

# Social Protection Shuffle

“Linking Social Protection and Shocks”  
#116



## Why this game?

For years we have realised the importance of the linkages between



climate resilience & social protection

These issues seem complex!



To make them accessible - we have created a game that helps you navigate this complexity.

During this game you will experience various elements of social protection, for example targeting - or “identification”.

### Link with Climate Change

The climate is changing, climate extremes are becoming more frequent and intense



**We need more approaches that systematically ensure people are resilient to deal with these extremes**

climate sensitive social protection can be a useful approach!

## Game overview

**Description:** In this participatory activity, players become subsistence farmers, who face changing risks and government officers. Players must make individual and collective decisions, with consequences.

**Learning outcomes:** To explore how:

- Regular cash transfer protects people from the impoverishing impacts of climate shocks
- Cash transfers allow people to invest in more resilient livelihoods
- Investing in social protection systems is in the long-run more cost-effective and can increase the speed of humanitarian response

**Facilitator skill level:** ★★★ Challenging, needs skilled facilitation

**Intended audience:** Programme managers and policy makers in government and development agencies at global, regional, national and subnational levels.

**Number of players:** 10-60

**Time needed for gameplay/discussion:** 20-30 minutes

**Playspace Requirements:** Large room without tables and chairs

**Materials (for 20 players):**



1. 160 assets, eg beans



2. 10 bowls or cups for beans



3. Printed materials - resources



4. Timer



5. Optional: Powerpoint

### Want to know more?



Link to more resources

Climate Centre games: <http://climatecentre.org/resources-games/games>

# Facilitation guide



## Rules and game play:

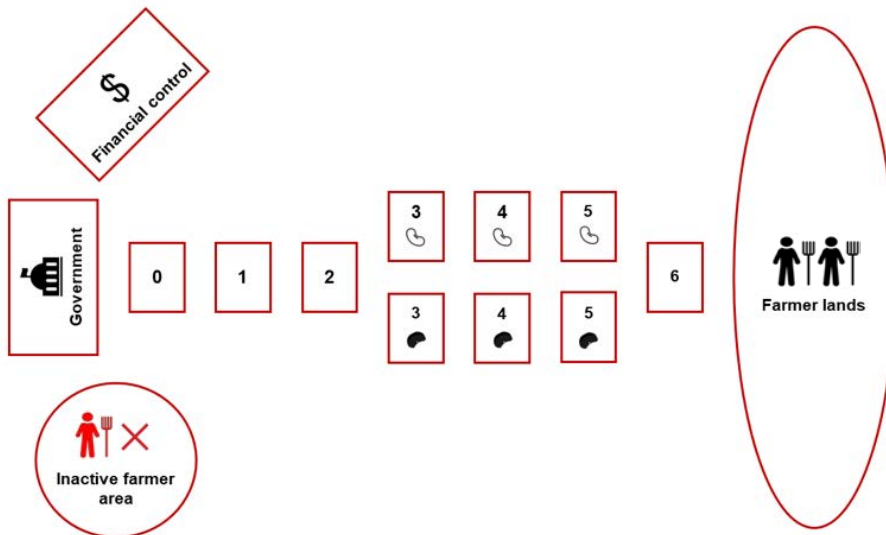
**Explain setting and ground rules:** see powerpoint file for detailed facilitation notes

*Note: As you explain the rules, it is important you do so in a playful mode. You can exaggerate a bit or make some jokes throughout this explanation.*

1. The game is a simplified representation of reality, focusing only on those aspects that contribute to the learning outcome.
2. Players join the game accepting the rules; there is no challenging the rules during gameplay.
3. In this game, each round represents a year. We are going to play 7-10 rounds.
4. Finally, like in any game, the rules may be confusing at first. This is normal!

## Set up and basics:

Set up the room according to the image below. Place the prints on the floor to label the areas in the room.



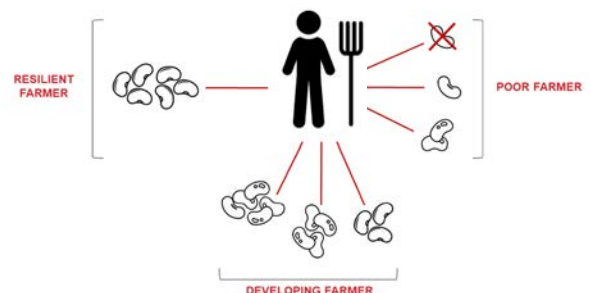
## How to win this game:

- Government: Your goal in this game is to **keep as many farmers in the game as possible** and to spend as little as possible
- Farmers: you can win by becoming resilient which means having **6 assets**. However more important your main goal is to **stay in the game as an active farmer for as many rounds as possible**.

## Rules and Play:

In the game there are two types of players, **government officers** and **farmers**.

- **Government** players have a budget which is replenished each year. They will need to allocate this budget in order to help their country and individual farmers thrive.
- **Farmers** are vulnerable to climate shocks, which can cause them to lose their assets. Farmers can also invest, but only when they are not 'poor'. Farmers can be categorized in 3 different groups: poor, developing and resilient (see image).



# Facilitation guide



1. The game is played in **multiple rounds** and each round represents a year (minimum 7, maximum 10)
2. In **each round** there is a risk of a shock. No one knows when a shock will hit.
3. If there is a shock, a farmer loses assets: *No shock = OK! ; Dry spell = lose 1 asset) ; (Severe drought = lose 2 assets)\** *\*the chances of a severe drought occurring will be announced after year 3.*
4. If a farmer **loses all assets**, he or she is removed from the game until they can be helped back in by the government. While they are out of the game, they become an **inactive farmer**. All other farmers are **active farmers**.
5. An **inactive** farmer will be inactive for at least 1 year.
6. The government can **activate** the inactive farmers at the end of the next year by giving them 2 assets per farmer. The farmer then returns to where he or she was located before he or she became inactive.
7. Each round the government has an **allocated budget** to be spent on disaster response and preparedness and each year the government needs to decide how to spend the budget. The government receives this budget each year at the **beginning of each round. The budget equals** a fixed income + a variable income. The fixed income equals half of the number of farmers in the game, rounding upwards. The variable income equals 1x the number of **active** farmers in that year.

Examples:

- There are 15 farmers in the game; all farmers are active, none inactive. The government budget equals  $8 + 15 - 0 = 23$  assets.
- There are 22 farmers in the game; 17 active, 5 inactive. The government budget equals  $11 + 17 = 28$  assets.

No of players	Government players	Financial controller*	Farmers	Assets needed (=8x no of players)	Min farmers to identify (from round 3)
10-20	2	1	max 17	80-160	4
21-30	2	1	max 27	170-240	6
31-40	3	1	max 36	250-320	8
41-50	4	1	max 45	330-400	10
51-60	5	1	max 54	410-480	12

Table 1.

\*The role of financial controller could be played by members of the facilitation team or by workshop participants.

- A **financial controller** manages the games finances.
- The financial controller receives the following **materials**: A bowl filled with assets; A description (see game prints).

## Introduction to the game

“In recent decades, there has been a sharp increase in weather-related disasters, and climate change is aggravating these risks. You live in a the country of Zamunda. Zamunda is a country that is vulnerable to climate risks, which means it has a history in weather-related disasters and especially in these recent decades the risks of climate shocks are extremely high. Most of you are poor farmers which rely on agriculture to survive. Especially for farmers a climate shock will have a lot of impact.”

## Game play: Assigning player roles

“Some of you are the government of this country. The government *gives direction to the country and stimulates the development of society. You would want to protect your country from extreme weather events but is that really possible? Should farmers lose all their assets as the result of a shock, you will give aid to the victims and enable Zamunda to rebuild. But you are a poor country and also you as a government are on a budget. Your goal in this game is to **keep as many farmers in the game as possible** and to spend as little as possible.*”

# Facilitation guide



“Who wants to be the government of Zamunda?” *Assign government players, number of government players: see table 1.*

“The government is assisted by a financial controller, who manages the finances of Zamunda.” *Introduce financial controller*

“All other players are the farmers of Zamunda. You can win by becoming resilient which means having **6 assets**. However more important your main goal is to **stay in the game as an active farmer at all times**. If you’ve become inactive, it means that you cannot take care of your family. And you will be inactive for 1 whole year. Think about what that would mean for you, for your farm and for your family.”

“We will play for between 7 and 10 rounds, each round representing one year. Each year, there is a risk of a shock in Zamunda. There are assets in the game and these are very important. Having sufficient assets means that you are protected against such a shock. The type of shock that you are vulnerable to is a dry spell. If there is a dry spell all farmers lose 1 asset. If there is no shock you are all okay and you can keep all of your assets.”

To the farmers: “Unfortunately, you are poor farmers. You start the game with one or two assets. If as a farmer at some point you have no assets left you will be inactive for 1 year and you will move to the inactive farmer area.”

1. The government players go to the **government office** at one side of the room.
2. While the government takes office, the facilitator takes the **farmer players** to the other side of the room, the farmer lands.
3. **Half of the farmers** are instructed to each take 1 asset as their starting budget. The other half of the farmers are split in two: half of them take 2 assets and the remaining farmers also take 1 asset. (1/4 have 2 assets, 3/4 have 1 asset)
4. Around the room there are **bowls** filled with assets. When a farmer receives assets, he or she can take an asset out of a bowl and when a farmer loses an asset he or she returns the asset into the bowl.
5. The farmers are instructed not to talk to the government unless spoken to and not to tell the government the number of assets they have and unless asked for personally.
6. The farmers are instructed to mix up and take a **random spot** in the farmer land area (to make sure not all farmers with the same starting budget stand together).
7. If all **rules are clear**, the first round starts.

## Round 1: Quick Round

1. Government receives **income**.
2. The first round is a **short round** and the facilitator immediately checks whether a shock hits that year, either by going to the next powerpoint slide or by turning the upper card from the pile of ‘shock’ cards.
3. It is a **‘dry-spell’**: all farmers need to hand in 1 asset (return it into one of the bowls)
4. All farmers need to stay where they are!

# Facilitation guide



5. The **rules of emergency aid** are explained:

- **All but one** of the government players may approach the farmers and give aid: ask how many assets the farmer has and **give as much aid as you want, when needed**.
- Approach farmers **individually** – The government can't approach multiple farmers at the same time.
- During a shock people are hard to reach: anyone approached will **cost the government 2 assets**, to be paid to the financial controller.
- **Directly pay** the financial controller **after each farmer** you approach. This means walking / running back and forth.
- You have **30 seconds**.

6. Time starts: the government has **30 seconds** time to give emergency aid.

7. The farmers that still have 0 assets after emergency aid are instructed to move to the '**inactive farmer area**'. The **inactive farmer rules** are explained:

- These farmers are inactive for at least 1 year: at the end of the next year the government can activate them by giving them **at least 2 assets per farmer**.
- If the government has no assets left to give to these farmers, **they can't return** to the game (yet).
- The government **doesn't receive income** from inactive farmers.

## Round 2: another quick round

1. Government receives **income**.
2. The second round is another **short round** and the facilitator immediately checks whether a shock hits this year.
3. It is another '**dry-spell**': all farmers need to hand in 1 asset (return it into one of the buckets).
4. All farmers need to stay where they are! The government can give emergency aid to farmers who need it.
5. Time starts: the government has **30 seconds** time to give emergency aid.
6. The farmers that still have 0 assets after emergency aid are instructed to move to the '**inactive farmer area**'.
7. The inactive farmers from last round may **return to their farms** if the government gives 2 assets per farmer to help them back.

## Round 3: identification and farmer investments

1. Government receives **income**
2. **New rule** for the government! The identification rules are explained:
  - The government is able to **gain information** about the assets of the farmers
  - At the cost of **1 asset per farmer** they can know how many assets a farmer has.
  - This 1 asset needs to be **paid to the financial controller**, not to the farmers.
  - The government is not allowed to approach only 1 farmer per round. Investing in information means investing in a **group of farmers** (*Minimum number of farmers: see table 1.1*)
  - To help remember which farmers are approached and how many assets they have, these approached farmers go to the **areas in the middle of the room marked 0-6**. These numbers indicate the number of assets of the farmer(s) in the area.

# Facilitation guide



**3. Another new rule**, for the farmers! The farmers investment rules are explained:

- All farmers started this game as **poor farmers**, and poor farmers have up to 2 assets.
- Your goal is to become a **resilient farmer**, with 6 assets.
- If at some point during the game you have 3, 4 or 5 assets, you are no longer poor, but a **developing farmer**
- Developing farmers have **more means** and therefore they are able to invest.
- As a developing farmer, each year you have the choice to invest in **Normal crops or Special crops**.
- The Investing in normal crops means **upgrading your existing production**: when there is no shock, you will earn **2 assets**. When there is a dry spell, you will still lose one asset.
- Investing in special crops means **investing a crop that is resistant to drought**. When there is a dry spell, you will be okay and you will **not lose assets**. When there is no shock, you will earn **1 asset**. (*Investments for the special crop is higher and therefore you earn less than with the normal crops*)

**4. Government**: do you want to **invest in information**? For how many farmers?

**5. Developing farmers**: **choose your investment!**

**6. End of the round**: the facilitator checks whether a shock hits that year.

**7. No shock**: all farmers are **OK!**

**8. The inactive farmers** from last round may **return to their farms** if the government has sufficient assets to help them back: 2 assets per farmer

## BREAKING NEWS: changing risks

“In recent decades, the risks of a dry spell occurring have become very high. Unfortunately climate change is increasing the risk of extreme events. Research has shown that in the next years the likelihood and intensity of drought will increase in Zamunda. This means that besides a dry spell, there is also the risk of a **severe drought!** If a severe drought occurs, a farmer loses not 1 but 2 assets. Unless you invest in special crops, in which case you will lose only 1 asset.”

Replace the numbers on the floor:

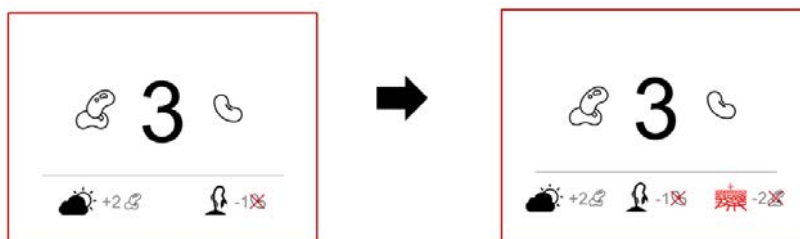
### Round 4: social protection

**1. Government** receives **income**.

**2. New rule** for the government!

**3. Social protection** rule is explained:

- The government is able to give **extra assets** to farmers, to make them more resilient against climate shocks.
- If social protection is activated, the ‘poor’ farmers (with up to two assets) the government is connected to (in the numbered areas of the room) receive **1 asset per year**, each year (= they move 1 area up)
- *In smaller groups, the government can give the assets directly to the farmers and then the farmers move 1 area up.*
- *In larger groups, the farmers move 1 area up and the government pays the social protection assets to the financial controller.*



# Facilitation guide



4. Question 1 for government: do you want to **invest in information**? For how many farmers?
5. Question 2 for government: do you want to activate social protection?
6. If social protection is activated: all farmers on the numbers receive 1 asset from the government and **move 1 area up**
7. Developing farmers: **choose your investment!**
8. End of the round: the facilitator checks whether a shock hits this year
9. 'Dry spell': farmers hand in 1 asset and move 1 area down (unless they invested in special crops)
10. The government can give emergency aid to farmers who need it.
11. Time starts: the government has **30 seconds** time to give emergency aid.
12. The farmers that still have 0 assets after emergency aid are instructed to move to the '**inactive farmer area**'.
13. The inactive farmers from last round may **return to their farms** if the government has sufficient assets to help them back: 2 assets per farmer

All rules and game elements are introduced. From now on the following steps need to be followed for each round:

## Round 5 – 10 Standard Order

1. Government receives **income**

If there are still farmers in the farmer lands:

2. Question 1 for government: do you want to **invest in information**? For how many farmers?

If social protection is not activated:

- 3a. Question 2 for government: do you want to activate social protection?

If social protection is activated:

- 3b. All farmers on the numbers receive 1 asset from the government and **move 1 area up**

4. Developing farmers: **choose your investment!**

5. **End of the round:** check if a shock hits - and play out the following scenario:

Scenario A: No Shock	Scenario B: Dry Spell	Scenario C: Severe Drought
6a. No shock: all farmers are <b>OK!</b> If they invested in normal crops, they move 2 areas up. If they invested in special crops, they move 1 area up.	6b. 'Dry spell': farmers hand in 1 asset and move 1 area down (unless they invested in special crops)	6c. 'Severe drought': farmers hand in 2 asset and move 2 areas down: (unless they invested in special crops, then they hand in 1 asset and move 1 area down)
7a. The inactive farmers from last round may <b>return to their farms</b> if the government has sufficient assets to help them back: at least 2 assets per farmer.	7b. The government can give emergency aid to farmers.	7c. The government can give emergency aid to farmers.
	8b. Time starts: the government has <b>30 seconds</b> time to give emergency aid.	8c. Time starts: the government has <b>30 seconds</b> time to give emergency aid.
	9b. The farmers that still have 0 assets after emergency aid are instructed to move to the ' <b>inactive farmer area</b> '.	9c. The farmers that still have 0 assets after emergency aid are instructed to move to the ' <b>inactive farmer area</b> '.
	10b. Inactive farmers from last round: may <b>return to their farms</b> if the government has sufficient assets to help them back: 2 assets per farmer	10c. Inactive farmers from last round: may <b>return to their farms</b> if the government has sufficient assets to help them back: 2 assets per farmer

# Facilitation guide



## Default scenario per round

- |              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 1: dry spell | 6: severe drought |
| 2: dry spell | 7: no shock       |
| 3: no shock  | 8: dry spell      |
| 4: dry spell | 9: dry spell      |
| 5: no shock  | 10: no shock      |

## End of the game

- After playing 7 – 10 rounds you can end the game if you think the messages have come across to the players and you feel the game can be finished.
- A good time to finish the game is when a farmer becomes resilient and wins. However this could also happen in earlier rounds and then you want to keep playing to intensify the experience of the players.
- After round 10 the game is automatically finished.

## Debrief:

The debriefing is a crucial part of the game experience as this is where the shared learning takes place. Example questions:

1. What did you experience during this game?
2. What was the difference between targeting and not targeting? How does that relate to real life? Tip! Ask a government representative and a farmer to respond in the plenary feedback.
3. How did you experience social protection? How does that or any other insight from the game relate to real life? Tip! Ask a government representative and a farmer to respond in the plenary feedback.

## Wrap up key messages:

You have the option to highlight a few key lessons around social protection:

- In the game we see that: **Receiving social assistance helps farmers to become more resilient**
- In reality: Investing in flexible and scalable social protection systems is a **key strategy** in order to:
  1. Address the root causes of poverty and vulnerability;
  2. Reduce reliance to negative coping mechanisms (i.e. selling off productive assets);
  3. Incentivize poor farmers to invest in resilient and climate smart agricultural practices;
- In the game we see that: **Establishing information links (targeting) makes it more effective and efficient for the Government to allocate aid after a stress or a crisis.**
- In reality: Investing in flexible and scalable social protection systems is a **key strategy** in order to:
  4. Allow for an efficient, effective and inclusive response to stress or crisis by Governments.

## Acknowledgements:

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