Social Protection (SP) and Humanitarian Cash Transfers (HCT) Update #47 (26 April – 9 May 2021)

Highlights from 26 April – 9 May 2021

Recent webinars and remote events:

- During the recent Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week (HNPW) the Grand Bargain Sub-Group on linking HCT and SP collaborated with SPACE, Humanitarian Outcomes, UNICEF, WFP and UNOCHA to hold a panel discussion on social assistance in crises. The discussion focused on examining emerging evidence, policy and practice at the interface between humanitarian cash and social protection approaches in crises. The speakers at the panel discussion were Valentina Barca, Clare O Brien, Nupur Kukrety and the session was moderated by Paul Harvey. You can find the recording of the discussion here.
- The South Sudan Cash Working Group recently held a webinar to explore linkages between social protection and humanitarian cash in the country. You can find the video recording: here.
- The recording and slides from the IPC-IG and UNICEF webinar assessing global practices on the access of international migrants and their families to national social protection systems, aiming to inform the policy debate on extending social protection to international migrants in the MENA region, especially in Egypt can be found here.
- You can find the recording of EPRi’s recent webinar on “Digital Solutions for Social Protection Systems”: here.
- CaLP, UNHCR, NRC and SEEP recently held a webinar on Making Market Assessments Fit for Your Purpose. You can access the recording: here.

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

Publications and Research

- Following their virtually convened Global Humanitarian Policy Forum (GHPF) at the end of 2020, OCHA and the UN Foundation have published outputs from the discussions held in relation to the political, socio-economic, and security implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and how they might transform humanitarian action. Discussions included the need to address recovery, long-term needs and resilience, including through social protection and health and safety measures which must go hand in hand with humanitarian response. GHPF participants noted that building the resilience of local communities requires looking at the social contract, building trust in institutions, and scaling up support for marginalized groups in insecure places outside of capital cities. You can read the report here: A Case for Transformation? The Longer-Term Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- A recent paper by Development Pathways as part of the Inclusive Social Security Policy Forum "Shifting the Paradigm" series assesses the scope and adequacy of social protection responses to the COVID-19 crisis in the MENA region also covers the impact of the pandemic on humanitarian assistance in the region.
- UNICEF’s recent research report on Improving social protection for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers considers examples from Brazil, Turkey and Morocco to reach a number of conclusions including the need for partnership and alignment between humanitarian and government responses, with humanitarian action supporting development of national social protection systems.
- OCHA’s report – From Digital Promise to Frontline Practice: New And Emerging Technologies in Humanitarian Action – underscores some of the advantages and complex challenges and risks linked to the use of technology including for digital cash transfers. The report gives the example of inadequate data protection and privacy which risks causing harm, intensifying insecurities and hindering the principled delivery of humanitarian assistance. The report goes on to highlight that unequal connectivity, access to technology or digital literacy can exacerbate core vulnerabilities and intensify gender biases, while incomplete data sets about affected people can lead to digital discrimination.
- The SPACE team has produced a useful directory of social protection materials related to the pandemic which includes a section on the linkages between social protection and humanitarian cash.
- The International Social Security Association (ISSA) has analysed the efforts to address existing and new social security coverage gaps due to extensive labour market disruptions as a result of COVID-19: Ensuring social security coverage during COVID-19
- WIEGO has produced a series of briefs to analyse the Social Protection Responses to COVID-19, drawing from WIEGO’s own database, in order to support advocacy efforts to expand social protection to informal workers in this period of crisis. These briefs comprise country cases of measures to protect informal workers from risks from lockdowns and from the pandemic itself. These are not policy recommendations, but are instead tools to share initiatives and policies implemented in different parts of the world. You can find the briefs: here.
Clement Chipenda and Tom Tom’s report on Zimbabwe’s Social Policy Response to Covid-19: Temporary Food Relief and Cash Transfers describes how Zimbabwe’s social policy response to Covid-19 unfolded in a context of enduring socioeconomic and political crises. Its main instruments were temporary food relief and cash transfers, though it also included healthcare measures, an economic stimulus package, pension benefits, and “cushioning allowances”. The expansion of food relief and cash transfers was based on existing social protection programmes, and recipients were, at least in theory determined through means-testing and targeting. Local and international civil society organisations supported the government’s response.

Writing for the International Review of the Red Cross, Jo Burton explores how cash transfers have changed the way the humanitarian sector delivers assistance. The digitalisation of cash means that the simple click of a button can put money in the hands of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people within minutes. The article emphasizes that humanitarians need to articulate what “do no harm” means in the digital age, applying this equally to the way digital payments are used to support people affected by armed conflicts and other situations of violence. “Doing no harm” in the digital age: What the digitalization of cash means for humanitarian action.

The Cash Hub has shared a paper on Linking humanitarian cash and social protection - Learning from the experience of eight National Societies. The paper covers Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, Montserrat, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey where Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies collaborated with governments in the first few months of the pandemic to implement, enhance and scale up cash-based social protection schemes.

The Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe Regional Office for West and Central Asia has shared its evaluation of a five month project, Supporting Food Security Among Vulnerable Households in the Gaza Strip. The evaluation makes findings on a number of issues including the extent to which basic needs were met and modality preference.

The new G7 famine prevention and humanitarian crises compact includes commitments to ensure that funding is timely; multi-sector, including nutrition, health, including in support of sexual and reproductive health and rights, water and sanitation and protection as well as food assistance; gender, age and disability-sensitive; and in line with the Grand Bargain Commitments, especially those on localisation, cash programming and predictable and flexible funding, including for NGOs. In addition, the group committed to: support shock-responsive and social protection systems in more of the most vulnerable and conflict-affected countries, and enhance support to existing systems, including through strengthening the linkages between humanitarian assistance and national systems.

Guidance and Tools:

Given the need for concise, practical guidance for humanitarian actors on linking HCT to SP programmes and systems, CaLP is developing a ‘toolbox’ of key resources. The attached summary shows the scope of work, and the thematic areas for which they are seeking tools, templates, examples and guidance and contacts to lead us to those resources. If you have anything to share, please sent to Gaby Smith at gab.smithers@hotmail.com and/or Julie at julie.lawson-mcdowell@calpnetwork.org. The provisional deadline for collating materials is 31st May 2021.

The Northwest Syria CVA Risk and Mitigation Taskforce, under the umbrella of the Northwest Syria Inter-agency Cash Working Group, has developed a Northwest Syria Cash and Voucher Assistance Risk and Mitigation Matrix. It is a working document which outlines the key risks that can have an impact on Cash and Voucher Assistance programming in Northwest Syria and identifies mitigation measures that can help aid agencies address these risks.

Plan International has released Standard operating procedure for Food and cash distribution for vulnerable girls, women, boys and men IDPs in Sittwe, Rakhine state. The SOPs include advice on coordinating with the Department of Social Welfare.

News/Media/Op Eds

The Asian Development Bank has said that investment in health, education and social protection alongside deeper regional cooperation can help countries in the Asia Pacific region in achieving equitable recovery from the pandemic. You can find the article here.

In India, as the second wave of COVID-19 takes its toll, Bloomberg reports on the need for food, and cash transfers as the first line of defence.

In an interview published by McKinsey, Dr. Sania Nishtar, the prime minister’s special assistant on poverty alleviation and social protection explains How Pakistan tackled its largest-ever social-protection crisis.

Alex Ballard from the British Red Cross (BRC) offers his thoughts on the new emergency cash service: the UK Hardship Fund which BRC launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with the aim of providing nation-wide, short-term financial assistance to people who were struggling to meet their essential needs. The Fund offered a tool for British Red Cross and
Online community SP in Crisis Contexts

their partner charities to deliver short term direct cash assistance to people, all run through a centralised system at the British Red Cross. How partnerships and technology helped the British Red Cross reach the most vulnerable during COVID-19

Blogs, podcasts, discussions and videos

- Ferid Belhaj, writing for the World Bank, discusses: Social protection for all in need: Lessons from the COVID-19 response in MENA
- Writing for CEGA Anya Marchenko and Han Sheng Chia ask How “MobileAid” and machine learning-based targeting can complement existing social protections. They propose a new paradigm for delivering social protections, called MobileAid. This approach combines (1) machine learning-based targeting with (2) recipient self-enrollment and (3) contactless delivery via mobile money. They discuss the lessons learned from deploying MobileAid in Togo, and describe how governments and NGOs can use MobileAid to complement their existing social protection systems.

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.

You can also join the newly created social protection in crisis discussion group which is hosted by socialprotection.org here: discussion group (joining instructions are here)

UNDP and UN Women launched the update of their Covid-19 Global Gender Response Tracker

Looking Ahead – Webinars/Events during the coming weeks: 9 - 17 May 2021

Over the next two weeks you can sign up to attend the following events:

- On Tuesday 11 May you can join the East Africa Regional CWG Meeting. The agenda includes a round of updates from national CWGs in the region highlighting their current projects and priorities, a presentation and discussion of the feedback obtained from consultations on the work of the Regional CWG to date, and setting of priorities for the coming year, including possible areas of research.
- On Wednesday 12 May, the Digital Frontiers Institute is hosting an interactive webinar at which highlights from the recent GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation report will be shared. The event will include representatives from Concern Burundi, Cassava Fintech Burundi and Ground Truth Solutions, who will discuss human-centred design methodology, how user perspectives can be used to improve humanitarian cash programming, and how these findings are being implemented in Burundi.
- Also on Wednesday 12 May, OECD is hosting a webinar focusing on data and digital technologies for social protection in times of COVID-19.
- On Thursday 20 May REDLAC and the Regional Cash Working Group-R4V invite key actors in social protection and cash transfer responses such as National Governments, UN Organizations, National and International NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Civil Society Organizations to collectively learn how to identify these linkages in practice, and open the dialogue on challenges and opportunities. The event will be held in Spanish with simultaneous translation into English.

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<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>Organiser/Host</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 11</td>
<td>East Africa Regional CWG meeting</td>
<td>CaLP</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 12</td>
<td>Human-Centred Design and Humanitarian Cash Programming</td>
<td>Digital Frontiers Institute</td>
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<td>Thursday 20</td>
<td>Regional learning event &quot;Linking cash and voucher assistance with social protection systems&quot;</td>
<td>REDLAC and the Regional Cash Working Group-R4V</td>
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**Online community SP in Crisis Contexts**

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<tr>
<th>Wednesday 12 and 19 May</th>
<th>Weekly SP/HCT Hangout</th>
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**Looking further ahead:**

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<th>Tuesday 18 May</th>
<th>Social safety nets in MENA: Through COVID-19 and beyond</th>
<th>Chatham House</th>
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<th>Tuesday 1 June</th>
<th>Social Protection and Inequality in a Pandemic: Evidence from Ghana</th>
<th>Northwestern University</th>
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<th>Tuesday 8 June</th>
<th>Eastern Africa Regional CWG Meeting on CVA for Health Outcomes: towards a regional action plan</th>
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<td>For more information, please click: <a href="#">here</a></td>
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**Contributions:** With thanks to Anya Marchenko, Han Sheng Chia, Alex Ballard, Valentina Barca, Ferid Belhaj, Jo Burton, Pauline Perez and Ugo Gentilini.

Please email [gbsubgroupshct@gmail.com](mailto:gbsubgroupshct@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](https://goo.gl/VYCajT)
2. Join the online community on ‘Social protection in crisis contexts’ : [https://goo.gl/aRzVqb](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.*