

## Policy Brief: Combination social protection reduces new HIV infections in adolescents

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Social protection programs which aim to reduce HIV-risk behaviours often focus on unconditional cash transfer programs. However, recent research suggests that a combination of financial/ in-kind “cash”, psychosocial “care”, and school-based “classroom” social protection provisions might be more effective for HIV prevention in adolescents.

### Research questions:

1. Which specific types of social protection interventions are effective in adolescent HIV-risk reduction?
2. Are there cumulative prevention benefits from accessing combination social protection?

### The Research:

- Prospective longitudinal study of 3516 adolescents aged 10–18 conducted in 2009 (baseline) and 2012 (follow-up).
- Social protection: Sustained receipt of 14 social protection interventions at baseline and follow-up.
- Outcomes: Rates of new HIV-risk behaviours between baseline and follow-up (past-year incidence).

**Cash Social Protection:** child support or foster child foster grant, pension, food gardens, food parcels or soup kitchens

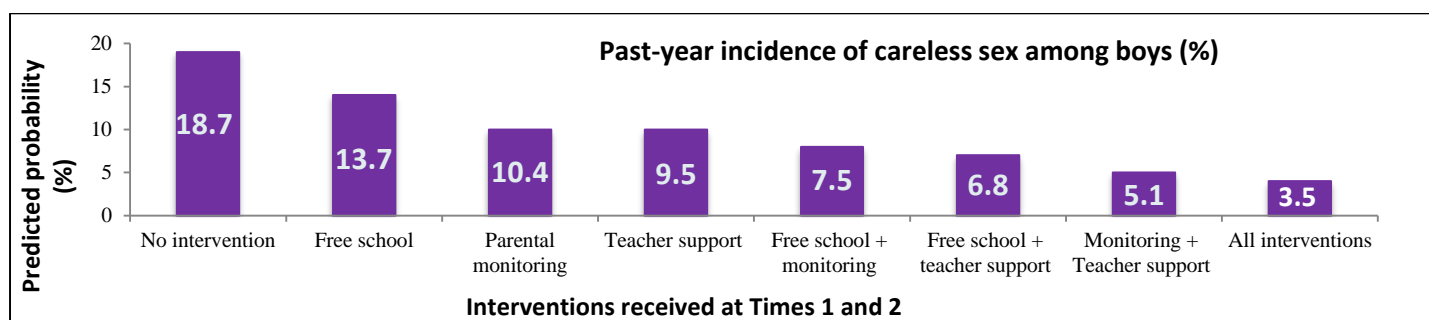
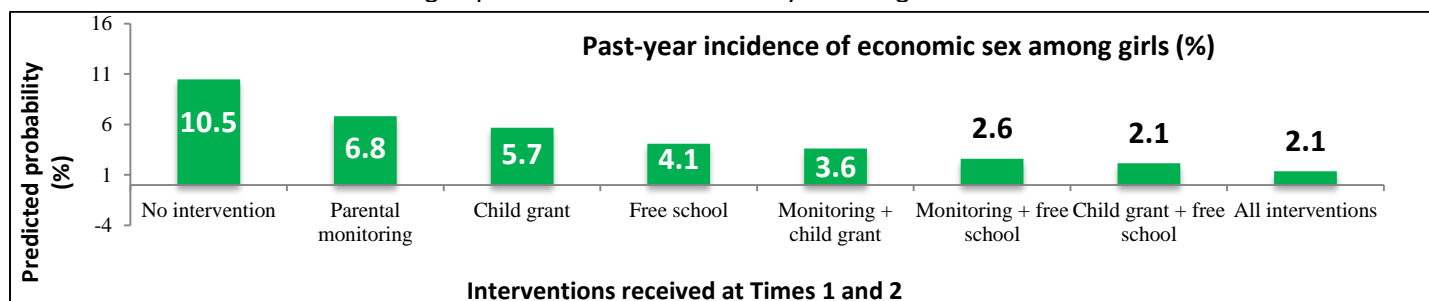
**Care Social Protection:** Positive parenting, good parental monitoring

**Classroom Social Protection:** free school, school feeding, teacher support, school counsellor.

**Finding 1:** Child-focused grants, free schooling, school feeding, teacher support, and parental monitoring were independently associated with reduced HIV-risk behaviour incidence.

**Finding 2:** Combination social protection were strongly associated with greater reductions in HIV-risk behaviours. For example, girls' predicted past-year incidence of economically-driven sex dropped from 10.5 % with no interventions to 2.1 % among those with a child grant, free school, and good parental monitoring.

**Finding 3:** Existing interventions that are currently provided by governmental and nongovernmental organizations, or families delivered in real-life setting improve adolescent health by reducing HIV-risk behaviour.



### Policy Message:

- Reducing HIV-risk behaviours is key to reducing new HIV infections among adolescents.
- Specific social protection provisions (cash, care, and classroom) could reduce new HIV infections in adolescents.
- Combinations of social protection provisions may have a cumulative effect in reducing new HIV infections in adolescents: the more provisions accessed by the adolescent, the greater the reduction.