



ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL PROTECTION WEEK 2026

Empowered Lives, Resilient Futures

Systems Reboot: Social Protection in a Digital World

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49

Years

At the current pace of progress —
that is when every person on earth
will have social protection.

ILO World Social Protection Report, 2024-2026



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Amara

32 years. Flood survivor.
Widow. Mother of three.

Qualifies for 5 programmes.

*Cash transfers. Emergency relief.
Widow support. School feeding.
Subsidized healthcare.*

She is 1 of 3.8 billion.

**The system
has never
heard of her**

Not because the benefits don't exist.
Not because the budget isn't there.

Because the systems
don't talk to each other.



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We spent decades building programmes

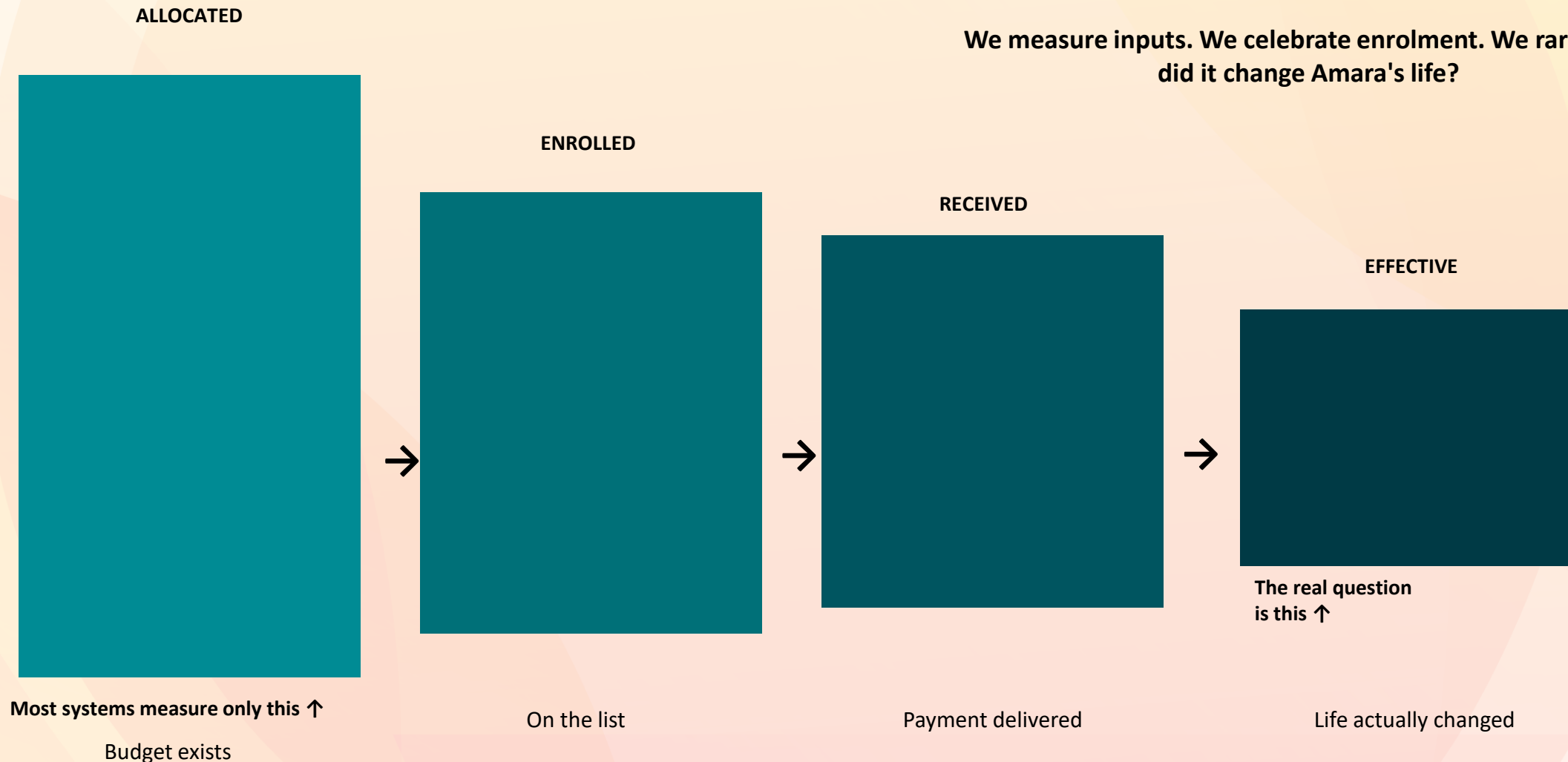
We forgot to build the system.



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The Gap Nobody Measures





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The reboot comes down to three things.

CONNECT

**One person.
One record.
Many services.**

Interoperable registries.
Shared digital ID/DPI
Benefit portability
Open standards

REACH

**If the system
can't find them,
it has failed.**

Proactive outreach.
Assisted digital access.
First-mile delivery
before the crisis.
Design for Amara —
not the average user.

TRUST

**Data is power.
Power needs
governance.**

Privacy and security
by design.
Human oversight of AI.
Accountability to
the people whose
data we hold.



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This is not theory

Three countries in this room have been rebooting — in real time.

Türkiye TR

A decade of persistent system-building.

What does it take to connect a whole government's data around a single citizen?

Azerbaijan AZ

A decision: no citizen should ever answer the same question twice.

What did it take to make that real?

Maldives MV

A small island nation, a uniquely complex geography, a whole-of-government digital bet.

Did it pay off?

You are about to hear their answers — in their own words.



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Amara is still waiting

**49 years.
Or now.**

The budget exists.

The technology exists.

The political will — increasingly — exists.



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**What is missing is the decision
to build for her — not around her.**

We can close that gap in this generation. Or we can close it in the next one.

That choice is made in rooms like this one — and in the systems decisions that follow.



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Now I want to listen

Three questions this presentation raised — that only you can answer.

Where in the cascade did you most often lose people like Amara?

Allocated → Enrolled → Received → Effective.

Which gap was hardest to close — and what finally closed it?

Connect, Reach, or Trust — which one nearly broke you?

The technical challenge or the human one.

When the system worked — but the people still didn't believe it.

What would you say to Amara — honestly?

If someone invisible to the system asked you:

'Is it ready for me now?' — what would you tell her?



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Thank You