PROGRESS REPORT 2013

HELPING TO CAST SAFETY NETS WIDER

RSR helped to lay the foundations of a safety net system that is anchored within a social protection strategy and capable of effectively responding to crises and increasing people's resilience.

CHALLENGE

Guinea rests at a critical juncture, brought about by the combination of a first-ever government with both national and international legitimacy and the coming together of civil society energies in support for democracy and development. In step, the new government is ceasing this window of opportunity to use social service delivery as a means to reduce poverty and increase growth. But as is commonly the case in low income countries, social protection interventions are characterized by fragmented, small-scale piecemeal programs, to a large extent dependent on donors.

The government is recognizing the challenge of fragmentation and is now looking for a systems approach in order to improve both efficiency and effectiveness.

APPROACH

To assist the government in this endeavor—and with support from RSR—a World Bank task team set out to identify the sources of systemic shocks in Guinea and their effects on the chronic poor.

The analytical work resulted in the approval of an IDA grant of US$25 million for Guinea's Productive Safety Net Project, approved in June 2012. RSR also helped to build in-country capacity (including at the local institutions level) to efficiently implement the IDA-financed project, which is attracting new partners as well; for example, the UN Peace Building Fund and the European Union have pledged additional funding. In parallel to the implementation, lessons are drawn from the project which will feed into a new social protection strategy for the country. Guinea’s Productive Safety Net Project provides temporary jobs in public works and cash transfers. The latter invests directly in helping malnourished children and primary school girls in rural areas where many children suffer from malnutrition and too few girls finish primary education.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS

• Carried out a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the Food, Fuel, and Financial Crisis on the poor and vulnerable populations, assessing household coping mechanisms and reviewing existing safety net instruments for effectiveness (relevance, responsiveness to crisis, scalability, targeting, coverage, sustainability)

• Laid groundwork for extensive in-country dialogue, contextualizing dimensions of social protection and identifying instruments suitable to the Guinean context

• Designed key safety net system elements, including eligibility criteria, benefit levels, targeting mechanisms, payment systems, management information system/information and communications technology, and implementation and financing options

• Supported South-South learning participation

• Associated IDA Project: Productive Social Safety Net Project (US$ 25 million)
  - Creates 2.4 million work days for 24,000 temporary workers (100 days per worker per year), benefiting 144,000 people
  - Builds community infrastructure through public works, serving 500,000 users
  - Provides life skills training for 5,000 youth participating in the public works program
  - Covers 10,000 poor households, benefiting approximately 60,000 people from unconditional cash transfers, of which 5,000 households with malnourished children 0-24 months old and 5,000 households with primary school age girls