from demographic data showing women constituted about 60 per cent of the poor in the country (Parenzee and Budlender 2016).  
India’s MNREGA has a 33 per cent reservation for women in MGNREGA employment. Moreover, through its operational guidelines, it also expects categories of ‘vulnerable’ women, such as ‘widowed’, ‘deserted’ and ‘destitute’ women, to be specifically included in employment provision (Zaidi et al 2017).  
In the Uganda Transport Rehabilitation Project, the contractors are encouraged to ensure that women constitute at least 30 percent of the labour force (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)  
Nepal’s KEP has included female-headed households as one of its key target groups (Ghosh, Singh, and Chigateri 2017) |
| Giving preferential access to women | Single women and female-headed households have been given priority in the recruitment of labourers in the PWP in Madagascar and The Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme PWP in Rwanda. |
| Ensuring female-friendly recruitment and registration | In India’s state of Kerala, women’s self-help groups register MGNREGS beneficiaries and manage the programme. As a result, female participation is at 68 percent, which is higher than the programme quota (FAO, 2018).  
In Mozambique’s Rural Roads Programme (1989-2002) Provincial Gender Units were established to promote women’s participation in labour-based work and support registration. They reported to a Gender Department established under the National Directorate of Roads and Bridges (responsible for gender mainstreaming) (Tanzarn and Gutierrez, 2015)  
Indonesia’s integrated development programme in Aceh and Nias conducted female-only registration following monitoring reports where women were shown to be unwilling to present themselves as job-seekers. |
| Addressing the needs of women when adopting full or partial family targeting | Family targeting is an approach whereby household members are given the choice of deciding who actually works on sites and can rotate their participation (e.g. among spouses/other members), with the payment being made to the household (often the household head), with the risk of women not having direct control over their incomes. Household targeting is adopted in Ethiopia and India, for example. Efforts to address this have included opening separate bank accounts for women workers to receive their income and not excluding single female-headed households (FAO, 2018). For example:  
Targeting guidelines adopted in the MGNREGS in India stipulate that when opening bank accounts for labourers, the bank or Panchayat must consider either providing individual accounts for each worker or a joint account (one for each job card holder). It also recommends that if joint accounts are used, the different household members (e.g. |
c. Ensuring equal pay for equal work

By setting the same wages for women and men, public works programmes can effectively lead by example for other sectors where the gender pay-gap is still a serious issue (Antonopolous, 2007). Of course, this does not address the broader ‘wage’ issue for public works programmes internationally, whereby wages are often purposely set very low to encourage self-selection – with the risk of undermining the desired social protection impacts (Del Ninno et al. 2009; Subbarao et al. 2013; Beazley and Vaidya 2015).

There is some (limited) evidence showing that public works with high coverage, such as the India’s Employment Guarantee Scheme and Bangladesh Food-for-Work, have had positive effects on the ‘threat point’ of the poor in bargaining over agricultural wages (Ravallion, 1990 cited in Dejardin, 1996), while driving up rural wages in general (most recently Berg et al., 2018). In Argentina, vocal actors within the local business community were against the Jefes y Jefas public works programme (that had very high female participation), “since it defined a de facto minimum wage for the informal sector, especially in the rural areas” (Kostzer 2008).

Examples of programmes that explicitly make provisions for equal wages are provided in Table 3. We also comment on day schedule vs piece rate remuneration and impacts on women.

Table 3: Strategies adopted to ensure equal pay for equal work

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure equal pay for equal work</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Setting equal wages – leading by example for other sectors | • In **India**, the MGNREGS states that equal wages must be paid to men and women workers under the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976 (FAO, 2018)  
• **Bangladesh**’s Rural Maintenance Program (RMP) establishes equal pay for comparable work  
• **Ethiopia**’s PSNP establishes the same wage rate for the same work, regardless of gender (MoA, 2014).  
• **Nepal**’s Karnali Employment Programme (KEP) makes provisions for equal wages (Ghosh, Singh, and Chigateri 2017) |
| Daily wage rather than piece-rate remuneration | • Piecemeal rates may be gender-biased as they are typically based on male work norms, meaning that even if there are formal |

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4 Note for example the CSW 2019 Recommendation: “Enact or strengthen and enforce laws and regulations that uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value”.

5 Using a decade’s worth (2000–2011) of monthly data on agricultural wages for a panel of over 200 Indian districts, Berg et al 2018 find that, on average, NREGS boosted the real daily agricultural wage rate in India by 4.3% per year.
Approach to ensure equal pay for equal work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>provisions for equal wages, women end up being paid less (Antonopoulos, 2007). For example, in Ethiopia there is evidence that daily wage rates favour women given their lower daily targets (for example, metres of road levelled, length of stretch cleared of vegetation, etc.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Channel 2: Outputs of work – assets/services generated

Ensuring project design that responds to women’s needs and reduces women’s unpaid work

This second channel of impact focuses on a) asset creation and b) service provision that responds to the needs of women, specifically by reducing the burden of their unpaid work via public works (Dejardin 1996; Antonopoulos 2007; UNDP 2010; FAO 2018).

Such an approach explicitly acknowledges the fact that – especially in poor communities and neighbourhoods – deficits in public service delivery are compensated for by long hours of unpaid care and reproductive work which is “undervalued, undercounted, and unprotected” (Antonopoulos 2007). These represent de-facto ‘subsidies’ to public sector provisioning (Picchio 2003, Antonopoulos and Fontana 2006) – monetising women’s unpaid care work. Overall, the cost-effectiveness of public works “crucially hinges on the benefits of the assets created or services provided” (Beierl and Grimm 2017).

Prioritising these types of assets and services of course has a strong institutional dimension to it, in terms of involving women in decision-making over public works programming. This is discussed within the ‘cross-cutting channel’ below.

a. Ensuring asset creation that poor women need (‘social infrastructure’)

The strong relationship between infrastructure and gender equality is widely recognised across international actors (Chopra 2018). Infrastructure can address some root causes of gender inequality such as time poverty (IFAD 2017), affecting women’s capacity to engage in labour and productive activities (EBRD 2015). Unless ‘intentionally built into program design and consistently followed up and monitored’, systematic benefits for women are unlikely to materialise (Khan 2018, in Chopra 2018). As an example, in rural Senegal, small piped water systems and increased water availability led to time savings that allowed women to enhance productive activities and initiate new enterprises (UN WOMEN 2015). A WIEGO brief based on a seven-country study in South Asia (Sinha, 2013) extensively showcases how accessible and affordable
fuel, electricity, and water and sanitation services are essential to the productivity of home based workers – whose homes are their workplace (increasingly frequent, especially for urban women⁶).

The literature on the specific types of assets and infrastructure that (poor) women need – aimed at reducing the time, burdens and drudgery of unpaid work while also increasing women’s productivity, psychosocial health and resilience – has been expanding rapidly over the years. In particular, the following broad categories emerge (based on Antonopoulos 2007; UNDP 2010; FAO 2018; ILO 2018; CSW 2019):

- **facilitating access to goods that are gathered through unpaid work**, such as water and firewood/fuel. Examples include:
  - construction of water harvesting structures and improving traditional structures
  - regeneration of common lands, plantation, and reforestation
  - laying of water pipelines in underserved areas
  - organizing the collection and distribution of water and firewood

- **facilitating access to markets and services** via improved transportation and/or bringing services closer to the home. Examples include:
  - construction of approach roads, feeder roads, paving of internal roads
  - construction of community service centres/infrastructure (e.g child care and education, health care, agricultural extension services, etc)
  - enhancing the safety of women and girls e.g. via street lighting

- **improving the quality of housing, water & sanitation (latrines, drainage) and provision of utilities**, with psychosocial and productivity benefits for subsistence unpaid work and home-based work (predominantly female). Examples include:
  - construction of durable housing and latrines for ultra poor and poor households
  - provision of electricity and other utilities

The examples in Table 4 below are simply indicative of the range of projects and jobs that have been designed to play these functions across relevant countries.

### Table 4: Strategies adopted to ensure asset creation that poor women need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure asset creation that poor women need</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prioritise assets that reduce women’s burdens and increase their productivity, psychosocial health and resilience by:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assets supported under Rwanda’s VUP are chosen on the basis of their social and environmental impacts (alongside ensuring labour intensity &gt; 70%):</strong> community road maintenance and rehabilitation; urban drainage; reclamation of degraded marshland for agriculture; progressive and radical terracing; and rehabilitation and construction of water and sanitation networks and refurbishment of small structures to house community-based child care centers (GoR, 2018).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- facilitating access to goods that are gathered through unpaid work</td>
<td><strong>In India’s MNREGA, women’s participation in the selection of works is crucial; works need to reduce women’s workloads and enhance local natural resources (Chopra 2018).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- facilitating access to markets and services</td>
<td><strong>In Ethiopia’s PSNP community water-points and fuelwood sources are prioritized in explicit acknowledgment of their effects on women’s time poverty (Chopra 2018). Public labour was also used to build farmer training centres in each project location, which reduced the distance rural women needed to travel (impacting women’s access to agricultural extension services and non-farm adult education) (Jones, Tafere and Woldehanna, 2010).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- improving the quality/provision of housing, water &amp; sanitation, and utilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶ In 2009-10, in India, it represented 18 per cent of total urban employment (Sinha, 2013).
Approach to ensure asset creation that poor women need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Argentina’s Jefes y Jefas programme included a strong focus on sewerage and irrigation schemes, construction and maintenance of schools and hospitals, and building of community centres and sports halls (Kostzer 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In Cameroon, the Ngaoundere-Garoua Bouai Road Programme engaged women actively in decision-making on design issues, resulting in the creation of a range of community assets supportive of their productive work and reproductive status. These included: construction of feeder roads; creation of market facilities; access facilities for agricultural products; and improvement of health care facilities (OECD, 2012 cited in ILO 2017).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensuring adequate water supply and sanitation was prioritized in public works in Cameroon, Madagascar, Malawi and Nigeria, and electrification projects in Nigeria and Honduras (ILO 2017)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implications for urban areas?**

As most experiences discussed are rural, we provide some broad implications for urban areas, focusing public works on:

- road accessibility and transportation
- construction of service centres closer to neighbourhoods where poor/vulnerable women live (e.g. childcare, health centres, schools, government offices), with a focus on relieving women from unpaid care responsibilities and time poverty
- improving quality of housing, water & sanitation (latrines, drainage) and provision of utilities (including in public areas, e.g. better lighting affects women’s safety)

**b. Ensuring service delivery that women need (and often already provide, for free)**

“A gender-responsive public service is one that ‘identifies that males and females (…) often have different – practical and strategic – needs and priorities for what services are provided, as well as how these services are provided’”

(ActionAid 2016).

The idea of public works programmes focused on service delivery that women need (and often already provide, for free?) has been discussed for years. In 1996, an ILO paper by Desjardin discussed the role of “projects that provide social services or those that target the efficiency and enhancement of public service delivery”. Work by Antonopoulos in the early and mid 2000s – including policy work in South Africa – helped to strengthen the evidence base and make the case for public works venturing into new areas of work (Antonopoulos 2007, 2009; UNDP 2010). These were then reiterated across relevant literature (e.g. Holmes and Jones, 2010a).

More recently, these ideas have made their way into flagship publications by international organisations. Key examples include:

- ILO’s “Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work” (ILO 2018), which discusses the alignment with SDG Goal 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), among others. “Public works programmes that take into account the care obligations of participants, can contribute to the creation of decent jobs (8.3) (…). By giving support to unpaid carers through the provision of care services and by generating decent care jobs, care policies and services expand the care

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7 The care diamond envisages four key institutional actors in the provision of care – the State, the family, the market and the not-for-profit sector (Razavi 2007). Therefore, if the State fails to provide care services, other actors, such as the family (predominantly women) have to assume this role…. 
workforce, sustaining the demand for women’s (and men’s) employment and contributing to full and productive employment for all (8.5)".

- FAO’s “Toolkit on Gender-Sensitive Social Protection Programmes to Combat Rural Poverty and Hunger” (FAO 2018), which stresses that “public works can adopt a broad definition of what constitutes a public work assignment, and provide appropriate types of jobs that are in line with men’s and women’s skill sets and work experience” including the provision of a “range of services, such as child care or support for the elderly”.

- DFAT’s “Guidance note on options to link social protection to sustainable employment” (DFAT 2017), which discusses how “public works or employment guarantees can be used to employ and train poor women to provide childcare to others – potentially a more appropriate and socially beneficial task than most of the physical labour that currently dominates employment opportunities on such programs”.

- The inter-agency ISPA tool (World Bank, WFP, GIZ, ILO, EC, DFAT, ODI and Helpage International) on “Social protection public works programmes” (ISPA un-dated), where the section on ‘asset creation and services’ encompasses a focus on ‘social service provision’ and one on ‘social infrastructure’.

It is also widely recognised that the “provision of equitable, inclusive, quality, accessible and affordable early childhood education and care services are crucial in enabling women to enter and remain in the labour market” (CSW 2019), while also reaping broader benefits for children and those who are cared for and delivering more jobs than infrastructure projects for similar resources (Antonopolous 2011; UN WOMEN 2015b). As an example, a “recent study by the Women’s Budget Group has shown that investing 2 percent of GDP in social infrastructure (especially health and care services) in six emerging economies could generate increases in employment ranging from 1.2 percent to 3.2 percent (24 million new jobs)” (De Henau et al. 2017 cited in UNDP and UN WOMEN 2018).

Nevertheless, country applications of ‘service-oriented’ public works are still few and far between, with a majority of the evidence stemming from South Africa’s Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Further examples that were traced in the available published and grey literature include:

- Argentina’s Jefes Y Jefas programme, operational between 2002-2012 (currently inactive)
- El Salvador’s Programa de Apoyo Temporal al Ingreso (PATI) programme, operational between 2009-2013 (currently inactive)
- South Korea’s (temporary) emergency public works programme following the 1997/1998 economic crisis, operational between 1998-2000 (currently inactive)
- Ghana’s National Youth Employment Programme and its Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI) between 2010-2013 (this component was never scaled up, currently inactive)
- Rwanda’s VUP programme, recently re-designed for extended scope.
- Mozambique’s ‘soft’/inclusive public works, the Proyecto-Piloto de Trabalhos Públicos Inclusivos (TPI)

These are further discussed in Section 3 as little systematic evidence is available in existing literature.
Table 5: Strategies adopted to ensure service delivery that poor women need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure service delivery that poor women need</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Health** (Home-based care assistance, mobile clinics, vaccination drives, etc) | • In **South Africa**, the EPWP employs workers to provide home-based care assistance for the bed-ridden, elderly and disabled - and mobile clinics; community health workers; nutrition and food security workers; direct-observation therapy practitioners; TB and malaria officers; nurses’ aides and custodial personnel for clinics and hospitals.  
• In **Argentina**’s Jefes y Jefas, tasks carried out by participants included supporting vaccination drives, elderly care and health program support. The programme also noted an increasing demand for these services due to the economic crises (Kostzer 2008)  
• **Ghana** employed beneficiaries as auxiliary health workers. |
| **Education** (Early Childhood Development, school teacher assistants, after-school programmes, food handling for school nutrition/feeding programmes, mass literacy campaigns, sports coaching, etc) | • In **South Africa** the EPWP employs workers to provide early childhood development; food handling for school nutrition/feeding programmes; after-school programmes; sports facilitation/coaching and; mass literacy campaigns  
• Within the 2018 Social Protection Investment Plan for **Rwanda**, supported by the World Bank, the VUP is creating an Expanded Public Works component to reach moderately labour-constrained households caring for children, through multi-year, flexible, part-time work opportunities for road maintenance and home-based childcare. This will include training and supervision to ensure reaching nutrition and early childhood development objectives (GoR, 2018).  
• In **Ghana**, the National Youth Employment Programme is a public works initiative that explicitly sought to address youth unemployment and vulnerability. Men and women under 35 years received a stipend in exchange for work as community education teaching assistants. Despite proven success, the pilot was never scaled up (IPA, 2014; Lehan, 2018)  
• **South Korea**’s emergency public works programme included teaching children from low-income families in after-school classes (Lee, 2000).  
• **Argentina**’s Jefes y Jefas included childcare, work in community and school kitchens (Kostzer 2008)  
• **South Korea**’s emergency public works programme included ‘maintenance’ projects such as garbage collection, lawn maintenance, snow removal, and street cleaning. ‘Information Technology’ projects were added in 1999 for relatively young and educated workers (construction of databases, etc), while ‘public service’ jobs included support to community welfare service centres and management of cultural assets in national museums (Lee, 2000).  
• In **South Africa** the EPWP employs workers to provide community based recycling of garbage; community crime prevention; home repairs and cleaning/maintenance work for households headed by older people and those unable to do so  
• The functioning of Argentina’s Jefes y Jefas, which was responsive to on-demand activities and projects, led to initiatives such as mass recycling and the creation of daycare centers, homeless shelters, and family attention centers for violence prevention where they were needed (Tcherneva, 2012)  
• Beneficiaries of **Mozambique**’s TPI inclusive public works were included in behavioural change communication activities at community level, focused on a) hygiene, b) nutrition, c) family |
Approach to ensure service delivery that poor women need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>planning, d) preventive healthcare, e) civil registration, etc. Innovative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approaches were experimented, including door to door campaigns, theatrical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>representations, public announcements on cash transfer payments days, etc. In</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some districts, workers also provided household chores and care services for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>those in need (Hirvonen, 2016).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsidised work via non-state sectors

- In South Africa, the EPWP has branched out into a new area of operations, providing subsidised work within the non-state sector (Non-Profits etc). This is ultimately operationalised in many different ways, including support with cleaning, gardening, caregiving, administration and cooking activities (EPWP site)
- In Argentina’s Jefes y Jefas, non state actors (NGOs and civil society, but also private sector) were subsidised to provide employment

2.3 Channel 3: Consequences of work – skills development and enhanced employability

Ensuring a focus on hard and soft skills

In this section, we draw the net more widely than the sections above – to draw relevant learning also from Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) aimed at addressing issues of youth unemployment via skills building. Specifically, we include broad insights from training and skills development programmes\(^8\). We do not focus on entrepreneurship promotion interventions\(^9\), wage subsidy programmes\(^10\) and employment service programs\(^11\) even though we acknowledge these could similarly offer important insights.

Education and skills are core factors in determining the outcomes for young people in the labour market (Biavaschi et al. 2012), This is the reason why skills training programs are the most widely used active labour market intervention for young people worldwide\(^12\) (Kluve et al 2016), often delivered as a complement to other labour market interventions – including public works programmes. A skills development focus that appropriately addresses hard and soft skill gaps, while also acknowledging the broader role of psychosocial support and mentoring, could play an important role in addressing the barriers to employment faced by youth: inadequate skills (technical, cognitive, and non-cognitive), no or little work experience, skills mismatches etc.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that a focus on skills development and training within public works is only relevant where the key constraint to employment in a country is lack of skills rather than lack of employment opportunities (McCord and Slater 2009). In contexts where there is an un-met demand for skilled labour, public works can play a role in addressing supply-side constraints to employment, thus improving labour market outcomes (Beazley, Morris and Vitali

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\(^8\) Comprises “programs outside the formal education system that offer skills training to young people to improve their employability and facilitate access to jobs” (Kluve et al. 2016).

\(^9\) Entrepreneurship promotion interventions “aim to provide advisory services, as well as facilitate access to finance and markets via the provision of start-up grants or facilitating access to credit” (Kluve et al. 2016).

\(^10\) “Wage subsidies provide incentives to employers to hire often first-time job-seekers for a given period of time by reducing labour costs. The programs can take many forms, from grants to employers or trainees to reductions in social security contributions” (Kluve et al. 2016).

\(^11\) Employment services “deliver job counselling, job-search assistance, and/or mentoring services for (re)activation purposes, which are often complemented by job placements and technical or financial assistance” (Kluve et al. 2016)

\(^12\) In a recent systematic review of interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth, over half had some skills training components (Kluve et al. 2016).
Where this is not the case, the risk is not only to have no impacts on aggregate employment, but also to generate frustration among youth.

This section analyses this topic via five complementary approaches to ensuring skills development that addresses the needs of urban young women (which can be delivered in combination with standard public works programming):

a. Increasing the chances of on-the-job acquisition of skills by ensuring their access to higher skilled jobs and senior positions
b. Training in new technical/vocational skills
c. Training in ‘soft’ skills
d. Psychosocial support and mentoring
e. Linkages to other complementary and ‘empowering’ interventions

In a final Section 3 we discuss emerging insights from programme impacts and operational insights.

a. On-the-job skills: ensuring women’s access to semi-skilled categories of public works and senior positions

Giving women access to semi-skilled categories of public works and senior positions (including as supervisors, contractors and subcontractors) has a double benefit of ensuring on-the-job skills development while potentially also improving women’s confidence, leadership capacity and social skills (Antonopoulos 2007; ISPA 2017; DFAT 2017) From a broader perspective, there may be broader impacts from female workers having female managers. Such an approach would help to address entrenched and discriminatory labour practices. Importantly, moreover, it aligns with Channel 2 above and an increased focus on ‘service-oriented’ and more highly skilled public works.

Evidence of this being explicitly prioritised for public works programming is scarce, with examples primarily focused on quotas/targets for equal participation of women in ‘skilled’ and ‘leadership’ positions (see Table 6). Of course, outcomes in this area are also strongly linked to other aspects discussed within channels above and within the Crosscutting ‘institutional’ channel below.

Table 6: Strategies adopted to ensure women’s access to semi-skilled categories of public works and senior positions (for on-the-job learning)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensuring women’s access to semi-skilled work and senior positions</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Promotion of equal participation of women and men in decision-making/leadership positions (targets/quotas) | • There are provisions for women to take on programme supervisory roles within Bangladesh’s Rural Maintenance Programme and Botswana’s Labour Intensive Rural Public Works Programme.  
• In India, MNREGA operational guidelines recommends that states consider reserving 50 per cent of ‘mates’ (site supervisors) posts for women (Zaidi et al 2017) |

Of course, there is also potentially a role to be played via state-sponsored and short-term internships and on-the-job trainings via the private sector (which have been shown to have higher impacts on medium term employment – Kluve et al 2016), but this is not covered within the review.

13 In certain contexts these may also be completely overlapping.
b. Training in new technical/vocational ('hard') skills

A small proportion of public works programmes include a training dimension focused on the creation of new technical/vocational skills. The types of skills covered include analytical skills, manual skills, and delivery of routine processes (ISPA un-dated), but also entrepreneurship skills. The extent to which women are able to access these trainings (due to direct, indirect and opportunity costs and barriers) – and the extent to which these offer a skillset that is compatible with women’s labour market constraints discussed in Section 1.2 will determine the level of ‘gender sensitivity’ of the training.

The impact of this training on future employability is also strongly linked to the likelihood of that skill being in demand within the participants’ local economy (without the expectation of migration or excessive travel to work) (McCord and Slater 2009; Beazley, Morris and Vitali 2016; ISPA un-dated). This significantly complicates the successful delivery of such skills development programmes: they require a costly and time-consuming analysis of local labour markets. Several countries have addressed the challenge by involving well-established national training institutions alongside the private sector (to clearly identify skills shortages and local labour demand, thus offering ‘competency-based training’). Yet this ‘outsourcing’ comes at a financial cost, while also introducing further administrative complexity (Beazley, Morris and Vitali 2016).

There is no way this literature review could do justice to this broad topic. Table 7 provides selected examples of training being provided alongside public works programmes while Section 4.5 delves into the topic of impacts. We also provide an example from Brazil of vocational training provided alongside other social protection interventions (cash transfers) in the Box below.

Box 1: Linking vocational training to social protection provision

“Brazil has been very successful with its National Program for Access to Technical Education and Employment (Pronatec). Created in 2011, Pronatec aims at the promotion of access to vocational training and technical education and the insertion of its beneficiaries into the workforce. Its offers either short qualification courses (with an average duration of 200 hours and minimum duration of 160 hours) or technical courses (minimum duration of 800 hours). Courses are free. The program covers costs related to all required learning materials, and provides a student assistance payment to cover indirect costs of participation such as transport and light meals. Pronatec operates with providers certified by the Ministry of Education whose training is high quality and high return. These providers are acknowledged by the market as being the best in the country in professional education. This recognition has positive consequences for the beneficiaries, enhancing their chance of being recruited. Beneficiaries of cash transfer programs are a key target audience for Pronatec. To better serve this public, there have been many adjustments in the program since it started. An increasing proportion of the courses (indeed, since 2015 the majority of courses) are offered in the evening. Similarly, most courses (two-thirds in 2015) are now delivered through mobile units or by ‘remote provision’ (where city halls provide appropriately equipped facilities to the training institutions). This has made it possible to offer courses much closer to the communities where the target audience live, particularly in small towns and rural areas. Social assistance agents play a central role in connecting potential beneficiaries to Pronatec. They provide information about the courses to the public; undertake registration at the municipal level; follow up on students; and refer them to other labour programs. The total number of individuals enrolled in Pronatec from October 2011 to June 2014 is nearly three million. Among those, 63 per cent are low-income individuals, about half of whom are beneficiaries of Brazil’s Bolsa Família CCT. Interestingly, success rates are slightly higher among the Bolsa Familia beneficiaries, at 82 per cent (against 76 per cent among those not in their registry).”

Source: DFAT (2017)

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14 “Most training programs supporting entrepreneurship are complemented with other business services such as start-up grants, access to credit, and advisory services such as mentoring and counselling” (ISPA, un-dated)

15 In urban settings the challenge is reduced because of the larger aggregate labour demand.
Table 7: Strategies adopted to ensure (women’s) training in new technical/vocational skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure (women’s) training in new technical/vocational skills</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Training and ‘hard’ skills enhancing | • Ethiopia’s PSNP Gender Action Plan places an emphasis on women’s capacity building through trainings, provided by Development Agents, the government-employed extension workers, in a range of technical areas such as financial management, employment, farming and irrigation, and soil and water conservation (MoA 2014; Meta Meta and Mekelle University 2017).  
  • In Argentina, the Jefes y Jefas programme included training in carpentry and other hard skills and women were actively encouraged to participate.  
  • The PATI programme in El Salvador (which targeted youth and primarily women) included a minimum of 80 hours of technical training (on topics as diverse as bakery, cooking and cosmetology) and 16 hours of labour market orientation. The training was provided by the national public training institution, with funding guaranteed through payroll taxes (Beneke de Sanfeliú and Acosta, 2014; Fondeis 2015; DFAT 2017).  
  • The EPWP in South Africa places a strong emphasis on training and ‘learnerships’ (aligned with the Skills Development Act), though this ambition has been reduced over the years. Learnerships last for 12-18 months and are nationally accredited. Only a small proportion of EPWP workers benefit from these (McCord 2005; DPW 2011). |
| Entrepreneurship training | • Bangladesh’s Rural Maintenance Programme (RMP) requires women participating in the programme to attend income generation and skills training programme, as well as to participate in a compulsory savings plan retaining part of their earnings. The ultimate aim of the programme was to promote enterprise development by providing beneficiaries with the necessary skills and capital to become self-employed and start profitable businesses (Hashemi and Rosenberg 2006). |

c. Explicit training in ‘soft’ skills

“The possession of soft skills16 is as important as the possession of hard skills to access and maintain employment” (DFAT 2017). These can be classified as ‘internal’ skills – such as self-awareness, self-control, self-esteem and self-confidence – and ‘interactional’ skills – such as awareness of one’s environment, an ability to communicate, and a knowledge of rights. Each is mutually reinforcing, and interacts positively with hard skills (DFAT 2017).

It is essential that social protection interventions such as public works programmes support rather than undermine these skills, especially in the case of young women. On one hand, this requires an explicit focus on avoiding stigma and undermining of dignity in programme design and implementation. On the other, some of these skills can be explicitly addressed within formal training programmes – for example by focusing on work readiness, job search17, interpersonal communications, leadership skills, conflict resolution, decision-making/problem-solving, worker rights, basic first aid and occupational hazards (ISPA un-dated). Within Kluve et al’s 2016

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16 In the literature, these are also referred to as “transferable skills” or “essential skills”. The ILO uses the terms “core work skills” or “core skills for employability” and defines these as “the skills, knowledge and competencies that enhance a worker’s ability to secure and retain a job, progress at work and cope with change, secure another job if he/she so wishes or has been laid off and enter more easily into the labour market at different periods of the life cycle” (ILO 2013).

17 Include teaching how to perform in job interviews, personal strategies for looking for jobs, interview techniques, and CV (or resume) preparation (ISPA).
review of public works programmes (mostly from Sub Saharan Africa) 29 interventions out of 87 incorporated soft skills within their ‘package’.

**Selected examples of soft skills training provided alongside public works programmes – sometimes with a specific focus on women – are provided in Table 8.** Box 2 below provides a further example of soft skills training delivered alongside a flagship cash transfer programme in Colombia.

**Box 2: Colombia’s Jóvenes en Acción soft skills training**

“Colombia’s Jóvenes en Acción (Youth in Action) program has been an interesting pioneer in the area of soft-skills training. The program aims to promote the development of human capital for over 100,000 youths in each of its two streams, through the National Training Service, SENA. The majority of its beneficiaries are drawn from households that are on the Red Unidos (formerly Juntos) Conditional Cash Transfers program, victims of forced displacement, young people in protection, members of indigenous communities, or people registered in the system of identification for social assistance beneficiaries (SISBEN) database of other social programs. Recognising that some of its students were struggling to adapt to higher education, Jóvenes en Acción began to offer life-skills training to complement its academic training. This provides tools to facilitate the participants’ labour-market and social integration through enhancing and developing non-cognitive skills and transversal competences. The life-skills training covers a range of different elements, over eight workshops. Twenty-five thousand participants improved their self-knowledge, ability to deal with emotions, decision-making processes, creativity and conflict-resolution skills thanks to workshops conducted in 2014. In order to cover 79,300 program participants during 2016, the program has four cycles”.

(DFAT 2017).

**Table 8: Strategies adopted to ensure (women's) training in ‘soft’ skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure (women’s) training in ‘soft’ skills</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Training in leadership, communications and other soft skills | • In **Somalia**’s EPP project, a stand-alone project called the “Employment for Peace – Promoting Gender Equity” was designed in 2007 with the overall objective of increasing the level and quality of women’s participation in the EPP through training in leadership and communication skills (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015).  
• **Ethiopia**’s PSNP Gender Action Plan includes a focus on female training with topics including health and hygiene, childcare and gender mainstreaming provisions (MoA 2014). Specifically, the ‘Women Development Package’ provides training activities on women’s rights, which include ‘community conversations’ on gender-based violence (Jones, Tafere and Woldehanna 2010; FAO 2018) |

**d. Psychosocial support and mentoring**

“The importance of psycho-social well-being in social protection is increasingly recognized, either as an outcome of social protection programming (Attah et al. 2016) or as an instrumental factor towards achieving transformative change (Molyneux et al. 2016)” (Roelen et al. 2017). These considerations have increasingly been incorporated into social protection programming, with successful experimentations ensuring links to psycho-social support for beneficiary households. ‘Famous’ examples include Chile’s ‘Programa Puente’, built around a strong relationship between cash transfer beneficiaries and social workers to build trust and develop an action plan along seven dimensions (identification, health, education, family dynamics, housing conditions, work and income) (Roelen et al. 2017).
Nevertheless, such a personalised – ‘mentorship-based’ approach – has been far from the norm for public works programming. This review found no evidence of government-led programmes incorporating such practice (a donor financed and implemented example comes from ‘Muv’Assistentes’ in Mozambique).

e. Linkages to ‘empowering’ complementary services

In some cases providing training and skills directly via public works programming is not cost-effective or feasible. In these cases, a possibility is to establish explicit linkages with complementary services. Most common examples include linkages to ‘second-chance’ adult education programmes offering foundational skills such as literacy and numeracy (with recognised certification) (ISPA, un-dated), alongside programmes that enhance participants’ access to finance (e.g. via savings groups) and those that provide Behavioural Change Communications (see Table 9 for selected examples).

Evidence on the barriers to employment faced by public works participants attest to the importance of such schemes. For example, the Fusades 2015 evaluation of the PATI public works in El Salvador stressed the role of foundational education as being more important than specific ‘vocational’ skills created.

Table 9: Strategies adopted to ensure (women’s) linkage to empowering complementary services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure (women’s) linkage to complementary services</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Linkages to ‘empowering’ complementary services, e.g. provision of adult literacy classes for women | • In Senegal, the Agence d’Ececution des Travaux d’Interet Public (AGETIP) program began managing complementary programs for female literacy in the mid 1990s (Holmes and Jones 2010a).  
• Argentina’s Jefes y Jefes had a ‘back to school’ component which was selected by 6% of participants. The main challenges for implementation included lack of infrastructure and teachers for adult populations (Kostzer 2008).  
• Nepal’s Dhalugiri Irrigation Project supported women participants to save their incomes through the establishment of savings groups (e.g.), while Bangladesh’s RMP and Ethiopia’s PSNP facilitated access to credit  
• The plan for VUP expansion in Rwanda includes a strong focus on complementary Behaviour Change Communication alongside “parenting training and support for nutritionally vulnerable families” via an increased role of case workers (GoR 2018) |

2.4 Crosscutting channel: institutional set-up

Supporting the achievement of the three Channels discussed above is a ‘cross-cutting’ channel focused on ensuring an institutional set-up for public works that is gender aware and sensitive. Activities that broadly fall under this include: addressing cultural barriers and norms via training of staff and workers; better including women in programme design, planning, management and monitoring, and; adopting a more gender-sensitive approach to M&E (see Box 3\textsuperscript{18}). These are all activities that require explicit planning and financing (FAO 2018c). As an example, while broadly hailed as a good example of gender mainstreaming for public works, a

\textsuperscript{18} The importance of ‘gender-sensitive’ monitoring of implementation is extensively stressed in UN WOMEN, 2015 and discussed within FAO 2018c.
recent evaluation of India’s MGNREGS stresses a lack gender-sensitisation amongst programme implementers and a lack of gender-sensitive monitoring (Zaidi et al. 2017).

**Box 3: Gender sensitive M&E**

Gender sensitive M&E helps to:

- assess gender-related changes in status, roles and capacities of women and men affected by the programme over time;
- analyse the participation of women and men in the programmes, and their access to and control over benefits;
- measure the economic and social impacts, both positive and negative, of the programmes on rural women and men; and
- assess how specific programme design and implementation processes promote (or impede) gender equality and women’s empowerment, and identify good practices that drive positive results.

Sources: FAO (2018c) – see extensive information within the Technical Guide

**The existing literature discusses this channel extensively** (Dejardin 1996; Holmes and Jones 2010a; FAO 2018; Chopra 2018), therefore this section simply provides key examples in Table 10.

**Table 10: Strategies adopted to ensure gender-sensitive institutional set-up**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure gender-sensitive institutional setup</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
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| Addressing cultural barriers and norms via training of staff and workers | • In **Peru**’s Special Rural Roads Project, where project preparation was informed by a gender study, an integrated training programme on gender was designed and implemented during the second phase (programme managers, technical staff, local authorities and beneficiaries) (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)  
• In **Mozambique**, the Rural Roads Programme established a Gender Department under the National Directorate of Roads and Bridges. Among other tasks, it conducted gender awareness courses for all members of its Provincial Units as well as for all government and private sector professionals working for the programme (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015)  
• In **Ethiopia**’s PSNP, research has shown that a key constraint to realising the gender-equality enhancing provisions in the programme design is lack of awareness, both at the community-level and at the level of the field officers responsible for implementation (Meta meta and Mekelle University, 2017)  
• In **Uganda**’s Kakumiro-Mubende road project conducted gender awareness creation amongst the female and male members of the community, which was intended to underline the importance of women’s control over their income (Tanzarn and Gutierrez 2015). |
| Including women in programme design, planning, management and monitoring | • In **Bangladesh**, the Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme (EIIP) incorporated women’s voice as rights-bearers in planning the infrastructure created (roads, etc) (Chopra 2018)  
• In **Bulgaria** communities were given a monetary incentive (through reduced contributions) to select infrastructure projects addressing women’s groups’ priorities (IEG 2014)  
• In **Ghana**’s Decent Work pilot programme women workers in the informal economy, as well as small-scale women entrepreneurs, participated in the initial scoping, feasibility study and programme planning. They were involved in the assessment of the gender dimensions of poverty and the informal economy.  
• In **Somalia**’s Employment for Peace Programme (EPP) included a community needs assessment was participatory and consultative. Both women and men were given equal opportunities to express their views.  
• In **Ethiopia**, PSNP has provisions to promote women’s involvement in community decision making about the programme and assets created, yet the level to which this is effectively implemented varies |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to ensure gender-sensitive institutional setup</th>
<th>Country examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>widely (Chopra, 2018). Specifically, the Programme Implementation Manual instructs implementers to ‘promote the participation of women as well as men in decision-making structures’ (Meta Meta and Mekelle University 2017)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>India</strong>’s MGNREGA requires that women participate in the monitoring and management of the programme. The 2005 MNREGA ACT and stipulates that not less than one-third of the non-official members of the Central and District Employment Guarantee Council should be women (Sudarshan et al. 2015)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adopting gender-sensitive programming, monitoring and evaluation</strong></td>
<td>• Programme planning can incorporate <strong>gender-sensitive needs assessments and situation analyses</strong>, such as the GSPVA proposed by FAO (2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• For <strong>Ethiopia</strong>’s PSNP, while there are provisions to promote women’s involvement in community decision making about the programme, these and other gender-responsive elements are not monitored, and there are no specific targets related to these – undermining their effectiveness (Holmes and Jones, 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Somalia</strong>’s Cash for Work Phase II contained a dedicated outcome within the Theory of Change to reducing women’s work burden and improving their community support, livelihoods and access to services (IANWGE 2018)</td>
</tr>
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3 Selected case studies

Given the importance of Channel 2b (ensuring service delivery that women need) for this Literature Review, and given no systematic evidence on the topic is available, we briefly discuss 7 case studies showcasing achievements, impacts and operational insights from each.

3.1 South Africa’s EPWP

The South African EPWP was developed nationally, based on prior small-scale experiences as well as learning from the ILO, and launched in 2004 (McCord 2017). It is currently coming to the end of its third\(^{19}\) phase of expansion and offers 100 workdays per beneficiary on a one-off ‘work opportunity’ basis, at a monthly stipend of R1 517.69. The programme is exclusively financed domestically and has secure medium-term financing (McCord 2017).

Unlike most large-scale public works internationally, EPWP is implemented across a range of sectors, in partnership with public bodies from all spheres of government. Line Ministries are mandated to contribute additional jobs via EPWP and policies/strategies are aligned so as to leverage and absorb surplus labour into programmes designed to address a range of societal challenges (McCord 2017). The Department of Public Works (DPW) provides overall programme coordination (GoSA 2016). In its current Phase III formulation, the EPWP supports four main areas of work (DPW 2012; EPWP website; McCord 2017):

- **Infrastructure**: led by DPW in collaboration with the Departments of Transport; Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs; Water Affairs; Mineral Resources; and Energy. Involves the use of labour-intensive methods in the construction and maintenance of public sector funded infrastructure projects implemented by provinces and municipalities. Linked to training components, e.g. under the National Youth Service.

- **Environment and culture**: focused on building South Africa’s natural and cultural heritage in collaboration with a wide range of departments, including Environmental Affairs, Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries and Arts and Culture. Flagship programmes focus on Sustainable Land-based Livelihoods; Waste Management; Tourism and Creative Industries; Parks and Beautification; Coastal Management; and Sustainable Energy. Examples of work performed has included clearing millions of hectares of alien invasive plants, and providing services to respond to and prevent forest fires.

- **Social sector**: supporting the delivery of social development and community protection services such as Early Childhood Development; Home Community Based Care; School nutrition programmes; Community Crime Prevention; Sports Coaching; Mass Literacy Campaigns. Coordinated by the Department of Social Development assisted by the Department of Basic Education and the Department of Health.

- **‘Non-state’ sector**, introduced in 2009 for Phase II and creating work opportunities via ‘demand-driven’ labour intensive employment, through:
  - the **Non-Profit Organisation Programme (NPO)**, which incentivises organisations outside of government who operate in labour-intensive areas to provide work opportunities for those who are poor, unemployed and unskilled via a wage subsidy.
  - the **Community Work Programme (CWP)** which provides subsidies for communities to initiate activities according to priority needs.

The EPWP underwent several rounds of evaluation and scrutiny over the course of its three phases – partly in response to attacks from academics and civil society. Evidence of outputs and impacts (or lack thereof) include the following:

Gender sensitive public works: literature review

- **Addressing unemployment in the short term and high % of female workers.** “The programme has been highly successful in terms of its own objective of creating mass employment” (McCord 2017). According to the Department of Public Works, the EPWP created just over four million job opportunities in its Phase II from 2009 to 2014 (against a target of 4.5 million)\(^\text{20}\), while the EPWP social sector achieved over 800,000 work opportunities by 2013 against a target of 750,000. The targets for women and youth of 55% and 40% were also exceeded, with 60% of the participants women and 50% youth (Parenzee and Budlender, 2016). M&E data from 2018 shows further increases in female participation, up to 70% of the total (particularly driven by 82% in the social sector) – nevertheless new data also shows shortfalls in work opportunities created against 5 year and yearly targets\(^\text{21}\) (DPW 2018).

- **Minimal impacts on income and poverty.** An evaluation conducted in 2014 (EPRI 2015) found that the stipend’s poverty alleviation benefits were minimised by late payments and, in some cases, non-compliance with the stipulated minimum stipend amount as per the EPWP Ministerial Determination. Nevertheless, participants indicated that their stipends “put food on the table” and quantitative measurements suggested that the minimum stipend was likely to enable most (67%–88%) participant households to afford sufficient food.

- **No impacts on longer term labour market participation.** Expectations from the first Phase of the EPWP were high in terms of former participants findings market-based employment due to their increased employability (training, experience, etc). However, initial evaluation findings and realism regarding the state of the economy (e.g. systemic and chronic unemployment challenges) led to an acknowledgment that these objectives were over-ambitious. Phase II and III recognised the need for the provision of “ongoing, rather than one-off, employment provision” (McCord 2017). The 2014 evaluation stressed that although the programme helped to address “individual level barriers to employment, such as a lack of skills; lack of access to information about opportunities; low self-esteem; and no work experience” it could not address structural causes of unemployment”. For example, reports from provincial implementing programmes in 2011/12 and 2012/13 suggest participants had a less than 1.9% chance of being “career pathed” (purposely trained and recruited into specific government jobs) through EPWP-Social Sector (EPRI, 2015). Evidence on employment in other sectors is insufficient, with anecdotal evidence that the training provided was not addressing the skills required in relevant local markets (EPRI, 2015) and some evidence the duration and quality of the trainings provided were insufficient to transfer skills (Mkhatshwa-Ngwénya, 2016).

- **Important psychosocial impacts.** Despite continued constraints to their income, EPWP participants interviewed for the Phase II evaluation reported a “sense of being recognised and valued in the community”, of “dignity associated with being less dependent on family” and of self-efficacy linked to the ability to make some improvements to their homes. Supervisors also described observable improvements in confidence and a sense of self-worth that participants obtained from being able to dress well (EPRI, 2015).

- **Broader impacts of service provided.** Difficult to truly evaluate (and not addressed in existing evaluations), the impacts and cost-savings deriving from the EPWP services provided are likely to be high. Nevertheless, there are also tradeoffs that need addressing. For example, the Phase II evaluation questioned the use of often untrained individuals in specialised programmes, such as child development and care, reducing the quality of services to the detriment of poor communities (EPRI 2015).

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\(^{20}\) In 2017, a total of 688,829 employment opportunities were created in these sectors. 32% of them were in infrastructure, 20% in environment and culture, 20% in social, 8% in non-state sector and 20% in community work sector.

\(^{21}\) Specifically, 53.5% of the annual work opportunity target was reached by the EPWP in 2018.
Evaluations and reviews of performance (none experimental) from previous Phases have also led to important operational insights (EPRI 2015; Parenzee and Budlender 2015; Skosana 2016; McCord 2017):

- **Institutional housing and insufficient social protection focus.** EPWP implementation is led by the Department for Public Works, which is traditionally mandated to manage public assets and does not have experience with social protection programming. Despite increasing coordination and leadership by DSW, this has led to the provision of support which does not always “conform to the basic principles of social protection (e.g. being regular, reliable, and ongoing)” (McCord 2017). Moreover, the EPWP is de facto implemented by provinces and municipalities who faced severe human resources constraints Mkhatshwa-Ngwenya, 2016)

- **Incentive structures for implementing partners.** Overall, the EPWP has been at the forefront of experimentation of partnership arrangements for the delivery of public works across a wide range of stakeholders, both within Government and beyond. Setting performance incentives for these complex arrangements (e.g. sometimes operationalised as wage subsidies, sometimes as monetary incentives) has not always been easy. Recent attacks, for example, have stressed the excessive focus on performance against ‘work opportunity’ targets (with incentives to create EPWP jobs) rather than more holistic social protection targets. This has sometimes led to perverse incentives.  

- **Challenges of operating high-quality training at scale.** “Institutional constraints relating to national training and management capacity were a challenge” when the EPWP was implemented to scale. This led to the removal of training as a formal requirement of implementation (McCord 2017). For Phase IV, the 2018 EPW Summit has identified this as a priority area of work and improvement going forwards.

- **Trade-offs between the three objectives of public works** (income, assets/services, skills), sometimes due to overburdening line ministries against their core mandates, compromising implementation (Parenzee and Budlender 2016; McCord 2017).

- **Risk of supporting a “two tier labour market”.** Lack of compliance with EPWP standards and a general priority given to ‘job creation over ‘decent job creation risks placing EPWP employees as alternative workers with inferior terms and conditions and precarious, underpaid jobs (McCord 2017; Parenzee and Budlender 2015). For example, interviews with programme beneficiaries stress the importance of addressing the temporary nature of EPWP jobs, low wages earned and the poor working conditions participants are subjected to (Hlatshwayo 2017).

3.2 **Argentina’s Programa de Jefes y Jefas de Hogar Desocupados**

In Argentina, the Programa de Jefes y Jefas de Hogar Desocupados was established to tackle the high level of unemployment triggered by the Argentina 2001 financial crisis. It operated between 2002 and 2012, providing cash transfers in exchange for 20 hours of community service per week (Tcherneva 2012). The program was implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Social Security, which was responsible for the design and direct payment, but the projects and beneficiaries were defined at the local level and managed by local governments, NGOs and grassroots organisations. Local bodies, the Provincial Consulting Councils, were created for the purpose of ensuring streamlined delivery. Support and financing for the programme were provided by the World Bank as of 2003. Coverage was as high as 16% of households across

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22 E.g. the “substitution of EPWP workers for workers displaced from existing formal jobs, the renaming of pre-existing jobs as EPWP jobs, and the re-categorization of voluntary workers receiving sub-market rate stipends as ‘EPWP employees’, which does not necessarily contribute to additional employment” (McCord 2017).
the country (2 million participants), with almost half of beneficiaries under the age of 35, over 70% female\textsuperscript{23} and 20% not having finished primary school\textsuperscript{24} (Kostzer 2008).

While showcasing important impacts, the programme was phased out after a few years of operation and replaced by two separate programs: an unemployment insurance program for men (called Seguro de Capacitacion y Empleo) and a traditional welfare program (Plan Familias) which gave a cash stipend to poor women with children (with no work requirement). Importantly, this reform was made on the grounds that it artificially drew women into the workforce and that the vast majority of these women were “unemployable” because they were poor, uneducated, and had many children (Decreto 1506/2004, cited in Tcherneva 2012). This contrasts with extensive evidence on the desire of former Jefas women to keep on working (Tcherneva and Wray 2005; Pastoret and Tepepa 2006) as well as on the broader role the programme played in “undermining prevailing structures that produce and reproduce poverty and gender disparities” (Tcherneva 2012).

In terms of impacts, the following is documented in the literature (Kostzer 2008; Del Valle Magario 2015; Tcherneva 2012; Garzón de la Roza 2006; Tcherneva and Wray 2005; Tcherneva 2005)

- **Some impacts on medium-term labour market participation, but not for women.** Almost 750,000 beneficiaries were reinserted into the formal labour market following their public works experience. However, these were primarily males with previous experience in the labour market. Moreover, each year of formal education increased the chances of joining the formal labour market by 7%. Almost 3/4 of male beneficiaries went into construction and manufacturing, while females took on jobs in the service sector.

- **Mixed impacts on incomes and poverty.** Over 90% of Jefes workers who were hired into private firms were offered a wage above the Jefes wage, which gives some indication of the role of the programme in stabilizing wages at the bottom (creating a de-facto minimum wage). Workers within Jefes were also issued social security cards, meaning subsequent hiring was done via formal employment contracts paying mandated benefits to workers. Nevertheless, while the programme did reduce indigence rates (by 25% after 5 months of operations), official evaluations showed only a small decline in poverty rates (mostly as the wage was beneath the poverty line).

- **Important psychosocial impacts.** Plan Jefes provided an alternative to forced idleness. Evaluations clearly showed that the opportunity to earn an income was not nearly as important as the opportunity to “do something” (to be engaged, to contribute, to participate in the community). Research also showed profound transformation in how participants – and especially women – perceived their own self-worth: their work in Jefes was a source of pride and enabled them to transcend the private-public divide. The involvement in community work was also reported to increased solidarity and transform neighbourhoods\textsuperscript{25}.

- **Improved intra-household bargaining.** Qualitative evidence from the programme discusses how participation helped women acquire more power within the family while pushing many men to “live with” the reality that their wives wanted to and did work outside the home.

\textsuperscript{23} Attributed to the stigmatization of men getting an unemployment benefit, but also female tendency to have occasional jobs in the informal sector (Jefas reinforced the very low payment they received) (Kostzer 2008).

\textsuperscript{24} To make a comparison, the economically active population in the country at the time that had not finished primary school was only 7.4% (Kostzer 2008).

\textsuperscript{25} As an example, Tcherneva (2012) discusses the “transformative effects of Jefes projects on one of the most destitute regions of Buenos Aires: a region that was known for many years as Cuidad Oculta (the Hidden City), and that after 4 years of Jefes operation was renamed to Villa 15, as residents no longer believed to be outside the reach of public policy”.
Practical/operational insights gained from the programme implementation included (Kostzer 2008; Tcherneva 2012):

- The need for a very high level of coordination between jurisdictions (national and local level, involved in recruitment and project setting) and between the public and private sector.
- The importance of “creative management” and experimentation underpinned by serious technical evaluation and transparency.
- The value of turning to local municipalities to assess local needs and resources for more expedient – and on-demand – implementation of the program. In many cases, the unemployed themselves initiated, organized, and staffed projects in their communities (homeless shelters, food kitchens, mass recycling, etc).
- The importance of using public works to explicitly recognize care as a function of the larger community and not strictly of the individual family unit.

3.3 El Salvador’s PATI

El Salvador’s PATI program was a World Bank financed and supported programme designed by the Salvadoran Government to respond to the Triple F crisis, operating between 2009 and 2013. Its core objectives were to provide income support to households affected by the crisis while also enhancing their employability via labour market experience and a skills building component. The types of projects, many of which had a service-oriented focus (see Table 5) – were identified and managed by local communities. The programme was targeted to the most vulnerable and violent urban areas in 37 municipalities, prioritising young people 16-24 and female household heads and delivered $100 a month for a maximum of six months, alongside a total of 80 hours of training. By the end of 2013 it had reached 61,055 participants (Beneke de Sanfeliú, 2014).

The programme was accompanied by a qualitative (Fusades 2015) and quantitative experimental impact evaluation (Beneke de Sanfeliú, 2014), which stressed the following impacts:

- Impacts on medium term labour market participation, driven by women. PATI contributed to a 4.6 percentage point increase in labour market participation in the short term and 5.5-8.6 percentage point increase in the medium term. These effects were strongly driven by women (5.9 in the short term and 6.6-12.3 in the medium term) and by youth (9.0 in the short term and 8.4-16.5 in the medium term). Interestingly, effects were also significantly stronger for more highly educated participants (above 9th grade). Participants also declared feeling significantly more ‘ready’ to search for employment or start their own activity, though these effects were only visible in the short-term. The qualitative evaluation added interesting insights, including some women’s shifted attitudes to work (e.g. willingness to be more proactive searching for jobs and taking on ‘male’ jobs such as brick-laying). Yet it also provides a sobering account of the broader barriers to employment faced by women, which the programme did not (and could not) address.

- Impacts on incomes and poverty, but not for women. The quantitative evaluation provided some evidence of increased income in the middle-term. After a year of having participated in PATI, former beneficiaries earned on average 22% more a month than before the programme had started. However, these effects were evident for men, not women and primarily among those who had least education. As a consequence of these effects (i.e. attributable to the programme), extreme poverty was reduced by 9.6 percentage point for participant households.

- Limited psychosocial impacts. Quantitative indicators surprisingly show no impacts on self-esteem among participants. In terms of overall ‘state of mind’, however, there were significant impacts (10%) especially among women – though the effects disappeared in the medium term. Interesting impacts were also found on participation in community activities (a 50% increase starting from low values). Qualitative findings similarly showcase some impacts on community
cohesion and ‘coexistence’ – as the projects that were developed through PATI directly benefitted community members. Having worked to improve community assets or provide community services also affected participants’ satisfaction and standing within the community26 - though in some cases the impacts of these projects were not considered lasting because of a lack of ongoing maintenance. Moreover, no true impacts on self-esteem or agency were detected.

- **Improved intra-household bargaining.** Compared to quantitative baseline values, the programme also supported decision-making over household income and expenditures for participants, helping to close the gender gap for women who participated. Qualitative research corroborated these findings, showcasing for example increased willingness to ‘invest’ in the woman as the main breadwinner within the household (yet within a prevailing patriarchal culture which remained unchanged).

The qualitative evaluation (Fusades 2015) offers some further **operational insights** on:

- the **coordination challenges** of delivering a programme that is inter-sectoral in nature (because of the training component) and cutting across government levels by design (lower levels of administration had discretion in terms of the types of jobs and training provided);
- the **role of communication** efforts to increase uptake of such a programme among the desired target groups and clearly communicate eligibility criteria and objectives;
- the need to tailor **training** to need and focus on soft as well as hard skills – the institution in charge, MINTRAB, “provided tools to improve self-esteem and self-control of the participants, identifying their abilities, and with these bases, focus them on adequate relationships towards their employment project’;
- the need to address broader gender dimensions in the economy, most importantly the **lack of free/low-cost childcare** which strongly affects young women’s longer term job prospects

### 3.4 Ghana’s Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI) within the National Youth Employment Programme

TCAI was an education reform project operating via public works, coupled with a **randomized control trial, conducted in Ghana between 2010 and 2013**. The project was designed by Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), funded by Children’s Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), and implemented throughout the country by the Ghanaian government through Ghana Education Services (GES) and the National Youth Employment Program (NYEP). TCAI “adapted and further tested evidence from India and Kenya showing that using teaching assistants from local communities to teach remedial classes can raise learning levels for primary school students who are below grade-level” (Lehan, 2018).

In practice, TCAI was implemented by employing men and women under 35 years of age to work within their communities (urban and rural) alongside teachers. The youth were salaried via the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA), while training and ongoing implementation support was provided by the project partners alongside the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Services27.

The **impacts** measured by the experimental evaluation only focused on the learning of children (not on the Teacher Assistants). Overall, they show how ‘teaching at level’ (providing targeted instruction to the lowest-performing pupils) significantly improved children’s basic skills in numeracy and literacy on average, with 6.4 percent increase in scores for third- and fourth-graders.

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26 Note this is in a context of generalised insecurity and continuing presence of violent gangs, undermining community trust.

27 Materials used can be found, as links, at the bottom of this IPA document.
The approach was also evaluated as cost-effective – partly as Assistant salaries were not paid from the education sector budget (Duflo 2014 a/b).

Despite this, an agreement to scale up the program following the end-evaluation was ultimately abandoned, mostly due to implementation challenges. While the partnership between NYEP and GES was critical to the success and cost-effectiveness of TCAI, full coordination external to the education sector was complex to achieve. Over time, delays in payrolls for community assistants – which were the responsibility of NYEP – affected community assistant retention and morale. Moreover, evidence of inconsistent implementation across the country further affected the decision not to scale-up (Lehan, 2018).

3.5 Korea’s emergency public works programme

Public works in Korea were created in the aftermath of the financial crisis as a tool to address unemployment. The programme lasted between 1998-2000, with an average 400,000 jobs generated in 1999 (mostly urban). Selection criteria differed depending on the skills and credentials required by each project, but priorities were given to the head of household, those in their prime working age (30 to 55 years) and the poor unemployed. Projects supported fell into four broad categories (Lee 2000):

a) Infrastructure, e.g. forestation, construction of small public facilities, repairing public property;

b) Public service, providing temporary workers to public organizations and community welfare service centers;

c) Maintenance, e.g. garbage collection, lawn maintenance, snow removal, and street cleaning;

d) Information Technology, where relatively young and educated workers constructed databases, and provided assistance on resolving the year 2000 computer problems.

A (non experimental) survey of project participants showcased some impacts on respondent’s capacity to withstand the crisis and transition back to longer term employment. Yet the most interesting insights emerge from the operational/implementation side (Lee 2000):

- Determination of wage rates was a controversial process, with the business sector arguing for lower rates and eventually obtaining two successive reductions. These reduction led to the increasing attraction of disadvantaged workers over time (for the ‘wrong’ reasons): women, less educated, and older workers. Ultimately, wage rates were set below the minimum cost of living for a household with 4 persons – undermining the potential for meaningful impacts.

- Project duration was purposely low, at three months, undermining recipients’ capacity for recovery.

- Interestingly, the attraction of women was considered a ‘failure’ by the programme as the objective had been to provide income support for those who had lost their employment due to the crisis, not those who had previously been inactive. Some of this backlash was due to the erroneous assumption women had not been the main breadwinners in their households.

3.6 Rwanda’s Expanded Public Works

The Expanded Public Works is a new component of the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP) in Rwanda. VUP, which is a key element of the Government of Rwanda’s strategy for realising Vision 2020, dates back to 2008 and guarantees 100 days of employment to each eligible household every year. It has high coverage and a level of remuneration which is commensurate to social protection objectives (McCord, 2017).

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28 Information for this section was also provided by Tamsin Ayliffe.
As part of on-going reforms to the VUP, a part-time, flexible, medium-term and year-round Public Works scheme (known as ‘Expanded Public Works’, or ePW) was initiated in 2016/17 for moderately labour-constrained, extremely poor households – e.g. those caring for children aged 0-6 years and with moderate disabilities (GoR 2017). This component offers two types of work: (a) flexible (work hours) road maintenance and (b) home and community-based childcare. The former has been implemented since 2017, the latter has been fully designed and is due to be implemented via the support of a contracted service provider. Financing for (b) will come from both GoR own resources and a World Bank loan (World Bank 2017).

The history behind the introduction of ePW is based on the acknowledgement that the VUP was not responding to the needs of moderately labour constrained households and women with young children and caring responsibilities (Roelen and Shelmerdine 2014; Pavanello et al 2016; Ayliffe 2017; Murphy-McGreevey et al 2017).

Key implementation features of the home and community-based childcare component, as currently designed, include (GoR 2018, Ayliffe 2017):

- A monthly wage of 10,000 Rwf for all 12 months of the year and flexible work hours amounting to an equivalent of 12 hours' work per week in shifts and a labour intensity of projects of 70% at least.
- Employing 1 lead care-giver and an additional 6 assistant care-givers, with each group expected to provide care for approximately 10-15 children. The location would be either a home of one of the parents or an available community building (offering minimum conditions as agreed by the programme).
- A network of part-time Supervisors to provide regular supervision of childcare settings, and to lead parenting education sessions in the community.
- A cascade system of training on early Child Development offered via a ‘Qualified Service Provider’

3.7 Mozambique’s Trabalhos Publicos Inclusivos

Mozambique’s Pilot Trabalhos Publicos Inclusivos (inclusive public works programme) was launched in 2015 to complement the activities of the country’s main public works programme, the Programa de Accao Social Productiva (PASP) with the objective of including the most vulnerable household members in activities of ‘social interest’ at community level – in 8 districts. As discussed in Table 5, this primarily included sensitisation and behavioural Change Communication activities. Work hours were 4 hours a day, 4 days a week and a total of 8200 beneficiaries were included in the pilot (Hirvonen 2016).

A process evaluation in 2016 stressed (Hirvonen 2016):

- Mixed application of the capacity building/training across implementation areas and insufficient resources dedicated (e.g. beneficiaries in the last cycle received no training) – with the burden falling on overworked district PASP teams.
- The activities implemented were perceived as relevant as useful, but were not prioritised alongside local communities and sometimes suffered from lack of engagement by district and local leadership.
- High demand for this line of PASP activities (higher than positions available) and very different application of targeting criteria across locations
- Important psychosocial impacts for beneficiaries (people who were previously shunned because they were disabled, HIV positive etc were feeling newly respected and useful) and anecdotal stories of impact on behavioural change in communities.
4 Insights on impacts and implementation

Evidence on the impacts of the measures discussed in Section 2 is patchy, partly as there are very few evaluations that explicitly set out to measure gendered impacts – or to establish the causal chain between certain sender-sensitive ‘design tweaks’ and impact. Nevertheless, this section sets out to summarise the evidence available against the Channels discussed above – linked to the Framework in Section 1.3 and referencing the Case Studies in Section 3. It also draws out important insights in terms of the mediating effects of de-facto implementation (beyond design intentions).

In the background, it is worth keeping in mind that the overall cost-effectiveness of public works “crucially hinges on the benefits of the assets created or services provided” (Beierl and Grimm 2017), with the understanding that the cost of implementing public works compared to other social assistance programmes (e.g. cash transfers) is higher (McCord and Slater, 2009; Del Ninno et al., 2009).

4.1 Access to work

Efforts to increase female access to public works programmes via direct and indirect measures (discussed in Section 2.1 and Tables 1, 2 and 3) have had an impact on female participation numbers and rates across countries. In fact, these measures are increasingly being incorporated into public works design and implementation. In Ethiopia, the provisions within PSNP have “decisively impacted the number and percentage of women reached” – despite the infrastructural focus of the works conducted (Meta Meta and Mekelle University 2017). Similarly, in India’s NREGA, female participation increased to over 50 percent in 2012-13, and in states like Kerala, even reached over 90 percent (ISPA un-dated). Liberia’s CfWTEP, the predecessor of the YES program, had a 30 percent female quota but the actual participation rate was 45 percent in 2009 (ISPA un-dated). In Tanzania’s PSSN, despite the lack of explicit quotas for women, female participation rates reached 70% as a consequence of full household targeting combined with female receipt of the benefit29 (ISPA un-dated). More broadly, Tanzarn and Gutierrez’s 2015 review of public works programmes globally suggests that “women’s representation in public works is improving with time”.

In terms of implementation, the evidence points to the need for these measures to go beyond ‘tokenistic’ box-ticking exercises – towards truly addressing the needs of the women involved. As an example, in a recent study on making the MNREGS more “care responsive” based on fieldwork in Rajasthan, Zaidi et al (2017) note that the majority of women said there were “no crèches at the worksites or other protection from the elements, with some children being kept in ‘pits’” – despite clear legislation on the matter. In several other cases, provisions and legislation exist on paper, but women are found to be unaware of their entitlements or how to access redress.

4.2 Standard social protection outcomes

Impacts of public works on other important social protection dimensions – e.g. food consumption and expenditure, asset holding, health, education, local economy multiplier effects – channelled via the receipt of additional income, are far less consistent for both men and women. A recent systematic review of public works impacts (focused primarily on Africa) shows mixed or non-significant results on a broad range of these outcomes (Beierl and Grimm 2017). This contrasts with the literature on the impacts of Cash Transfers, where impacts on these dimensions are widely documented (e.g. Bastagli et al 2016).

Note there could be negative implications to this in terms of increased time-burden on women.
Potential explanatory factors include (McCord, 2012c; Beazley and Vaidya 2015; Beierl and Grimm 2017):

- Limited scale and coverage of many public works programmes (often just seasonal, short-term employment, e.g. in response to shocks), restricting the potential for multiplier effects and significant demand stimulus;  
- Participants’ opportunity costs to participation (not engaging in other activities). “The work requirement imposes heavier time and effort costs on poor women – who are typically already overworked – than on poor men, who are more likely to be underemployed” (Devereux, 2002);  
- Wages too low to enable the alleviation of any significant capital constraints to increased productivity;  
- Lack of explicit complementarity with other programmes/services

4.3 Assets generated

It is difficult to trace any evidence on whether and how assets created via public works have benefitted women and girls. Nevertheless, it is worth stressing the existing evidence on the factors that may enhance or limit the effectiveness of public works assets, including (McCord et al 2016):

- Assets must be appropriately selected and relevant to (women’s) needs in the local context;  
- Assets must be designed, located and constructed in line with technical specifications. This means: a) adequate technical inputs must be assured during design, implementation and maintenance, b) management and administration skills must be adequate to ensure quality, c) capital investment must be adequate to ensure that asset quality is not compromised, d) labour inputs (e.g. the total number of person days invested) must be consistent with the technical requirements;  
- There must be quality control of the assets produced, monitoring of asset functionality and usage, and follow up maintenance. This includes a focus on local government and/or community ownership and management of assets (this needs to be budgeted);  
- Access to asset benefits must be equitable and guaranteed (there is evidence that women and other less ‘vocal’ groups often do not benefit equally).

Moreover, the global evidence on the links between physical infrastructure and women's unpaid care burden is vast (see Box 4 for some examples).

Box 4: Links between physical infrastructure and women’s unpaid care burden

“An analysis of 38 sub-Saharan African countries during the period 1991–2010 has found a positive effect of physical infrastructure investments on gender equality in employment rates (Seguino and Were 2014), while a study in rural Senegal has shown that time savings associated with investments in small water piping systems enabled women to enhance their income-earning activities and to establish new livestock-raising enterprises (van Houweling et al. 2012). Moreover, access to electricity in many households in Uganda has increased the time men spend on unpaid care and domestic work, which they are able to carry out after dark (Parvez Butt et al. 2018). Safe and gender-responsive infrastructure also has positive externalities for health and education for women and children, leading to a virtuous cycle of human capital accumulation, labour productivity and economic growth (Agénor et al. 2010; Braunstein 2012; De Henau et al. 2016). In many developing countries, improved water and sanitation facilities decreases illness and time spent fetching water (UN Women 2015b), while public infrastructure such as transportation and electricity has beneficial effects on school attendance (Koolwal and van der Walle 2010; Nauges and Strand 2017).”

Source: extract from UNDP & UN WOMEN 2018

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30 Paying adequate wages via public works over an extended (and predictable) period of time is seen to enable the accumulation of savings and assets, with potential longer-term impacts on resilience, entrepreneurship and employability (via positive spillovers).
4.4 Services generated

‘Service-oriented’ public works were a core focus of this paper, and the most relevant case studies were explored in Section 3. The main insights across these programmes in terms of impacts included:

- Strong short term-impacts addressing unemployment
- Mixed medium-term impacts on labour market participation, with some programmes having little/no impacts
- Mixed impacts on incomes and poverty, sometimes because of excessively low wage levels
- Strong impacts on dignity and psychosocial wellbeing, where analysed

Impacts of the services generated on local communities was mixed across the programmes analysed – and most often not explicitly evaluated. Overall, there is too little evidence to reach any meaningful conclusion. In some contexts, such as Ghana’s evaluation of the effectiveness of Teacher Assistants, the impacts on learning among treated children were significant (Duflo 2014b). In others, such as South Africa’s Expanded Public Works Programme, the use of often untrained individuals in specialised programmes (such as child development and care) was questioned – stressing the risk of providing low quality of services to the detriment of poor communities (EPRI 2015).

4.5 Skills and longer term employment

The literature on the topic of the longer term impacts of public works on employability and future wages – whether a result of an explicit ‘skills development’ focus or not – is mixed. We discuss key outcomes in this section, noting that there is little to no differentiated analysis of impacts by gender.

Section 3 gave some initial insights on this topic, from the perspectives of programmes specifically focused on ‘service-oriented’ public works. Overall, it showed limited impacts on longer-term employment across these programmes.

Casting the net wider, a recent systematic review of public works programme impacts (with a focus on Africa) showed there is “no robust empirical evidence that a public works programme of any type generates sustainable extra employment in the medium to long-term” (Beierl and Grimm 2017). Of the 23 studies where labour supply impacts were investigated, only rare exceptions showcased any significant impact (see Box 5).

**Box 5: Positive labour market outcomes in the medium term in India**

Not all public works programmes ‘fail’ to trigger positive labour market outcomes in the short to medium term. For example, several studies over the years show some success in India:

- Azam (2012) used the progressive rollout of the NREGS to estimate its impact on labour force participation using a DD estimation strategy. Analysing individual level data from the National Sample Surveys showed that the program had a positive impact on labour force participation, driven by a strong increase in female labour force participation. According to this study, women’s participation in PWs increased by 4 percentage points more in NREGS districts than in non-NREGS districts between 2004–05 and 2007–08 (cited in IEG 2014).
- A recent study by Chakraborty and Singh (2018) use unit record data of the latest 68th round of the NSS Employment-Unemployment survey 2012 and examine gender differential impacts of MGNREGS on labour force participation rates across States in India, finding that MGNREGS job card holder’s labour force participation rates were higher than the non-card holders and the result was more pronounced for women.
The systematic review also found few studies that quantitatively isolated the role of the ‘skills vector’ on impacts. Those that did found no evidence of improved performance for public works accompanied by skills development (Beierl and Grimm 2017). Similar findings are showcased within another systematic review with a specific focus on youth employment programmes (Kluve et al 2016). For example, Kluve et al (2016) stress that “training programs that focus on soft or non-cognitive skills may not be the silver bullet that many expected them to be”. In fact, their results suggest that, “programs that include training in socio-emotional and behavioural skills do not necessarily do better than other programs” and sometimes perform worse. Previously, a review of IDB funded job training programmes in Latin America (2008), had found “limited and modest” impacts (Ibarrarán and Shady’s), as did two reviews of programmes to support young workers to enter the labour market (Betchererman et al 2004 and 2007).

The literature is broadly consistent when it comes to the design and implementation features that significantly mediate the impacts of skills-enhancement (World Bank 2010; McCord 2012d; Kluve et al 2016; Beierl and Grimm 2017). These include:

- **Better understanding local labour market barriers and designing programmes to address these.** For example, unemployment in most parts of Africa and the MENA region is not primarily due to a skills gap (i.e. a mismatch between demanded skills and the skill sets of the unemployed). Even if this were the case, the skills developed would need to match local demand for labour31 (e.g. involving the private sector in strategic planning for training, etc).

- **Offering complementary measures and deliberately capitalising on linkages with other programmes** (e.g., training, access to credit, extension services, etc).

- **Ensuring sufficient ‘contact time’ for skills development:** short term public works programmes, (e.g. duration under 6 months) limit the potential for skills transfer.

- **Focusing on training that is tailored to the needs and capabilities of the participants**32, via profiling and individualized follow-up and monitoring systems. This does not necessarily mean the need for ‘individualised’ support, but grouping of participants into broad categories with a particularly strong focus on those who are most vulnerable and marginalised.

- **Partnering and integrating strategies with national and accredited training providers,** who provide credible credentials for trainees and can leverage high quality expertise and economies of scale.

- **Assessing the effectiveness of skills development not only at the individual but also at the community and local-economy level,** ensuring any impacts on employment are not the substitution of one employee for another in the absence of any increase in labour demand.

- **Realistically assessing the cost-effectiveness of a focus on skills development and mentoring vis-à-vis other options.** Addressing chronic poverty through education and training is recognised as a high cost option33. Programmes which fully integrate skills development with social protection provision can have higher costs still, requiring significant investments of time and individual case by case support.

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31 For example, in an evaluation of the Ninaweza Youth Empowerment Program in Kenya, the type of employment made a difference between labour market impacts of treatment and control. The higher human capital provided through technology training led to program beneficiaries more often attaining full-time positions and employment in more productive modern sectors, while control group participants were more often employed as casual labourers (Kluve et al, 2016).

32 In El Salvador, for example, participants with minimal education levels were not able to fully understand and follow the ‘hard’ skills trainings offered, while those with higher education levels found the training ‘too basic’ and ‘useless’ compared to their aspirations (Fusades, 2015). Importantly the programme worked alongside the national training agency to improve the ‘soft’ training provided over the course of the programme: extending the number of hours from 4 to 16, incorporating a focus on students’ backgrounds and psychological profiles and working alongside social workers (Fusades, 2015).

5 Conclusions

Internationally, there is an increasing awareness of the need to explicitly address women and girl’s interests, needs and priorities into social protection design and implementation, based on a thorough understanding of the economic, social and lifecycle risks and barriers that women and girls face. The number of public works programmes incorporating such an analysis has been on the rise over the past ten years, as extensively documented in the literature and discussed throughout this paper.

Nevertheless, there is still a strong risk of such measures being primarily ‘cosmetic’ and ‘tokenistic’ – in order to tick boxes with regards to pressure by donors and the international community, as well as gender-focused branches of Government or civil society. For example, several of the public works programmes that are hailed as international ‘best practice’ with regards to gender-sensitive programming (in terms of ‘ticking the boxes’) fall short of fully addressing the needs of women and girls under public and academic scrutiny (see for example Parenzee and Budlender 2016 for South Africa, Del Valle Magario 2014 for Argentina, Zaidi et al 2017 for India, Holmes and Jones 2010a, etc).

Overall, a few broad conclusions and recommendations emerge that are relevant for future efforts:

- First of all, none of the measures discussed (and summarised in Figure 2) are effective on their own. It is the combined effort to address the needs and priorities of women and girls – with key decisions made together with women and girls and M&E focused on evaluating a broad set of outcomes against these targets – that stands a chance of making any difference compared to routine approaches to programming. This holds true across the policy cycle, from appraisal of needs through to policy and programme design, through to implementation and continuous ‘design tweaks’ based on tailored M&E (see also FAO, 2018). Overall, there needs to be a focus not only on “practical gender needs” but also “strategic gender interests” (Molyneux, 1984).

- Second, there needs to be an acknowledgment that there are also trade-offs between the Channels of impact discussed in this paper – especially when assessing the overall cost-effectiveness to address chronic poverty and vulnerability. For example, in South Africa the training focus risked undermining the underlying social protection objectives, as documented by McCord (2005 and 2017). Reasons include the high cost and low returns of providing training, the need to target more highly educated participants and the high management and coordination efforts required for delivering high quality training. These trade-offs need to be tackled upfront in line with the desired outcomes and the specific country context.

- Third, while gender-sensitive design plays an important role, gender sensitive implementation is also essential to trigger desired outcomes. This was extensively explored in Section 3 and can be somewhat summarised in Figure 3. The FAO Technical Guide 3 on Integrating gender into implementation and monitoring and evaluation of cash transfer and public works programmes does this topic justice.
**Figure 3: Incorporating examples of implementation challenges into the framework**

### Gender-informed Public Works for vulnerable women and girls

2. Ensuring equitable access to public works jobs & wages
   a. **Addressing women’s labour supply constraints. E.g.:**
      i. Shorter length of the work day, availability of part-time work, flexible working hours
      ii. Maternity leave and alternate direct support
      iii. Availability of a creche/childcare provision & allocated time to feed young children
      iv. Low distance from work site
      v. Feminist-friendly and ‘safe’ work environments
   b. **Ensuring that women are not excluded from jobs**
      i. Explicit targeting of women, establishing ‘targets’/quotas for women and/or giving preferential access to women
      ii. Ensuring female-friendly recruitment and registration
   c. **Ensuring equal pay for equal and comparable work** and that wages effectively reach and benefit women (e.g. addressing ‘household targeting’ and pay)

3. Ensuring design that responds to women’s needs & reduces unpaid work
   a. **Ensuring asset creation that women need:** that reduce women’s burdens, increasing their productivity & resilience (social infrastructure)
   b. **Ensuring service delivery that women need** (often already provide, for free).

2. Ensuring a focus on creating hard and soft skills for women
   a. **Ensuring women’s access to semi-skilled jobs and increasing participation as subcontractors/supervisors**
      ➢ Focus on types of jobs that enhance chances of on-the-job learning
   b. **Training in new technical (‘hard’) skills**
      ➢ Focus on local labour market relevance
   c. **Training in ‘soft’ skills**
      ➢ Focus on work readiness, intra-personal/communications, leadership, job search...
   d. **Psychosocial support and mentoring**
      ➢ Focus on self-esteem, etc.
   e. **Linkages to ‘empowering’ complementary services:** e.g. provision of adult literacy classes etc

### Implementation challenges (e.g.)

- Women unaware of their entitlements & how to access redress
- ‘Maternity’ provided too short
- Childcare low quality/not implemented
- Late and unpredictable payments and gender insensitive payment modality
- Poor implementation stigmatises participants & affects dignity (women participate for ‘wrong reasons’)
- Assets created low quality and not maintained
- Risk of providing low quality services to the detriment of poor communities
- Training not relevant to local market, to needs and capabilities of participants, very low quality or

### Consequences of work

- Where training provided externally, high costs and complex institutional arrangements and M&E
- Staff not aware of reasons for gender focus, hampering implementation
- Overall M&E not focusing on gender and/or not ‘acted upon’
- Women not truly participating and engaging in decision-making because of existing gender norms and

### Outputs

- Standard SP outcomes: income, food consumption & nutrition, asset holding, health and education
- Psycho-social wellbeing: Dignity, confidence, social networks, intra-household bargaining, etc
- Reduced burden of unpaid care work and home-based work
- Improved provision of services
- Labour supply: Entry into labour market, changed perceptions of work; more informed decisions; development of soft and hard skills, enhancing future employability

### Institutional dimension

Ensuring women’s voice, participation and overall gender focus (M&E etc)
Fourth, public works are not sufficient as a measure to address the structural unemployment of unskilled women and girls. In contexts where there is an un-met demand for skilled labour, public works can play a role in addressing supply-side constraints to employment, thus improving labour market outcomes (McCord 2009, Beazley, Morris and Vitali 2016) – especially when designed to provide a stable and predictable source of income that is sufficiently high for meeting individual and household needs. Where this is not the case, the risk is not only to have no impacts on aggregate employment, but also to generate frustration among youth.

Fifth – and linked to the above – there is no true consensus in the literature about how whether public works can strengthen the skills of participants leading to sustainable job participation in the medium term. There is even less evidence about how this is done for women – and very little evidence that is fully relevant for urban settings.

Sixth, there need to be explicit efforts in place to avoid public works becoming a ‘second tier’ labour market, where priority is only given to job creation over ‘decent job creation’, placing employees as alternative workers with inferior terms and conditions and precarious, underpaid jobs (see e.g. McCord 2017 and Parenzee and Budlender 2015 on the EPWP in South Africa).

Overall, it is also important to stress that – while still few and far between – experiences incorporating a service-oriented focus into public works programming have been very promising with regards to impacts on women and girls in particular (see Section 3). Through continued efforts in this direction (South Africa’s EPWP) – and new experiences such as those in Rwanda and Mozambique, the evidence base is growing and important learning starting to emerge. We hope that this review provides an impetus for further knowledge sharing – and continued efforts to design and implement programmes that meaningfully respond to the needs of women and girls.
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