Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash Transfers - Update #37 (6 - 19 December 2020)

Highlights from 6 - 19 December 2020

Recent webinars and events:

- The Cash Hub’s recent webinar which was organised in partnership with the newly launched Anticipation Hub held an interesting discussion on Cash and Voucher Assistance and Early Action. During the webinar, the Kenya Red Cross presented on a recent drought response, and the Bangladesh Red Crescent presented on a recent flood response. Challenges, lessons learned, and the work required to get to the point of delivering cash assistance pre-crisis rather than post-crisis were also discussed. You can find the recording: here. You can find more on this topic at this link: Forecast Based Financing Manual – Cash-based Early Actions.
- The recent webinar which saw the launch of the newly published book by Usha Mishra Hayes - Social Protection- Lands of Blossoming Hope - brought together key practitioners and thinkers to discuss the book and its lessons for practice. The book and the webinar focus on action and reflection and linking practice to policy.
- You can find the recording of IPA’s webinar on the digitization of cash assistance in Colombia during the COVID-19 pandemic here. The webinar saw the presentation of findings from one of the first randomized evaluations of a digital cash transfer programme during the pandemic in Colombia. This research explores the impacts of cash transfers on a range of outcomes such as financial health, food access and security, and political attitudes. Data on the impact of digitization on recipient behaviour during quarantine, barriers to new technology adoption by recipients, and implications for the digitization of future cash transfer programmes were also presented.
- INCLUDE held the third session of its 2020 Platform Meeting with members, special guests and experts from various fields. The session aimed to understand the changing perspectives of African policy stakeholders on social protection (SP) and specifically cash transfers as a policy instrument to mitigate COVID-19 short-term income losses and promote the reduction of poverty and inequality post-COVID-19, with some stimulating conclusions. You can find access the findings: here. The session on the COVID-19 research programme contained insights into differences in policy formulation and implementation during the crisis and observations about groups left behind. The extent of learning and reorientation within African policy making over the course of this year was also discussed, as well as the importance of trust in driving policy outcomes.

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

Publications: A new paper, commissioned by GIZ’s Sector Initiative Social Protection and compiled for the Social Protection Interagency Collaboration Board (SPIAC-B) considers whether the risks to privacy and personal data that are associated with the use of digital technology can be successfully overcome in order that such technology can be safely used in social protection systems in low and middle-income countries. Read more here.

- The findings of UNICEF’s study titled: How Effective are Cash Transfers in Mitigating Shocks for Vulnerable Children? Evidence on the impact of the Lesotho Child Grant Programme on multidimensional deprivation draws from the experience in Lesotho and highlights the importance of designing social protection programmes which include a shock-coping component which takes into account gender and labour-constrained households.
- The World Bank’s 14th edition of the global social protection response “living paper” is out. The 578-page report provides a summary of trends and country-level briefs as well as an accompanying Excel database. One of the points highlighted was that the duration of COVID-19 cash transfer programmes has been short, being provided for an average of 3.3 months. Out of the 429 cash programmes recorded, only 32 were extended for an additional period of time.
- Together with Development Pathways, Oxfam has released a research report - Shelter from the Storm - which reviewed government programmes used to inject additional money to help those affected by the pandemic in low and middle-income countries. It found none of them were adequate to meet everyone’s needs. Oxfam is calling for a Global Fund for Social Protection to avert a huge increase in global inequality and poverty, a keystone toward a more equal and resilient post-COVID economy. In addition, the report calls for increased quality of international aid in the form of new additional aid money, so as not to divert existing aid budgets away from other important humanitarian and development needs.
- Looking at Ethiopia, a recent SPACE paper aims to understand what the economic gains could have been of the COVID-19 social protection and humanitarian response, primarily focusing on the country’s Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Among other important issues, the findings suggest that investment in models that can deliver a timely response, complemented by longer term resilience, is critical for delivering effectiveness gains. Crisis financing, shock responsive social protection systems, complemented by delivery via networks of local actors and cash delivery, are fundamentally required. You can find the paper here.
- UNICEF has published a number of technical notes highlighting the social protection response to COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean. A brief synopsis of the notes and links to access them are provided here: Technical note 1: (English and Spanish). This constitutes the first mapping and analysis of the measures implemented in Latin American and
Caribbean countries in response to the impacts of COVID-19. It highlights the importance of adapting social protection systems to respond to this crisis as well as the context of the region prior to COVID and the most affected groups. It also provides reflections regarding the observed response measures. **Technical note 2:** The focus here is on social assistance ([English](https://www.oxfam.org/en) and [Spanish](https://www.oxfam.org/es)). This document reviews the social protection measures implemented by the Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries to respond to the socioeconomic effects of the COVID-19, updating the first edition. It presents the context, estimating the possible impact of this crisis on economic growth and poverty in the region; systematizes the social protection measures taken for the economic emergency; and provides a detailed analysis of the particular response in the social assistance component, with a focus on cash transfers and school feeding programs. **Technical note 3:** focusing on social security and the labour market ([English](https://www.oxfam.org/en) and [Spanish](https://www.oxfam.org/es)). This third edition updates the general status of government responses to social protection and examines the social security and labor market measures that have been adopted in relation to the economic slowdown and the upsurge in unemployment in the region.

- OECD’s brochure on the 2020 food and nutrition crisis in the Sahel and West Africa provides an analysis of responses undertaken – for example Niger’s response to COVID-19 which saw an extension of social safety nets in the form of monetary transfers to households suffering from the effects of the pandemic (through an adaptive social protection programme) – and looks at lessons that can be learned from the multiplicity of problems that caused the crisis with the aim of informing stakeholders to help reduce the risk of future crises. You can find the brochure: [here](https://www.oecd.org).
- **Financing:** IOM and UNHCR have launched a $1.4 billion appeal and response plan to respond to the Venezuela refugee and migrant crisis which has strained the capacity of Latin American and Caribbean countries to look after Venezuelan nationals. The appeal includes support for USD 183 million for multipurpose cash (MPC) transfers in the coming year. In addition, following the results from a regional survey which shows that promoting linkages between humanitarian assistance and social protection systems is a key priority for partners, the Regional Cash Working Group (CWG) will continue fostering dialogue and collaboration between national and sub-regional CWGs, and national authorities to strengthen those links, leveraging partners’ presence on the ground and long-standing work with social protection systems, to increasingly support them to assist Venezuelan refugees and migrants with cash assistance. The Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RRMP) can be found [here](https://www.rrmp2020.org).
- **Blogs:** Writing for Oxfam, Kristin Smart’s blog - **A Locally Shaped Future for CVA** – highlights the ongoing sidelining of local and national humanitarian actors with regard to cash and voucher assistance funding flows and inclusion and participation in global fora. The four key takeaway messages from a recent panel event by the Grand Bargain cash workstream local partnership group held to discuss the topic are: Local actors and partnerships facilitate informed, adaptable and cost-effective responses for those affected by crises; 2. Local actors are at the centre of CVA delivery and the forefront of risk, particularly in the context of COVID-19; Lack of equal participation in decision-making forums and clarity on cash coordination continue to challenge local actors and their ability to respond effectively; Partners are still viewed as ‘implementors’ that need ‘capacities’ to deliver.
- Sayanti Sengupta’s blog for the Cash Hub - **Beyond the Pandemic, towards Climate Emergencies: Learnings from National Societies on linkages with Social Protection** – discusses how the pandemic has accelerated linkages between National Societies and governments, with stronger collaborations to adapt and expand coverage of cash and social protection interventions. Key insights include that cash preparedness of Red Cross and Red Crescent national societies, which is often determined by availability of funds, established transfer channels, accessible distribution points and engaged community actors, is important to complement government schemes and extend support rapidly during climate emergencies. In addition, while social protection can go beyond cash and voucher assistance, cash transfers remain a tried and tested mechanism that is often favoured by governments and can be delivered rapidly and on scale.
- Ugo Gentilini shares with us his favourite cash transfer papers from the last year in his latest blog, helpfully broken down by theme. You can find it: [here](https://www.uogentilini.org/).
- Oxfam’s blog, “From Poverty to Power”, (link [here](https://www.oxfam.org)) shares highlights from the latest episode of the New Humanitarian’s “Transforming Humanitarianism” podcast entitled Money! Money! Money. The link to the podcast, which includes an interesting discussion on digital cash transfers can be found [here](https://www.oxfam.org/).
- Writing from St. Lucia, Tara Morris tells us how, through extended government social protection programmes, cash top-ups have been a lifeline for families during the COVID-19 crisis. You can find the blog here: [here](https://www.oxfam.org/).
- Gabrielle Smith offers **Five practical insights on linking humanitarian assistance and social protection** designed to guide humanitarian practitioners on how this can be achieved.
- Following a webinar earlier this year, Camila Pereira’s blog provides a summary of the discussion on **Social Protection Responses to COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities for Urban Environments in Sub-Saharan Africa** (in French). The summary highlights how the Tosika Fameno, a multi-sector and unconditional transfer of funds in Madagascar, was directed to the most vulnerable families in urban areas, such as informal workers, single parents and people with disabilities.
Online community SP in Crisis Contexts

Videos: CARE and Women's Refugee Commission and local organizations Fundacion Quimera, Fundacion Maria Amor in Ecuador show how the use of cash transfers for survivors of gender-based violence is both feasible and appropriate in this video. The video can be found in Spanish: [here](#) and in French: [here](#).

Regular and Ongoing Resources and Mappings

There are a number of regular and ongoing resources, including mappings, related to linking humanitarian cash and social protection which can be found: [here](#).

Looking Ahead – Webinars/Events during coming weeks 20 December 2020 – mid January 2021

The coming weeks are quiet as far as remote events go. On Wednesday 13 January ODI, in partnership with Irish Aid, will be hosting a half-day conference which will bring together experts, leaders, activists and policy makers, to discuss a pathway forward that places inequality and a new social contract at the front and centre of COVID-19 recovery efforts.

And on Wednesday 23rd and Wednesday 30th of December please do join Zehra Rizvi and Cecile Cherrier’s regular weekly informal hangout to discuss with peers any issues on social protection and humanitarian cash linkages that are on your mind.

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<th>DATES</th>
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<td>Wednesday 23 and 30 December</td>
<td>Weekly SP/HCT Hangout</td>
<td>Zehra Rizvi/Cecile Cherrier</td>
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<td>Wednesday 13 January 2021</td>
<td>Global Reset: time for a new social contract</td>
<td>ODI in partnership with Irish Aid</td>
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Please email [gbsubgroupspht@gmail.com](mailto:gbsubgroupspht@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.