

The Idea of Transformative Social Policy: securing human well-being in the African context

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Social Policy

- “Social policy [as] collective public efforts at affecting and protecting the social well-being of the people within a given territory.” (Adesina 2007, 2009).
- Concerned with:
 - the redistributive effects of economic policy,
 - the protection of people from the vagaries of the market and the changing circumstances of life,
 - the enhancement of the *productive potential of members of society*,
 - *the reconciliation of the burden of reproduction with that of other social tasks*” (Mkandawire 2011).
 - enhancing social cohesion / nation-building project (Adesina 2007, 2009, 2015).

Why Transformative Social Policy?



Social Policy design has always been about the social questions that a country seeks to address.

Reflects ideational commitment (around equality and solidarity).

Reflects the balance of power among social forces in the policy arena.



Conventional (EAIDs) social policy scholarship defined by:

Efforts to address the diswelfares of industrialisation.

Underpinned by Keynesian concerns (stabilisation in 'post-development' context).

Defined by excessive focus on social security and income maintenance.



Imperative of social policy scholarship attuned to the African context:

Reflect the imperatives of socio-economic structural transformations.

Rooted in local history, sociality, and ideational groundings.

Why Transformative Social Policy?

- The demand for structural economic transformation immediately raises questions of social policy.
- Take the case of the Lewisian* model: shifting labour from the “subsistence” sector to the “modern” sector:
 - Raises the question of skill, hence the need for investment in education
 - Population shift from rural to urban areas, throws up immediate issues of
 - Housing (for people to live in)
 - Urban planning & Transportation
 - Healthcare services
 - Educational services, etc.

*Sir Arthur Lewis's two-sector model of development: "*Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour*" (1954).

01

The imperative of social policy for nation-building in a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-religious context—transformation beyond primordial identities.

02

The imperative of a transformative social policy in a post-conflict, peace building context.

03

Transformative social policy in the context of reconstruction of gender relations.

Why Transformative Social Policy?

Why Transformative Social Policy?

- Averting the (neo-)liberal diminution of social policy:
 - Stratified, segmented, and segregated social policy architecture.
 - Simultaneous rolling back of public provisioning and inserting market transactional logic.
 - South Africa's social policy architecture as a case of a stratified and segregated system:
 - Stratified and segregated educational system.
 - Stratified and segregated health care system.
 - The alternative vision in the NHI
 - Occupational and Fiscal welfare in South Africa
 - Medical deductions: R64,8bn in 2012; R15,8bn in 2013; R16,8bn in 2014.
 - Deduction for pension contributions: R46,4bn (2014); R182.6 billion (2017) or 2.6 times OAG for 3.6 million assessed tax payers.
- Inequality-deepening nature of liberal social policy.

Parable of the Nested Russian Doll: misplaced focus



Return to a wider vision of Social Policy

Meaning of Transformative Social Policy

- Transformative social policy refers to *fundamental structural changes* in the economy, in social relations, and social institution in a country (or context) intended to expand and deepen human well-being.
- It speaks to large swats of the population not simply changes in individual well-being.
- It is concerned with addressing the structural underpinnings of diswelfares and entitle failure.

The itinerary of an idea

- “Transformative Social Policy” emerged out of the UNRISD global research project on *Social Policy in a Development Context*.
 - Project developed by Thandika Mkandawire as Director of UNRISD
 - I formulated and coordinated the ‘sub-Saharan Africa’ segment of the project.
- Articulation
 - In Mkandawire & UNRISD (2006), Mkandawire (2007, 2011)
 - Enunciation in Adesina (2007, 2010, 2011, 2015).
- ‘What questions do you ask of your Social Policy and how do you task it in the context of pursuing structural transformation?’
 - Unlike EAIDs, ‘post-colonial’ social policy largely involved focus on education, health, habitat, pan-territorial pricing, affirmative action.
- Antecedents of reconnecting social and economic policy
 - Aina (1997, 1999, 2004), Mkandawire (2004a, 2004b)

PREMISE



The Need to Return to A Wider Vision of Social Policy

Wider Vision of Society: the "good society"; "better life for all"; "human worth"

Broader Instruments: diversity of instruments;



The Interconnection of Social and Economic Objectives



Social Policy in the context of development



Multiple Levels (Domains) of Transformation

Economic Development

Social Institutions and Social Relations

Gendered lives and transformation of gender relations

Building Democratic Societies and Polities / Changing power relations



Multi-tasking of Social Policy (not 'mono-tasking')

Multiple 'tasks' or 'roles' of social policy.



“Economic development, as distinct from mere economic growth, combines: (1) self-sustaining growth; (2) structural change in patterns of production; (3) technological upgrading; (4) social, political and institutional modernization; and (5) widespread improvement in the human condition.”*

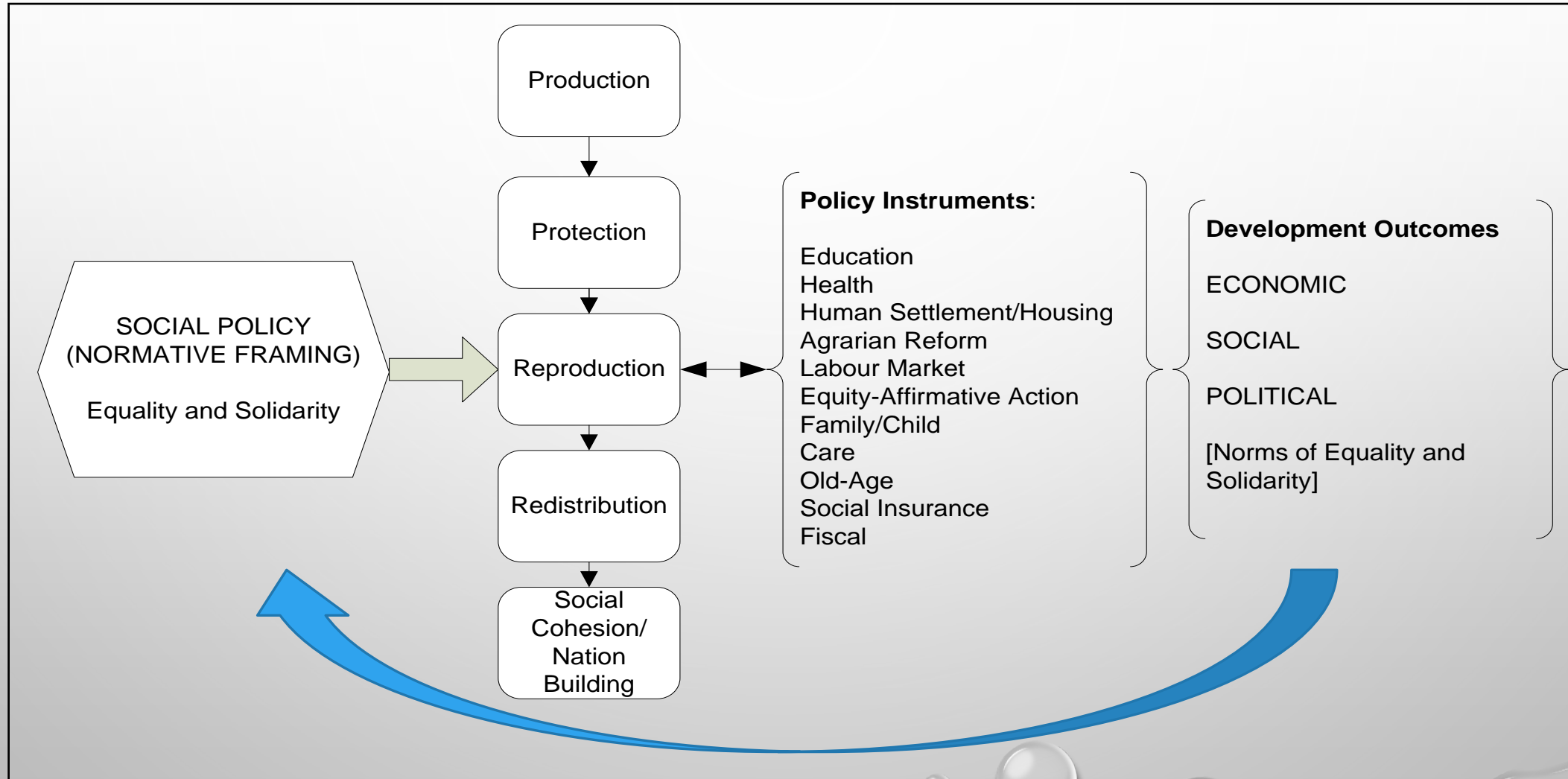
--Irma Adelman

**Understood as continuous improvement not 'to be like..'*

THE MANY TASKS OF SOCIAL POLICY



Transformative Social Policy: norms, function, instruments and outcomes



SOCIAL POLICY ARCHITECTURE

- The need to focus on inter-connectedness of diverse social policy instruments
 - It's not about one specific instrument but synergy between diverse instruments
- The normative underpinning of the architecture
 - The degree of synergistic connection between economic and social policy
 - Shared normative premises for economic and social policy
- Social Policy design is “not like shopping in a supermarket” (Michael Noble)

Transformative Social Policy as Conceptual and Evaluative Device

Transformative Social Policy as a conceptual device/framework:

- As a device for thinking about social policy (sense-making):
 - Multiple tasks of social policy; diversity of instruments
 - Ideational and normative framing of social policy
 - Focus on structural transformation: economy, social institutions, and social relations
 - Social policy architecture—as a coherent, interlocking set of policy instruments.

Transformative Social Policy as an evaluative device

- Evaluation of social policy framing and normative underpinning
- Assessment of instruments as part of a (coherent) whole: a social policy architecture
- Assessment of social policy outcomes: emphasis on structural underpinnings of diswelfare & inequality

DESIGNS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

- Tanzanian educational system
 - **Description:** Moving secondary school students from the south To school and live in the north, etc.
 - **What was it intended to fix?:** Development of a Tanzanian national identity beyond accretion to ethnic identities.
- Nigeria's 'unity schools' (Federal government secondary schools):
 - **Description:** Secondary schools built all all over the country, with admission policy requiring a student body drawn from all over the country.
 - **What was it intended to fix?:** Reflection on the civil war as a consequence of ethnic and regional balkanization (that breeds ignorance of the 'Others') and to promote a pan-Nigerian national identity.



DESIGNS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

Pension systems

- Varieties of pension systems
 - Individual capitalization accounts.
 - Occupational social insurance—defined benefit
 - National pension (Or provident) fund: Defined benefit
- Mobilization of Pension funds for development:
 - Finland's use of pension fund for infrastructure development and industrialization.
 - Korea's industrialisation: public pension funds were required to lend 90% of their funds to the National investment fund, which in turn lent to development banks at significantly discounted rate; development banks lent to targeted industries and for infrastructure development.
 - The use of Provident Fund in Singapore.



NATIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

- The overriding objectives
 - Closing health inequality gaps.
 - Securing quality health outcomes for people in the territory.
 - Access to care should not depend on the size of one's pocket.
- Design model
 - National healthcare scheme (Funded from the fiscus)
 - Social insurance funding
 - (minimize healthcare market)
- Tiered levels of health provisioning
 - Primary healthcare / Preventive
 - Secondary & Tertiary healthcare / curative

DESIGNS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

GENDER TRANSFORMATION

- Reconciling the burden of reproduction with other social tasks
 - Maternal and child health.
 - Family benefits
 - Generous maternity leave
 - Quality Early child care facilities.
- Equitable access to education, healthcare, etc.
- Promoting labour market access for women (including equal pay).
- Promoting men's role in care.
- Gender-sensitive affirmative action.
- Gender equity in public representation.

PRECONDITIONS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

- Definable National Sovereign Project (Development Plans, etc).
- Policy Sovereignty.
- Awareness of the inter-sectoral linkages and drivers.



‘PUBLIC GOODS’ OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMMONS?

“....social policy instruments are not about ‘public goods’, at least not in the Samuelson (1954: 387) sense of the “collective consumption of goods”: “each individual’s consumption of such goods leads to no subtraction from any other individual’s consumption of that good.” Rather they are Social and Economic Commons because they involve the idea of a collective, common good (not ‘goods’). Equity, rather than “non-excludability” or “non-rivality,” is the determinate condition for access, and access may be structured on the basis of gravity of need rather than presentation of demand.”

(Adesina 2010, p.5)

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THANK YOU