

# Money or Flexibility?

Insights from a Discrete-Choice Experiment in Malaysia

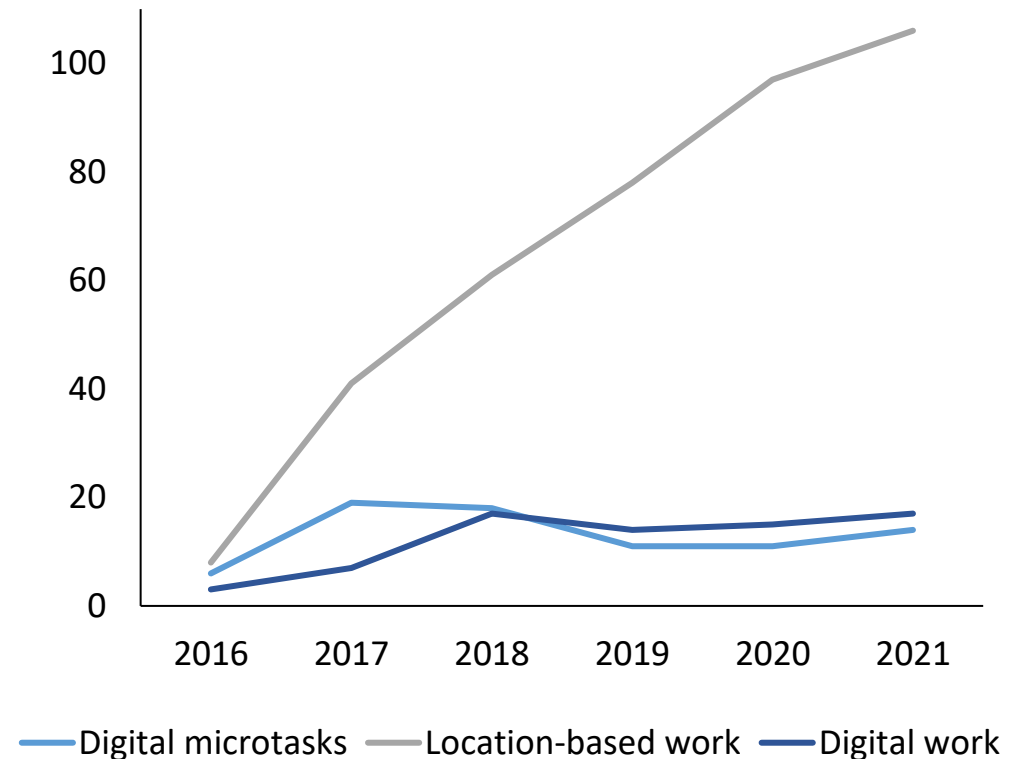
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# Introduction

- Rise in Alternate Work Arrangements even before, but esp. during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond
  - Garrote-Sanchez et al. (2021), Barerra et al, (2021)
- Prevalence of Informality, Emergence of Gig Economy – including in Malaysia
- Considerations of worker protection in Gig Work, but Valuation of Flexibility not sufficiently appreciated, especially in developing countries

Much evidence from the West USA (Mas and Pallais, 2020; Chen et al, 2019; Wiswall and Zafar, 2018), UK (Berger et al, 2019), Italy (Angelici and Profeta, 2020) and Denmark (Eriksson and Kristensen, 2014)
- Trade-offs between flexibility and income to inform firm-level compensation mechanisms and economy-wide labor regulations around flexible work – for gig economy as well as for those in standard employment

Number of digital labor platforms registered with MDEC in Malaysia

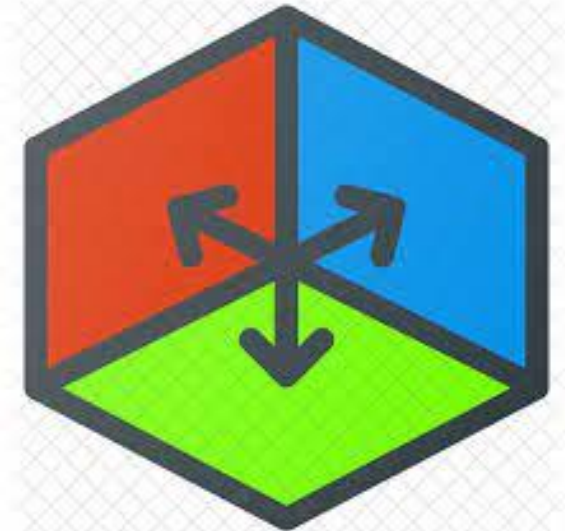


Source: MDEC (2022)

# Research Questions

- Do workers experience a trade-off between flexible work arrangements (with the options to **work from home**, or choose one's **work hours**) and income?
- Does this vary by workers current status in employment as freelancing or in standard employment, and by gender?
- Which demographic and economic characteristics, as well as workers' preferred and existing work conditions are correlated with the preference for flexible work arrangements?

**Earnings**                      **Flexibility**



**Protection**

[Larger Study also related to Valuation of Social Insurance Coverage](#)

# Online Survey of Digital Platform Freelancers: Data

## Sample

- MDEC's Global Online Workforce (GLOW) members – digital freelancers
- MDEC's non-GLOW members
- Gig workers

$n_1=1,038$

- Workers in Std employment
- Email Links to Online Survey

$n_2=300$

**N=1,338**

## Survey Details

Online survey, which included sections on:

- Demographic background
- Employment characteristics
- **Experimental section**
- Preferred work characteristics

Duration: 10-15 minutes

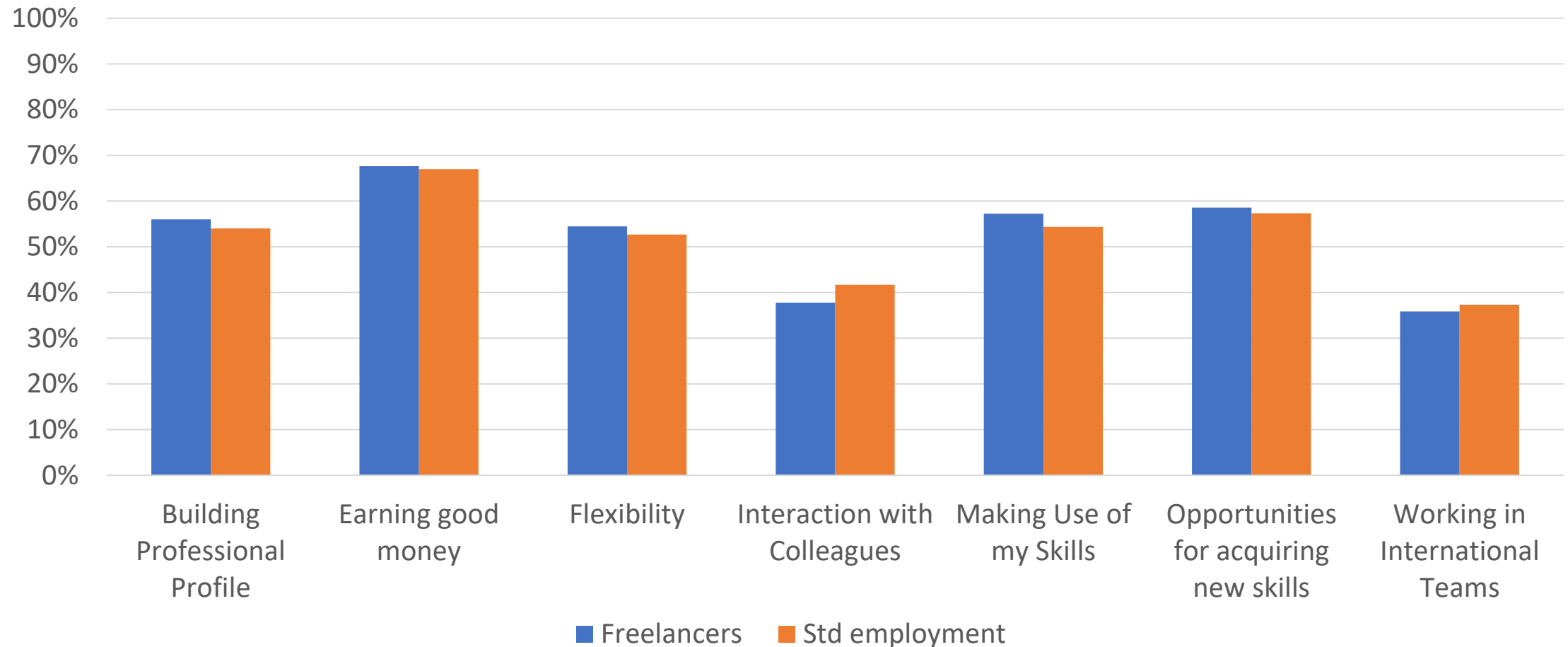
Time period: Feb 2022 – May 2022

# Methodology

- Combination of Descriptive and Causal Analysis
  - Endogeneity in observed access to Flexible work arrangements and Income
  - Observational data don't help understand marginal valuation of flexibility, as flexibility is a part of several observable/ unobservable attributes of a job
- Experimental approach to uncover trade-off between income and flexibility using a simple discrete choice experiment
- Pose Flexibility as a Non-monetary benefit of work (as viewed by the worker), ascertain **Trade-off between Income and Flexibility**
  - Compare preference between fictitious job descriptions with randomly varied attributes –including type of flexibility offered and associated cost wrt share of wages
  - Focus on Extensive margin of Valuation, rather than intensive (small N)
- Experiment design based on [Mas and Pallais \(2017\)](#), [Eriksson and Kristensen \(2014\)](#)

# While freelancers value attributes of work similarly to standard employees ...

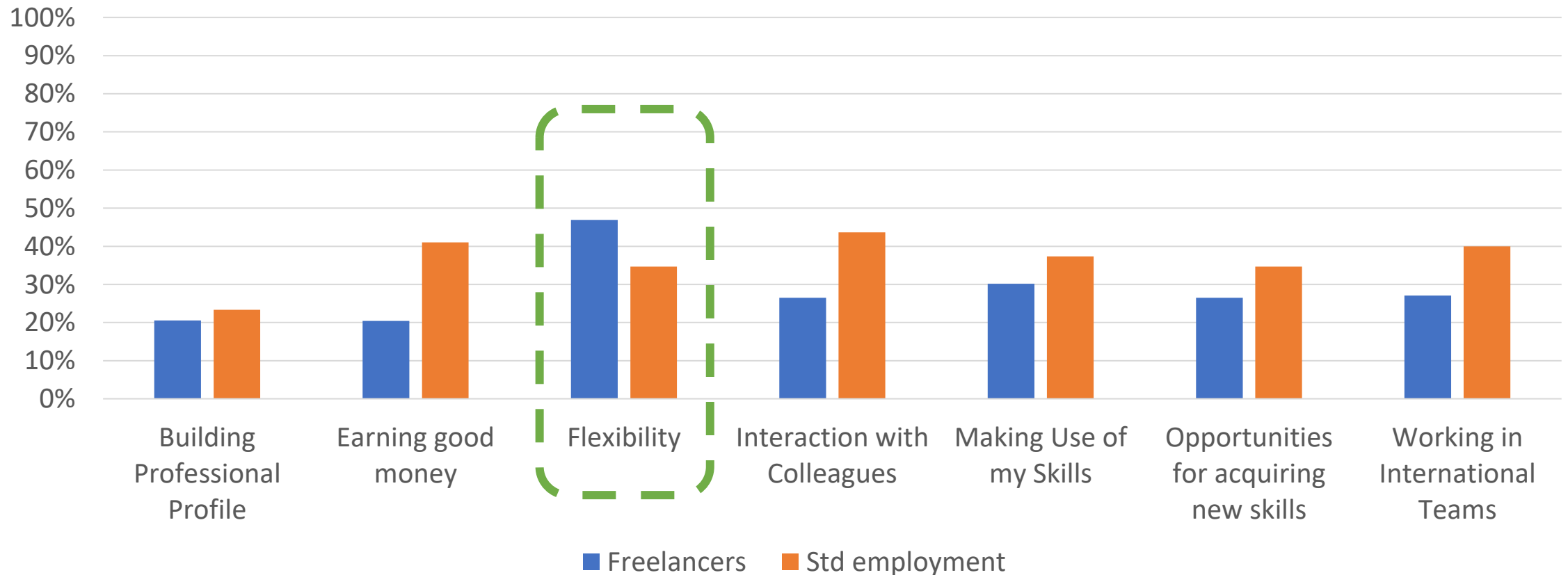
Share of workers that consider a work characteristic as being “Very important”



Source: World Bank (2022)

# ... they have greater flexibility but lesser of other opportunities in their current work

Share of workers that consider a work characteristic as being adequately provided in their current work



Source: World Bank (2022)

# Describing the Experiment: Job A v/s Job B (Location of Work)

	Standard	Most Flexible		More Flexible than standard	
	Job A	Job B1	Job B2	Job B3	Job B4
Hours worked per week	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours
Work Hours	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM
Location of Work	Fixed Office	WFH 5d/ week	WFH 5d/ week	WFH 2d of your choice/ week	WFH 2d of your choice/ week
Retirement Pension	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job
Health Insurance	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package
Unemployment Insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance
Monthly Take-Home Salary	Equal to your current take-home salary	10% less than your current take-home salary	20% less than your current take-home salary	10% less than your current take-home salary	20% less than your current take-home salary



	<b>Job A</b>		<b>Job B2</b>		
<b>Hours worked per week</b>	40 hours		40 hours		
<b>Work Hours</b>	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM		Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM		
<b>Location of Work</b>	<b>Fixed Office</b>		<b>WFH 5d/ week</b>		
<b>Retirement Pension</b>	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job		Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job		
<b>Health Insurance</b>	Included in compensation package		Included in compensation package		
<b>Unemployment Insurance</b>	No unemployment insurance		No unemployment insurance		
<b>Monthly Take-Home Salary</b>	<b>Equal to your current take-home salary</b>		<b>20% less than your current take-home salary</b>		

# Which of these two jobs would you prefer?

	Job A	Job B
Hours worked per week	40 hours	40 hours
Work Hours	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM
Location of Work	Fixed Office	WFH 5days/ week
Retirement Pension	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job
Health Insurance	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package
Unemployment Insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance
Monthly Take-Home Salary	<b>Equal to your current take-home salary</b>	<b>20% less than your current take-home salary</b>

Enter Preferred Job (A or B):

- Job A  
 Job B

Next

(B2)

# Describing the Experiment: Job A v/s Job B (Hours of Work)

	Standard	More Flexible		Less Flexible	
	Job A	Job B1	Job B2	Job B3	Job B4
Hours worked per week	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours	40 hours
Work Hours	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	8 hours / day from Monday to Friday, <b>you decide the work hours</b>	8 hours /day from Monday to Friday, <b>you decide the work hours</b>	8 hours / day from Monday to Friday, <b>client/ employer decides work hours</b>	8 hours / day from Monday to Friday, <b>client/ employer decides work hours</b>
Location of Work	Fixed Office	Fixed Office	Fixed Office	Fixed Office	Fixed Office
Retirement Pension	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job
Health Insurance	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package
Unemployment Insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance	No unemployment insurance
Monthly Take-Home Salary	<b>Equal</b> to your current take-home salary	<b>10% less</b> than your current take-home salary	<b>20% less</b> than your current take-home salary	<b>10% more</b> than your current take-home salary	<b>20% more</b> than your current take-home salary

# Randomization of Treatment Arms: Location of Work

	WFH everyday		WFH 2 days a week			
	10% lower earnings	20% lower earnings	10% lower earnings	20% lower earnings		
Variable	Job B1	Job B2	Job B3	Job B4	F-stat	P-value
Male	0.47	0.56	0.55	0.57	<b>2.42*</b>	0.064
Has Children	0.40	0.40	0.47	0.41	1.61	0.186
Single/ Unmarried	0.48	0.45	0.44	0.48	0.65	0.583
Age	35.22	35.84	35.82	35.96	0.34	0.799
Chinese	0.18	0.15	0.15	0.18	0.68	0.564
Indian	0.06	0.08	0.10	0.10	1.70	0.166
Bumiputera	0.75	0.75	0.73	0.70	0.74	0.527
EDU: up to secondary	0.20	0.16	0.22	0.16	<b>2.12*</b>	0.096
EDU: Post-secondary	0.23	0.21	0.25	0.28	1.70	0.165
EDU: Bachelor's	0.41	0.48	0.40	0.41	1.90	0.128
EDU: Professional	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.03	<b>2.80**</b>	0.039
EDU: Masters+	0.11	0.10	0.10	0.13	0.92	0.431
Low Income	0.29	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.44	0.722
Med Income	0.30	0.30	0.36	0.31	1.13	0.335
High Income	0.41	0.44	0.39	0.45	1.02	0.384
In Standard Employment	0.21	0.24	0.23	0.23	0.28	0.843
Time Preference Index	0.47	0.49	0.46	0.46	0.30	0.823
Risk Appetite (0-10)	6.30	6.54	6.47	6.40	0.59	0.621

# Randomization of Treatment Arms: Hours of Work

	Worker Decides Hours		Client/ Employer decides hours			
	10% lower earnings	20% lower earnings	10% higher earnings	20% higher earnings		
Variable	Job B1	Job B2	Job B3	Job B4	F-stat	P-value
Male	0.54	0.52	0.53	0.55	0.29	0.832
Has Children	0.41	0.41	0.44	0.42	0.26	0.851
Single/ Unmarried	0.44	0.46	0.47	0.48	0.28	0.841
Age	35.67	36.24	35.55	35.39	0.42	0.741
Ethnicity: Chinese	0.15	0.19	0.16	0.15	0.93	0.423
Ethnicity: Indian	0.09	0.10	0.05	0.10	<b>2.54*</b>	0.055
Ethnicity: Bumiputera	0.73	0.70	0.78	0.72	2.06	0.104
EDU: up to secondary	0.15	0.19	0.20	0.20	1.31	0.270
EDU: Post-secondary	0.26	0.22	0.25	0.23	0.64	0.589
EDU: Bachelor's	0.44	0.43	0.42	0.41	0.26	0.855
EDU: Professional	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.61	0.610
EDU: Masters+	0.12	0.11	0.10	0.11	0.36	0.781
Low Income	0.25	0.24	0.27	0.29	0.75	0.524
Med Income	0.32	0.34	0.30	0.31	0.48	0.698
High Income	0.42	0.42	0.43	0.40	0.19	0.902
In Standard Employment	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.03	0.992
Time Preference Index	0.50	0.49	0.44	0.45	1.25	0.290
Risk Appetite (0-10)	6.47	6.44	6.47	6.34	0.21	0.889

# Estimation

We estimate a Linear Probability Model (LPM) as depicted by the following equation:

$$Prob(A) = \beta B_{ij} + \epsilon_i$$

Where:

Prob (A) is the likelihood of the respondent  $i$  preferring Job A, the baseline scenario

B is the randomly allocated hypothetical job description  $j$  from 1 to 4 to individual  $i$

$\epsilon$  is the error term

We also estimate:

$$Prob(FLEX) = \alpha + \beta_1 B_{ij} + \beta_2 J_i + \beta_3 P_i + \beta_4 X_i + \epsilon_i$$

Prob (FLEX) is the likelihood of the respondent  $i$  preferring the more flexible job option between the two choices presented, implying also a certain percentage cut in earnings compared to the less flexible option

B is again the randomly allocated hypothetical job description  $j$  from 1 to 4 to individual  $i$

J is the matrix of self-reported characteristics of individual  $i$ 's current job

P is the matrix of individual  $i$ 's valuations of alternate job characteristics

X is the matrix of individual (demographic and economic) characteristics

$\epsilon$  is the error term

# Working From Home or from an Office?

Job A: Work from a fixed office 5 days/ week, Income = current level of earnings

Job B: Work from Home 2 / 5 days per week, 10 – 20 percent lower income

# Likelihood of **Choosing to work from an Office 5 days a week** given alternate options for location of work/ earnings

	TOTAL	Freelancing	Standard Employment	Female	Male
<b>WFH 5d/week, 10% lower earnings</b>	<b>0.381<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.348<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.507<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.400<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.361<sup>***</sup></b>
	[0.0267]	[0.0294]	[0.0606]	[0.0372]	[0.0383]
<b>WFH 5d/week, 20% lower earnings</b>	<b>0.473<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.428<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.620<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.490<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.460<sup>***</sup></b>
	[0.0273]	[0.0309]	[0.0550]	[0.0411]	[0.0365]
<b>WFH 2d/week, 10% lower earnings</b>	<b>0.383<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.314<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.618<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.418<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.353<sup>***</sup></b>
	[0.0265]	[0.0288]	[0.0561]	[0.0400]	[0.0353]
<b>WFH 2d/week, 20% lower earnings</b>	<b>0.464<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.426<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.592<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.441<sup>***</sup></b>	<b>0.481<sup>***</sup></b>
	[0.0274]	[0.0310]	[0.0568]	[0.0417]	[0.0364]
<b>Mean</b>	<b>0.425</b>	<b>0.379</b>	<b>0.587</b>	<b>0.435</b>	<b>0.416</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>1338</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>718</b>

(Dep Var = 1 if Job A preferred to Job B, else 0. Job A has a fixed office 5d/w and earnings equal to respondents' current income)



## Correlates of choosing to Work from an Office 5d/w

	(1) Total	(2) Freelancing	(3) Standard Employment	(4) Female	(5) Male
<b>Standard Employment</b>	<b>0.115***</b> [0.040]	-	-	0.115* [0.060]	0.117** [0.054]
<b>Age</b>	-0.003 [0.007]	-0.006 [0.008]	0.029* [0.017]	0.013 [0.008]	-0.014 [0.010]
<b>Age-squared</b>	0.000 [0.000]	0.000 [0.000]	-0.000* [0.000]	-0.000** [0.000]	0.000 [0.000]
<b>Female</b>	0.025 [0.037]	0.048 [0.041]	-0.016 [0.091]	-	-
<b>Single</b>	0.091** [0.039]	0.049 [0.045]	<b>0.271***</b> [0.089]	0.095* [0.057]	0.083 [0.055]
<b>Has children</b>	0.064 [0.046]	0.047 [0.053]	0.133 [0.097]	0.052 [0.055]	0.058 [0.053]
<b>Female*Has children</b>	-0.017 [0.054]	-0.072 [0.061]	0.096 [0.121]	-	-
<b>HH Size</b>	0.001 [0.007]	0.001 [0.008]	-0.006 [0.018]	-0.010 [0.011]	0.011 [0.011]

## Correlates of choosing to Work from an Office 5d/w (contd.)

	Total	Freelancing	Standard Employment	Female	Male
<b>Deemed as 'Very Important' in a job:</b>					
<b>Earning Good Money</b>	0.056* [0.032]	0.067* [0.036]	0.041 [0.071]	0.015 [0.048]	0.105** [0.044]
<b>Flexibility</b>	-0.131*** [0.031]	-0.145*** [0.034]	-0.037 [0.076]	-0.090* [0.047]	-0.165*** [0.042]
<b>Interaction with colleagues</b>	0.012 [0.034]	0.020 [0.039]	-0.009 [0.075]	-0.036 [0.052]	0.061 [0.047]
<b>Making Use of my Skills</b>	-0.032 [0.036]	-0.005 [0.041]	-0.113 [0.084]	0.050 [0.055]	-0.109** [0.050]
<b>Opportunities for acquiring new skills</b>	0.085** [0.038]	0.079* [0.042]	0.080 [0.084]	0.075 [0.060]	0.086* [0.050]
<b>Building professional profile</b>	0.005 [0.034]	-0.018 [0.039]	0.062 [0.077]	-0.013 [0.054]	0.024 [0.046]
<b>Working in International Teams</b>	0.003 [0.036]	0.034 [0.041]	-0.118 [0.078]	0.038 [0.056]	-0.028 [0.048]

## Correlates of choosing to Work from an Office 5d/w (contd.)

	Total	Freelancing	Standard Employment	Female	Male
<b>Current Job Adequately Provides Opportunities for ...</b>					
Earning Good Money	-0.050 [0.039]	-0.073 [0.047]	-0.003 [0.077]	-0.035 [0.058]	-0.050 [0.056]
Flexibility	<b>-0.077**</b> [0.031]	<b>-0.104***</b> [0.034]	0.090 [0.078]	-0.061 [0.047]	<b>-0.086**</b> [0.042]
Making Good Use of my Skills	0.025 [0.040]	0.032 [0.047]	-0.027 [0.080]	-0.039 [0.059]	0.071 [0.056]
Acquiring New Skills	0.044 [0.039]	0.014 [0.044]	0.138* [0.081]	0.058 [0.059]	0.034 [0.053]
Building my Professional Profile	0.055 [0.041]	0.061 [0.047]	-0.000 [0.084]	0.104* [0.061]	0.021 [0.058]
Working in international teams	0.030 [0.041]	0.063 [0.046]	-0.051 [0.087]	0.032 [0.063]	0.024 [0.055]
Interacting with colleagues	-0.030 [0.036]	-0.025 [0.041]	-0.022 [0.071]	-0.078 [0.054]	-0.000 [0.048]

# Summary of Results : Location of Work

- Considerable preference heterogeneity for WFH, esp. among freelancers (R2 < 9% overall, 8% for freelancers, 14% std employees)
  - Freelancers less likely to choose to work from an office
  - Single persons, esp. in std. employment more likely to choose to work from an office
  - Other demographics not correlated with preferences
- Valuing, and currently enjoying adequate **Flexibility** are both negatively correlated with the likelihood of choosing to work from an office
- Valuing **Earnings** positively correlated with preference for working from an office, especially among men
- No major differences whether offered option to WFH 2 or 5 days a week (unlike Aksoy et al, 2022, Lewandowski et al., 2023)
  - No direct comparison between 2d/5d per week; similar preference for (not) working from an office
  - indicative of an either/or type of preference among digital freelancers?

# Who chooses the Hours of Work?

Job A: Work 9 AM to 5 PM everyday, Income = current level of earnings

Job B: Worker chooses own work hours 10 – 20 % lower income; or

Employer / Client chooses own work hours 10 – 20 % higher income

# Likelihood of **Choosing to work fixed hours 9 AM to 5 PM** given alternate options for hours of work/ earnings

	TOTAL	Freelancing	Standard Employment	Female	Male
<b>B1: Worker decides hours, 10% lower earnings</b>	0.541 <sup>***</sup>	0.511 <sup>***</sup>	0.652 <sup>***</sup>	0.566 <sup>***</sup>	0.513 <sup>***</sup>
	[0.0274]	[0.0308]	[0.0577]	[0.0376]	[0.0399]
<b>B2: Worker chooses hours, 20% lower earnings</b>	0.497 <sup>***</sup>	0.479 <sup>***</sup>	0.557 <sup>***</sup>	0.490 <sup>***</sup>	0.503 <sup>***</sup>
	[0.0273]	[0.0312]	[0.0563]	[0.0411]	[0.0367]
<b>B3: Client/ employer chooses hours, 10% higher earnings</b>	0.472 <sup>***</sup>	0.414 <sup>***</sup>	0.671 <sup>***</sup>	0.490 <sup>***</sup>	0.457 <sup>***</sup>
	[0.0272]	[0.0305]	[0.0543]	[0.0405]	[0.0368]
<b>B4: Client/ employer chooses hours, 20% higher earnings</b>	0.533 <sup>***</sup>	0.480 <sup>***</sup>	0.711 <sup>***</sup>	0.545 <sup>***</sup>	0.524 <sup>***</sup>
	[0.0274]	[0.0313]	[0.0524]	[0.0418]	[0.0364]
<b>Mean</b>	<b>0.510</b>	<b>0.471</b>	<b>0.647</b>	<b>0.524</b>	<b>0.499</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>1338</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>718</b>

(Dep Var = 1 if Job A preferred to Job B, else 0. Job A has a fixed hours 9AM – 5PM and earnings equal to respondents' current income)

Least Flexible

Most Flexible



Client/ employer  
chooses hours

9AM – 5PM  
Fixed everyday

Worker chooses  
hours

Job A: Work 9 AM to 5 PM everyday, Income = current level of earnings

Job B: Worker chooses own work hours 10 – 20 % lower income; or

Employer / Client chooses own work hours 10 – 20 % higher income

## Correlates of choosing More Flexible Work Hours

	(1) Total	(2) Freelancing	(3) Standard Employment	(4) Female	(5) Male
<b>Standard Employment</b>	-0.044 [0.040]	--		<b>-0.200***</b> [0.058]	0.095* [0.057]
<b>Age</b>	-0.004 [0.007]	-0.003 [0.008]	0.004 [0.018]	-0.006 [0.010]	-0.006 [0.011]
<b>Age-squared</b>	0.000 [0.000]	0.000 [0.000]	-0.000 [0.000]	0.000 [0.000]	0.000 [0.000]
<b>Female</b>	0.000 [0.037]	0.031 [0.041]	-0.090 [0.091]	-	-
<b>Single</b>	0.008 [0.041]	0.012 [0.047]	-0.013 [0.088]	0.046 [0.061]	-0.018 [0.058]
<b>Has children</b>	0.012 [0.048]	0.026 [0.055]	-0.131 [0.100]	0.059 [0.057]	-0.018 [0.056]
<b>Female*Has children</b>	0.019 [0.056]	0.064 [0.064]	0.012 [0.121]	-	-
<b>HH Size</b>	-0.001 [0.008]	-0.003 [0.009]	0.019 [0.016]	-0.009 [0.011]	0.006 [0.011]



## Correlates of choosing More Flexible Hours (contd.)

	Total	Freelancing	Standard Employment	Female	Male
<b>Deemed as 'Very Important' in a job:</b>					
<b>Earning Good Money</b>	<b>-0.129***</b> [0.033]	<b>-0.124***</b> [0.037]	<b>-0.135**</b> [0.068]	<b>-0.112**</b> [0.049]	<b>-0.151***</b> [0.046]
<b>Flexibility</b>	<b>0.116***</b> [0.031]	<b>0.118***</b> [0.035]	0.084 [0.077]	<b>0.092**</b> [0.046]	<b>0.125***</b> [0.043]
<b>Interaction with colleagues</b>	0.028 [0.035]	0.036 [0.040]	0.015 [0.074]	0.006 [0.051]	0.057 [0.049]
<b>Making Use of my Skills</b>	0.012 [0.037]	-0.009 [0.041]	0.058 [0.084]	-0.025 [0.054]	0.060 [0.052]
<b>Opportunities for acquiring new skills</b>	-0.035 [0.039]	-0.035 [0.044]	-0.045 [0.085]	0.005 [0.061]	-0.075 [0.053]
<b>Building professional profile</b>	-0.046 [0.036]	-0.049 [0.041]	-0.024 [0.080]	-0.007 [0.056]	<b>-0.080*</b> [0.048]
<b>Working in International Teams</b>	0.032 [0.036]	0.016 [0.042]	<b>0.147**</b> [0.072]	0.030 [0.052]	0.033 [0.051]

## Correlates of choosing More Flexible Hours (contd.)

	Total	Freelancing	Standard Employment	Female	Male
<b>Current Job Adequately Provides Opportunities for ...</b>					
Earning Good Money	0.071* [0.041]	0.062 [0.048]	0.078 [0.073]	<b>0.140**</b> <b>[0.060]</b>	-0.002 [0.058]
Flexibility	0.022 [0.032]	0.017 [0.036]	0.021 [0.083]	0.044 [0.047]	0.014 [0.045]
Making Good Use of my Skills	-0.047 [0.040]	-0.027 [0.046]	-0.096 [0.076]	-0.047 [0.057]	-0.038 [0.057]
Acquiring New Skills	<b>0.089**</b> <b>[0.040]</b>	<b>0.113**</b> <b>[0.045]</b>	-0.023 [0.083]	0.077 [0.059]	0.105* [0.055]
Building my Professional Profile	<b>-0.080**</b> <b>[0.040]</b>	<b>-0.094**</b> <b>[0.046]</b>	-0.013 [0.086]	-0.088 [0.055]	-0.067 [0.059]
Working in international teams	-0.032 [0.042]	-0.043 [0.047]	-0.070 [0.088]	-0.059 [0.060]	-0.041 [0.057]
Interacting with colleagues	0.019 [0.036]	0.007 [0.043]	0.100 [0.069]	-0.023 [0.054]	0.064 [0.050]

# Summary of Results : Hours of Work

- Considerable preference heterogeneity for flexibility in the hours of work, esp. among freelancers ( $R^2 < 6\%$  overall, 7% for freelancers, 19% std employees)
- Demographics not correlated with preferences
- Women in std employment much less likely to choose flex hours compared to women freelancers: sorting?
- Those who assign high importance to **Earnings** less likely to choose flex hours, those who assign high importance to **Flexibility** are more

# Conclusions and Implications for Policy

## Considerable heterogeneity in the preference for Flexible Work Arrangements

- Though freelancers more willing to WFH than std employees, in neither group is the preference overwhelming
- Preferences are not driven by demographics or education levels,
- ... But consistent with the subjective importance assigned to Earning income and Flexibility
- Perceived trade-off between Earnings and Flexibility, and 'Profile-building' and Flexibility

## **POLICY TAKEAWAY:** One size does not fit all

- No single policy/ regulation likely to be optimal for everyone,
- Considerable evidence in our work that work attributes, esp. flexibility can increasingly become part of worker – employee/ client negotiations
- Also consider productivity implications of Flexible Work Arrangements

# Complementary Analysis to Understand Digital Freelancers' Willingness to Pay for Social Insurance

Wider project on Informal Employment in Malaysia

Used same Discrete choice experiment to assess WTP for Unemployment Insurance, Retirement Savings Fund, and Insurance for Workplace injuries among digital freelancers

- [High Willingness to Pay for UI](#) (> 80%) at current rates of contribution; higher preference among workers with different employers in the past; some substitution between retirement savings coverage and WTP for UI
- [Considerable interest in Retirement Savings Contributions](#), more interest when offered as a monthly pension rather than as a lumpsum (current model)
- [High WTP for Workplace injuries insurance](#) (> 70%), especially among those without health/injury insurance, or retirement savings – some substitution between SI instruments

Analysis informs policy options and design parameters for SI reform

# Which of these two jobs would you prefer?

	Job A	Job B
Hours worked per week	40 hours	40 hours
Work Hours	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM	Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM
Location of Work	Fixed Office	Fixed Office
Retirement Pension	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job	Regular pension after retirement (age 60) based on years of service in this job
Health Insurance	Included in compensation package	Included in compensation package
Unemployment Insurance	No unemployment insurance	If you become unemployed you receive a monthly income of <b>MYR 800</b> until you find a job, for up to 6 months
Monthly Take-Home Salary	Equal to your current take-home salary	<b>0.2% less than your current take-home salary</b>

Enter Preferred Job (A or B):

- Job A  
 Job B

Next

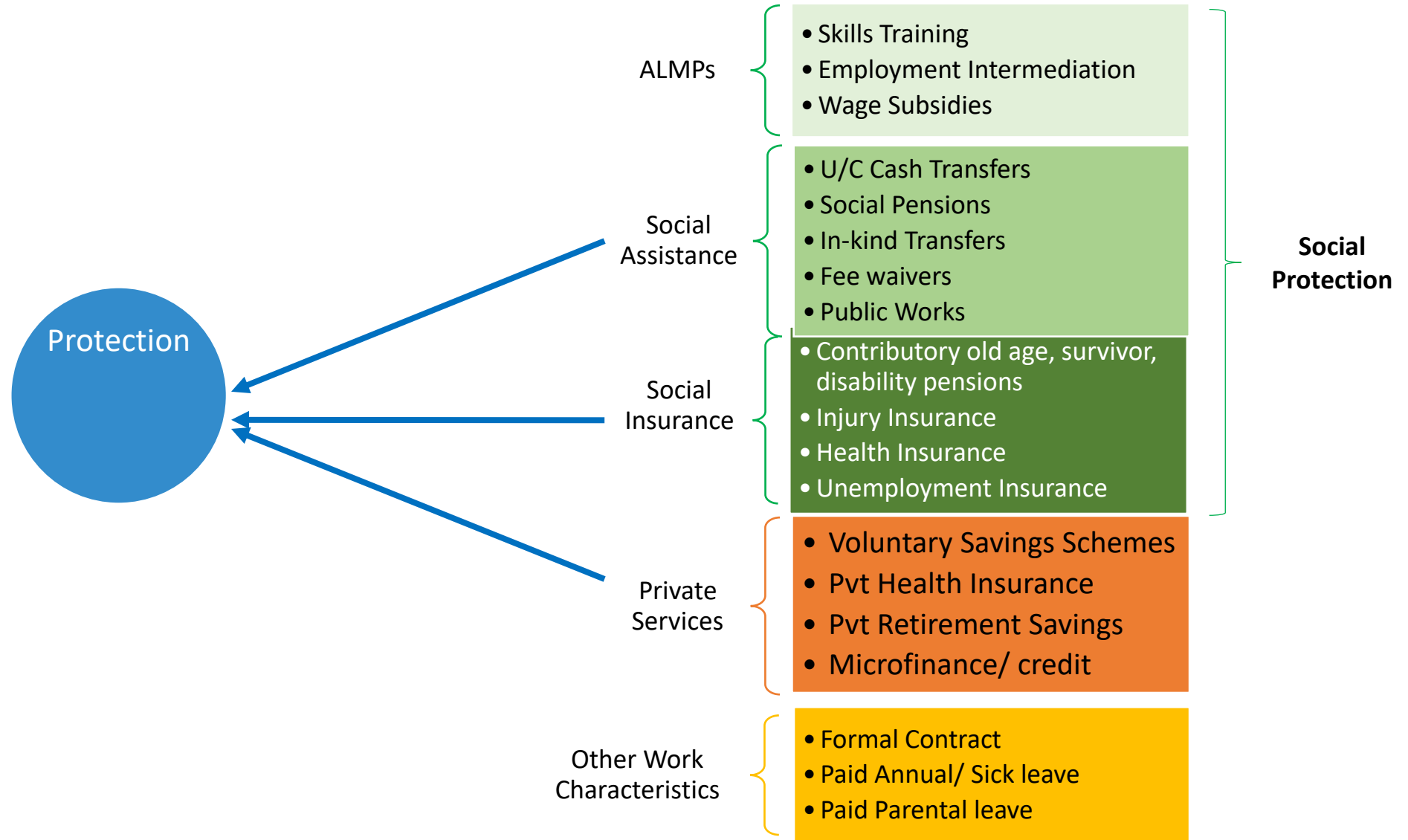
# THANK YOU!

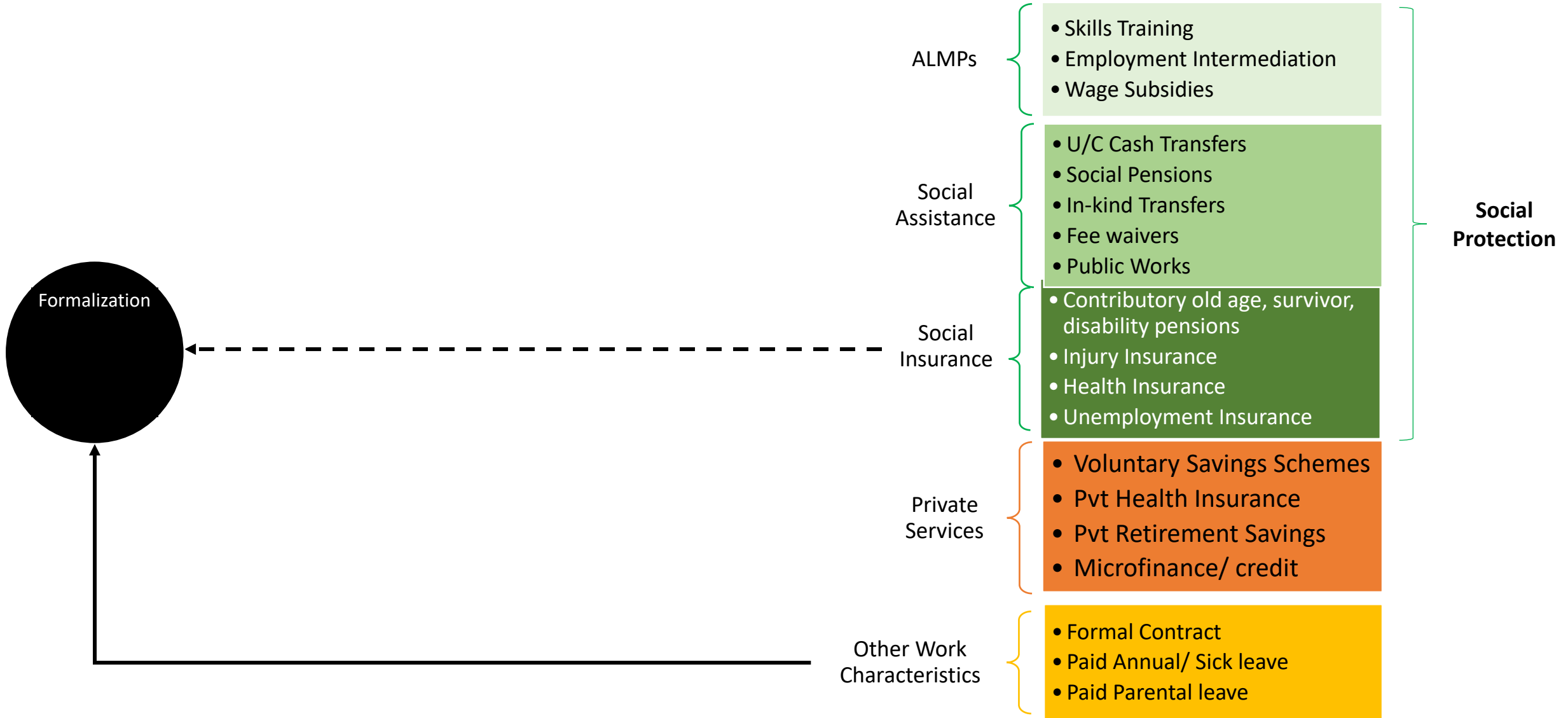
For your Interest, Attention, Questions, and Suggestions

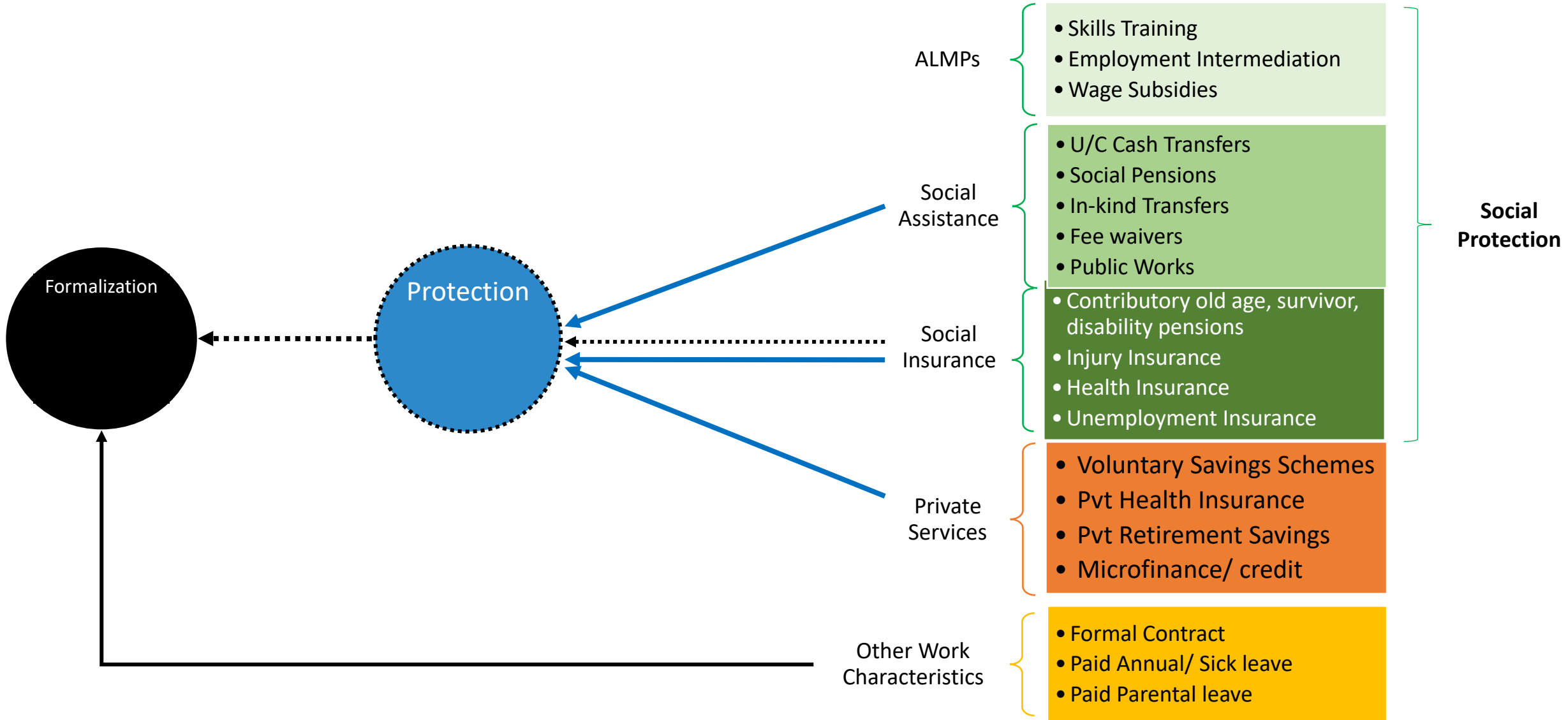
# Revisiting the links between Formalization, Protection, and Productivity

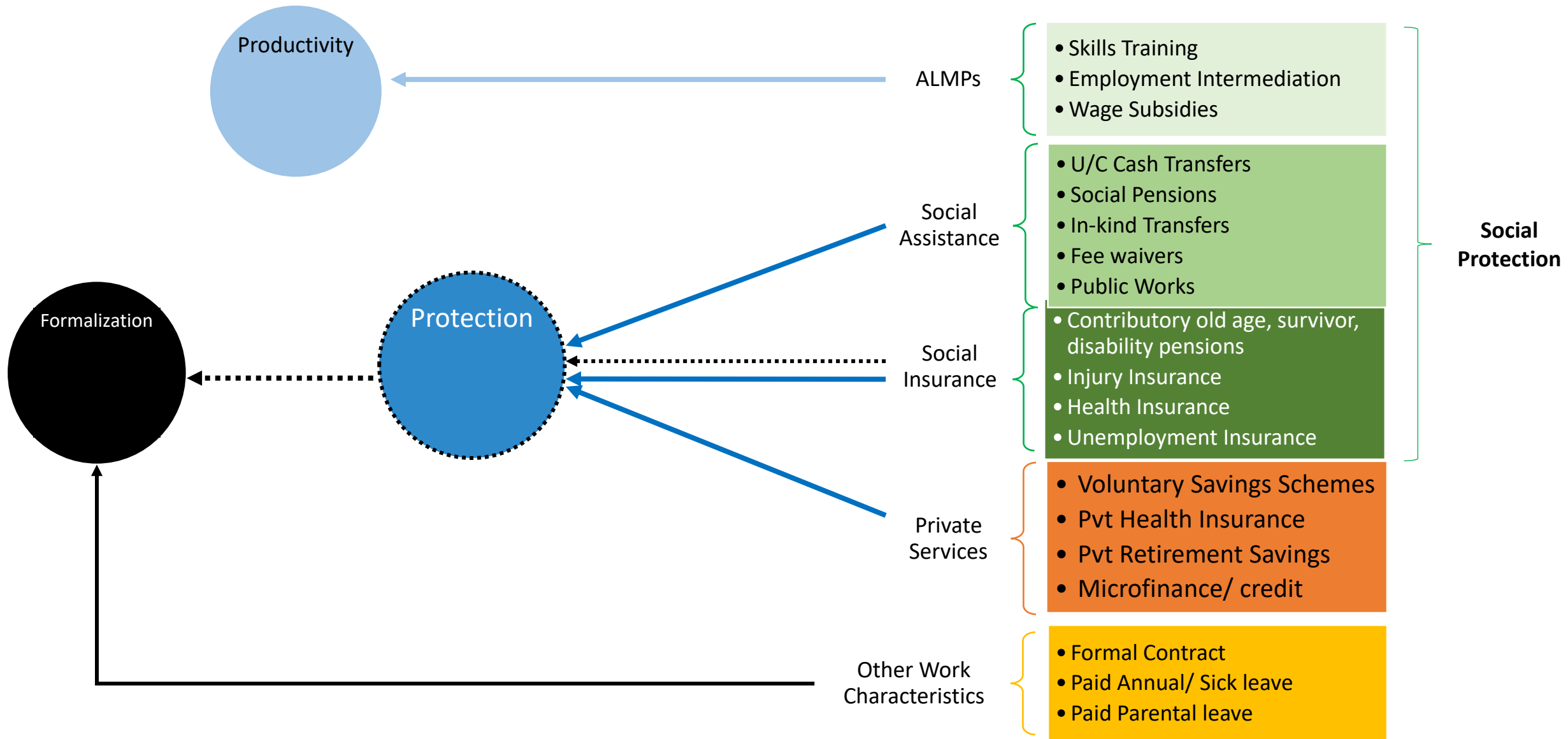
**A Conceptual Framework**

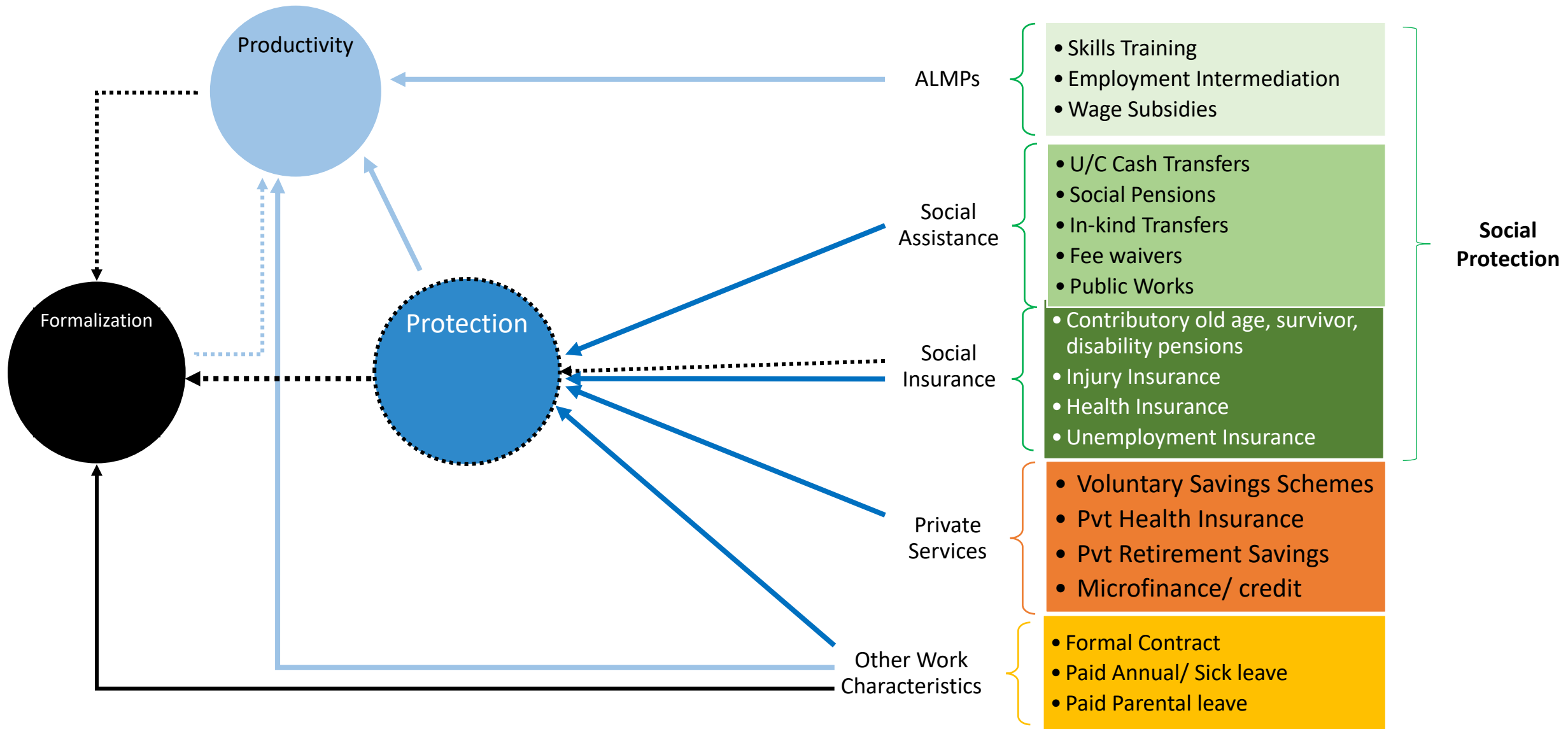


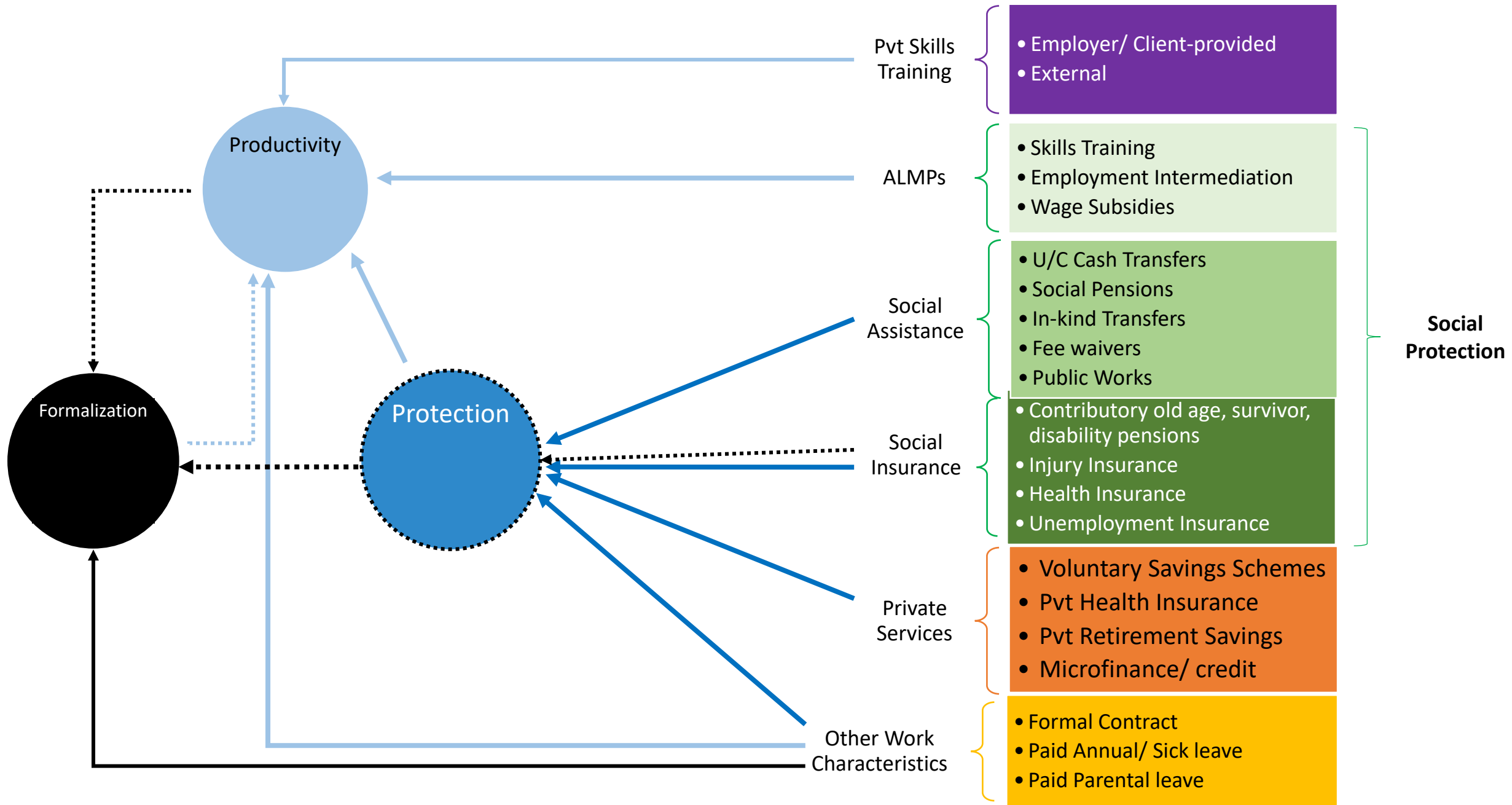


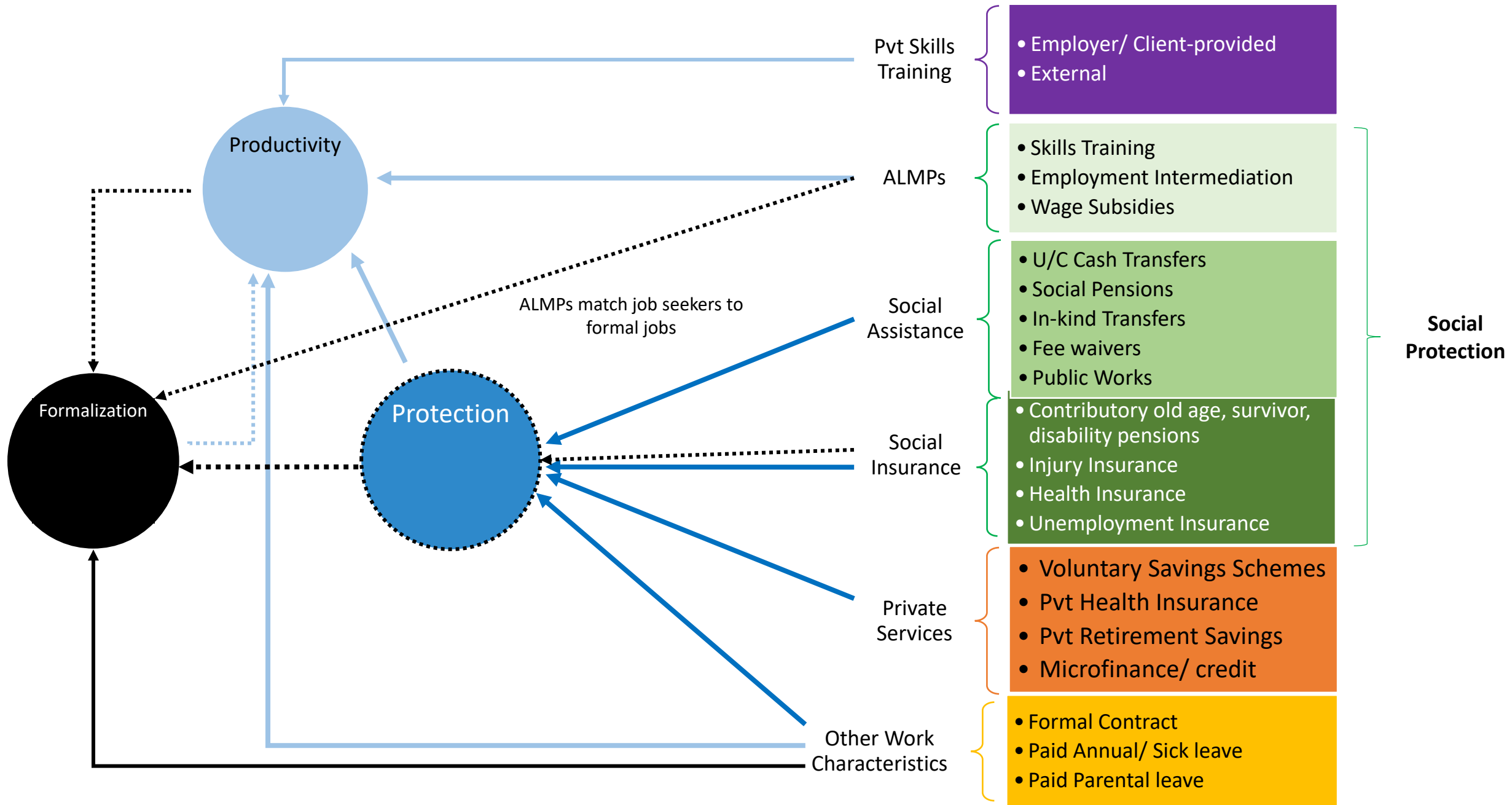






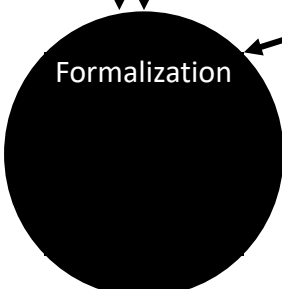
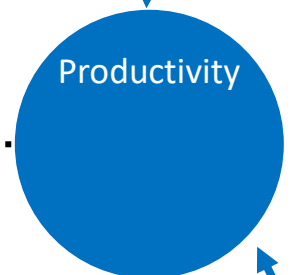






**Economy / Firm-level Policies**

- Economic Growth
- Pvt Sector development
- SME finance
- Tax level / complexity
- Law Enforcement



Pvt Skills Training

- Employer/ Client-provided
- External

ALMPs

- Skills Training
- Employment Intermediation
- Wage Subsidies

Social Assistance

- U/C Cash Transfers
- Social Pensions
- In-kind Transfers
- Fee waivers
- Public Works

Social Insurance

- Contributory old age, survivor, disability pensions
- Injury Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Unemployment Insurance

Private Services

- Voluntary Savings Schemes
- Pvt Health Insurance
- Pvt Retirement Savings
- Microfinance/ credit

Other Work Characteristics

- Formal Contract
- Paid Annual/ Sick leave
- Paid Parental leave

**Social Protection**

