### Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash Transfers - Update #31 (25 - 31 October 2020)

**Highlights from the week of 25 - 31 October 2020**

**Recent webinars and events:** CalP’s second of five webinars on the topic of Minimum Expenditure Baskets (MEB) was held last week. The webinar addressed: “Health expenditures: what and how to include in MEB?”. You can watch the recording [here](#).

- CGDEV’s webinar on [COVID-19 Payments: Managing risks, ensuring women’s inclusion, and communicating clearly](#) looked at how governments and humanitarian agencies can manage the risks associated with COVID-19 response payments, ensure women’s inclusion, and improve communication with recipients.
- You can find the recording of the webinar hosted by DFAT, UNPRD and UNICEF which presented the diversity of disability-related costs and the role of different methods used to assess them [here](#). Practices of accounting for disability costs in the design of mainstream social protection schemes as well as how low and middle-income countries can progressively build the combination of cash transfers, concessions, and services needed to address them were presented.

**Informal and on-line discussions:** Online chats this week were fairly quiet but informally, social protection and humanitarian actors were considering best approaches to data management during the pandemic, with large numbers of new recipients in need of support and systems struggling to include them in a timely way. Whether it is the data management platforms that are the issue or the people who manage them was a question raised, acknowledging that no matter how much we’d like them to, data management systems will unlikely be able to everything we want them to.

**Recently published: Articles/Blogs/Research/Guidance/Discussion threads/Policy briefs**

**Publications:** UNICEF has published its [Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action](#) which include commitments in relation to humanitarian cash and for the first time, in relation to social protection. One of the benchmarks included in the commitments is “Coordination between the social protection and the humanitarian cash coordination systems is established and functional”.

- ACAPS has released two reports to help support adaption of humanitarian interventions to the pandemic. The first one covers livelihood issues in relation to gender and the second, health and protection issues in relation to gender. Both reports can be found [here](#).
- The Center for Global Development’s recent lessons learned report on [digital cash transfers for stranded migrants - Bihar’s COVID-19 assistance programme](#) highlights a number of drawbacks and successes of the response which was designed to target the “new poor”, using digital mechanisms and platforms to identify, on-board and transfer social assistance remotely. Within a matter of weeks, the programme had managed to reach some 2 million recipients.
- A recent study by The World Bank and GFDRR - Adaptive Social Protection – the Delivery Chain and Shock Response - highlights the growing interest among governments, development and humanitarian policymakers and practitioners in understanding how to make use of and enhance social protection programmes and systems to build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households through adapting social protection approaches. Although not drawing on COVID-19 responses, the paper provides real examples of where successful adaptations have been made in relation to assessment, enrolment, delivery, grievance and exit, all of which are relevant for today’s pandemic-related adaptations and interventions.
- Focused primarily on social protection responses to the pandemic, a new study entitled “Reinvigorating the Social Contract and Strengthening Social Cohesion: Social Protection Responses to Covid-19” provides some examples of where national social protection systems were inadequate and humanitarian cash interventions have stepped in to fill urgent gaps. [Somalia](#) and [Iraq](#) are given as examples. The paper also stresses concern over the absence of social protection systems in some extremely fragile countries such as the Central African Republic and Yemen.

**Guidance:** On behalf of the [Yemen](#) Cash and Markets Working Group (CMWG), CashCap has shared a Working Paper on the: [Yemen currency crisis and the correlation with markets](#). Developed by the ‘Currency Exchange Technical Working Group’ (a sub working group of the CMWG) it seeks to map and analyze currency fluctuations in Yemen since 2016, identify the key drivers of these currency changes, and assess to what extent the changes have impacted the prices of basic goods.

- MicroSave Consulting highlights important lessons in relation to awareness, communication and outreach in order to ensure an effective communications strategy for cash transfers and social protection programmes. With a focus on COVID-19 payments and managing risks, ensuring women’s inclusion, and communicating clearly the presentation also covers strategies to communicate clearly in times of crisis in a [Framework for Strategic Communication](#), a tool for governments and relief agencies committed to optimizing their communication with G2P recipients. Find the presentation [here](#).

**Research:** This recent research article by Boniface Owino provides useful detail on the technical and political economy challenges of harmonizing data systems in Somalia, exploring the issues of linking humanitarian cash to government systems. “Harmonising data systems for cash transfer programming in emergencies in Somalia”.

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**The Grand Bargain Sub-Group on Linking Humanitarian Cash & Social Protection**

**Linking humanitarian cash and social protection for an effective cash response to the COVID-19 pandemic - Weekly Update**

**Online community SP in Crisis Contexts**
The Grand Bargain Sub-Group on  
LINKING HUMANITARIAN CASH & SOCIAL PROTECTION

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Programmes and Operations: In Jordan, WFP’s country brief provides an operational update on its HCT for refugees as well as its technical support to the National Aid Fund which has expanded its social protection assistance for Jordanian nationals. You can find the update here.

- In Kenya a UN-led cash and nutrition project is underway to avert the hunger crisis brought on by COVID-19. In conjunction with the local authorities, WFP has initiated the roll-out of an emergency cash programme in favour some 400,000 urban poor in locations badly affected by the pandemic. The programme aims to complement existing social protection programmes.
- DFAT has released its COVID Response Plan for Bangladesh which includes assistance to reform the systems underpinning the National Social Security Strategy, to ensure support reaches the most vulnerable.

Financing: This factsheet from Development Initiatives presents updated analysis on humanitarian assistance being provided to meet needs emerging from the pandemic. It looks at who is receiving assistance, where it is coming from, and how funding is being channelled. It also looks at UN appeal coverage and how the requirements met for the response to the pandemic compare with proportions met for other crises. Read more here.

- ILO’s paper Financing gaps in social protection: Global estimates and strategies for developing countries in light of the COVID-19 crisis and beyond considers five policy areas of the social protection floor (SPF): children; maternity; disability; old age; and health care. The paper provides updated regional and global estimates of the costs and financing gaps for targets 1.3 and 3.8 of the SDGs relating to social protection and health care in 2020 and projections of incremental financial needs for reaching universal coverage in 2030. The paper analyses options for filling these financing gaps in developing countries during the crisis and beyond, using domestic and external resources, including the strengthening and expansion of contributory systems.
- The EU has announced a support package of Euro 39m for nutrition and social protection in Malawi as part of Team Europe’s response to the pandemic. Read more here.

Media, News Articles and Op Eds: This OpEd by Shameran Abed for Devex News talks of the long shadow of COVID-19 on extreme poverty as the pandemic threatens to undo years of progress in poverty eradication while exacerbating preexisting inequalities and exposing the fragility of our systems.

- The Grand Bargain’s country brief provides an operational update on its HCT for refugees as well as its technical support to the National Aid Fund which has expanded its social protection assistance for Jordanian nationals. You can find the update here.

Blogs: Arshi Aadij and Abhishek Jain’s blog highlights how nations worldwide have responded to the pandemic with over 1,000 social protection programmes but that recipients are often unaware of the programmes and do not know how to access funds. The blog provides examples of the importance of “how improving strategic communications can boost the impact of social protection programmes”.

- Although not focused on HCT and SP, the recent blog by Prithvi Iyer for the Observer Research Foundation, highlights a number of critical challenges for humanitarian aid in the COVID-19 age, focusing on the significant cuts in funding for ongoing humanitarian relief efforts and delays in non-COVID humanitarian responses.
- Writing for CaLP, Ruth McCormack’s recent blog stresses a number of key issues raised in the 2020 “State of the World’s Cash” report. The blog highlights the ability of HCT to be a driver to facilitate change, as seen in the current pandemic where opportunities to develop coherent approaches across the humanitarian-development nexus have been present, including through better linkages between HCT and social protection. You can access the blog here.
- Two blogs from SPACE look at the value of humanitarian and social assistance cash transfers and how much is enough. Among other issues, the blogs look at the discrepancies between HC and social assistance transfer values and managing the trade-off between coverage and adequacy during the pandemic. Find links to the blogs here and here.
- Writing for IDS, Arwa Khogali’s recent blog tells us how the COVID-19 crisis presented an opportunity for initiating a new contract between Sudanese people and their government and laid the foundation for establishing a coherent social protection system in Sudan. Read more here.

Mapping Updates

- SP/humanitarian cash links mapping (GB cash sub group initiative): This can be accessed here. The purpose of this live, shareable mapping is to support humanitarian actors in the field. It is light touch and the initial focus is countries/regions that have Humanitarian Response Plans. The mapping has been developed in coordination with other mapping initiatives. Contact Lois Austin (KML consultant for the GB Cash Workstream sub group on Linking Humanitarian Cash and Social Protection) for info/to set up a call. And please do go ahead and add missing information from your country/region into the mapping in order to ensure that it is a helpful tool for practitioners.
- ILO Social Protection Monitor: This live tracking presents the latest global social protection policy trends based on media announcements. The monitor is updated weekly.
- The IMF Policy Responses to COVID-19 Tracker provides a summary of the key economic responses that governments are taking to limit the human and economic impact of the pandemic providing information which is of relevance to humanitarian and development actors, particularly in the design and modification of their COVID-19-related responses.
The context of COVID-remote gathering

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- The Oxford COVID-19 Supertracker is an online platform established to help policy-makers around the world to navigate the policy responses to tackling the pandemic, and its aftermath around the world. The Oxford ‘Supertracker’ project has compiled data from over 100 sources and made it freely available within one tool.

- The COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker monitors policy measures enacted by governments worldwide to tackle the COVID-19 crisis, and highlights responses that have integrated a gender lens. It includes national measures that are directly addressing women’s economic and social security, including unpaid care work, the labour market and violence against women. The tracker is coordinated by UNDP with substantive leadership and technical contributions from UN Women.

Regular and Ongoing Resources

- Socialprotection.org continues to host a space on social protection responses to #COVID19 which provides access to a series of events, newsletters, mappings etc. In addition, the website hosts a number of online communities including one specifically focused on social protection in crisis contexts. Here, as one of the community resources, you can find a page dedicated to the Grand Bargain cash workstream sub-group on linking HCT and SP which will give you links to this newsletter and more.

- CaLP has a dedicated space on CVA and COVID-19: resources, guidance, events and questions and CaLP-produced guidance on CVA considerations for COVID. (including a section specific to SP/HCTs).

- The Cash Hub (hosted by the British Red Cross) has developed a number of tip sheets on delivering CVA and advocating for the use of CVA in response to COVID-19. Whilst targeted towards Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the resources can be adapted to the needs and approaches of other organisations. They can be found here in English and Spanish.

- The Cash Hub platform also provides quarterly updates which provide a useful consolidation of CVA-related topics. Subscribe by clicking on this link.

- A multi-country cash transfer research initiative – the Transfer Project – provides a quick-access round-up of COVID-19 related resources click here

- Resources: Excellent resources that have been developed by SPACE (the DFID/GIZ Social Protection Approaches to COVID team) can be found in this useful twitter thread by Valentina Barca. The resources can all be found on SP.org.

- CCD has a page on Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash which includes country case studies and guidance.

- SP/HCT Hangout: This weekly informal hangout via Zoom, hosted by Zehra Rizvi and Cecile Cherrier provides the opportunity for practitioners from across the globe to raise questions and share experience in an open and supportive environment. Details are provided below.

- Foundational webinars: The first webinar from GB cash sub group series to demystify the concept of linking social protection and HCT; good introduction and primer to the topic. Second: How can SP Systems respond to the COVID 19 crisis? sets the scene on how SP systems can respond and the challenges governments are facing; recording here. And thirdly, Lessons learned and Opportunities: Linking SP systems to humanitarian cash in a pandemic. Includes examples within the context of COVID for measures to link SP/HCT.

- ALNAP’s COVID-19 Response Portal is a great place to access guidelines; tools; and papers in relation to the pandemic.

- REACH COVID-19 Information Thread – provides data and analysis, primarily for humanitarians (but also of relevance for other actors), on the impact of COVID-19 on affected populations.

- Groupe URD has set up a “real-time evaluation observatory” in order to produce synthesis reports, analysis and recommendations in relation to the COVID-19 crisis. The observatory takes lessons from previous years’ analysis of epidemics and explores different components of the current pandemic. Access the observatory here.

- Click the link to access Ugo Gentilini’s Weekly Social Protection Links newsletter. Packed with valuable information, focusing on social protection developments and action across the globe but also referencing humanitarian action where relevant, the newsletter is a helpful resource for practitioners and policymakers alike.

Looking Ahead – Webinars/Events during the week 25 - 31 October 2020

Just two webinars relevant to COVID-19 and HC/SP links this week:

- The first is on Tuesday and hosted by Sphere. The focus is on humanitarian standards during the pandemic, looking back at good practice and technical guidance over recent months.

- On Wednesday the Cash Hub will hold a webinar on monitoring in relation to Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA). In particular, the event will look at outcome indicators, the importance of better expenditure monitoring, recent work on well-being indicators, and the Turkish Red Crescent will share their practice on running remote focus group discussions.

- Also on Wednesday is the informal hangout hosted by Zehra Rizvi and Cecile Cherrier. This weekly remote gathering provides the opportunity to seek advice from peers or just let off steam about HC/SP issues that are on your mind.

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<td>Tuesday 3 November</td>
<td>Humanitarian Standards Matter - COVID-19: local and global perspectives Register here</td>
<td>Sphere</td>
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<td>Wednesday 4 November</td>
<td>Monitoring CVA Join here Password: redcross Meeting number: 163 948 0936 (10:00 Geneva/17:00 Kuala Lumpur/21:00 Suva)</td>
<td>Cash Hub</td>
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<td>Wednesday 4 November</td>
<td>Weekly SP/HCT Hangout 11.00 NY/ 16.00 UK/ 18.00 Amman - Join here</td>
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**Looking further ahead**

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<td>Tuesday 10 November</td>
<td>Launch of the State of the World’s Cash Report 2020 (French) Register here</td>
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Contributions: With thanks to Calum McLean; Ludovico Carraro; Simon Little; Graham Wright; Heidi Patmore; Christina Dankmeyer; Zehra Rizvi; Astrid de Valon; Ruth McCormack; Boniface Owino; Shameran Abed; Thomas Byrnes; Prithvi Iyer; Arwa Khogali; Arshi Aadil and Abhishek Jain

Please email gbsubgroupspshct@gmail.com and/or Cecile Cherrier for feedback/amendments/contributions. You can also join the CaLP d groups, and/or the SP.org Online Community for Social Protection in Crisis Contexts (joining instructions below) where many of these discussions are taking place.

**HOW TO JOIN THE ONLINE COMMUNITY ON ‘SOCIAL PROTECTION IN CRISIS CONTEXTS’**

1. Become a member of socialprotection.org: https://goo.gl/VYCajT
2. Join the online community on ‘Social protection in crisis contexts’: https://goo.gl/aRzVqb

Your feedback is important; it allows us to iteratively tailor the newsletter to your needs and to make decisions on what KML products are needed/useful.

_This newsletter is an initiative of the Grand Bargain Cash Sub-Group on linking Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash Transfers which is an inclusive space consisting of humanitarian and development actors from a wide range of agencies. It is co-led by IFRC, UNICEF and FCDO and the Online Community for Social Protection in Crisis Contexts which is an unbranded, member-based online space on the socialprotection.org platform._