

## Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash Transfer Links - Update #06 (04 to 10 May 2020)

### Highlights this week

- **Newsletter; now co-produced with [SP.org Online Community \(OC\): social protection in crisis contexts](#)**
  - As readers of the newsletter may know, the GB cash sub group collaborates with SP.Org and the Online Community (OC) on social protection in crisis contexts in particular on knowledge management; the purpose of this collaboration has been to bridge the divide between the two sets of practitioners (humanitarian and social protection). *We are pleased to cement this further and the newsletter is now a joint production of the online community and the GB cash sub group.* The newsletter will seek to highlight more experiences from the SP angle; the focus has been on social assistance but will also look at social insurance and labour markets (which are connected to humanitarian cash such as Cash for Work (CFW) programmes, sectoral top ups (education, livelihoods, protection) or income support programming etc.
- **[Joint Donor Statement on Humanitarian Cash Transfers in response to COVID 19](#). May 5<sup>th</sup>.** Prepared by the Donor Cash Forum, including the EU (DG ECHO), Denmark, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, this paper is intended to serve as a basis for engagement with our partners on how they deliver cash programmes and alignment of our funding and engagement, where appropriate.
- **Good practice: [UNHCR has produced a short note on emerging practice in cash responses to COVID](#).** Adjustments have been made to programming from contactless biometrics, repurposing of funds, pre-paying funds or changes to the MEB. There are also examples of working with government safety nets and coordinating/supporting government caseloads through referrals.
- **The knowledge gaps in linking SP/HCT** (light touch and gathered from various sources):
  - The gaps highlighted in previous newsletters remain (leadership, coordination, delivery, joint funding, the need for hum and dev actors to understand how each side functions). *New:* the question coming up in different fora; where is the space for the 'nexus'? Discussing joint approaches within cash heavy groups is fine but where are the overall programmatic and joint working conversations happening/organised? Cash tends to bring these questions to the fore but it's a tool not a programme (a recurring theme in the humanitarian cash space over the last 15 or more years that the discussion starts with cash but is about wider programmatic and coordination issues).
  - **Capacity building:** Several solutions were highlighted last week and as agencies ramp up capacity building efforts with training/tools, we'd like to highlight two resources that can be incorporated to increase understanding of the topic specific to cash and then more broadly. The first is this [five-minute audio clip](#) from the Economist (and Nobel Prize Winner) Esther Duflo from 09 April, on governments using cash transfers to meet social protection needs especially in low income countries where staying home is not a luxury many can afford. She stops just short of using the words, 'shock responsive social protection' but refers to it as something she wishes she had advocated for harder. The next resource is useful for the international humanitarian actors and all SP actors as it has been indicated as a gap in knowledge for both: [15 minute interview](#) with the Director of the Cayman Disaster Management Agency, Danielle Coleman, explaining what the structure looks like and how it's been activated for COVID (and hurricane season)

### Articles/Blogs/Research

- **[ILO; Social protection responses to the COVID-19 crisis: Country responses and policy considerations](#). 23 April.** Although a bit out of date, this 8-page brief is an excellent breakdown of the effects of COVID along the social protection spectrum and what can be done about it using examples from the current responses. One of the key points states: *Governments, together with social partners and other stakeholders, should take this opportunity to strengthen their social protection systems, including floors, as a cornerstone of national social and economic policy architecture.*
- **[CaLP Blog; The \\$90Bn Question: Can we reach 700 million people in response to COVID-19?](#) 05 May.** The blog points out the importance of supporting and working with national systems where possible and the added value of humanitarian actors ensuring that coverage (especially for refugees and migrants) is adequate. It ends with the following key question: *The question we face is whether, in unprecedented times, we can work together – with one goal – to respond to the priorities of people in crisis. The nature and scale of this challenge requires us to shift our approaches to more collective action. Cross-sector, multi-stakeholder collaboration will best support large-scale change, which will mean planning and responding collectively, not as individual organisations. This does not mean everyone does everything or that we are all needed in each context. Rather, we need to commit to a shared goal, working out what is needed and who is best placed to achieve that goal in each situation.*
- **[Humanitarian Assistance and Social Safety Nets in Protracted Crises; A Case Study of Iraq](#).** Although this has been produced pre-COVID, it's a useful study in how working alongside World Bank and others, the humanitarian cash community has been working to link to a social safety net in Iraq as a longer term durable solution.

## 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's light touch. Initial focus is on countries/regions that have Humanitarian Response Plans. It is done in coordination with other mapping initiatives. **Update:** The mapping is mostly being used to bring actors around a table and explain possible linkages using current examples. It is not intended to be used to plan out programming but rather as an indicative source of potential programming and to start the conversation in country. Contact [Zehra](#) for info/set up a call.
- The [SP links weekly email](#) This lists the social protection programmes (social assistance, social insurance and labour markets) being expanded in response to COVID. We have included highlights across the SP spectrum this week (not just social assistance) as humanitarian cash transfers can look to support (or emulate) how governments are responding across the board not just with "multi-purpose cash assistance". (NB: *Anything italicised has been added by us to highlight relevancy to humanitarian action*).

**As of May 8, 2020**, a total of 171 countries (12 more since last week) have planned, introduced or adapted 801 social protection measures in response to COVID-19. This week's new countries and territories include Caribbean Netherlands, Cuba, Curacao, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Gabon, Gibraltar, Guernsey, Malta, Moldova, Slovakia and Zambia.

**Social assistance** transfers remain the most widely used class of interventions (60.7% of global responses). They are being adapted in interesting ways (*relevant for humanitarian actors to see if linkages are possible or indeed to adapt their own programming using this as evidence when a linkage is not possible*). Combined, those adaptations in social assistance benefit over 1.46 billion people (individuals). Specifically, for cash transfers **administrative adaptations** are occurring in 27 countries. For example, anticipation of payments that due at later date (e.g., Malaysia); flexibility in the time of collection (e.g., Algeria); home delivery of cash for seniors (e.g., Armenia); postponement of recertification (e.g., Georgia); waiving of conditionalities (e.g., Philippines); and sharing of delivery systems across programs (e.g., Jordan). Increases in benefits among preexisting programs are implemented in up to 37 countries, including transfer value being increased in 29 countries (e.g., Egypt) and additional payment cycles taking place in 11 countries (e.g., Chile) (some countries are doing both). ← *This can be an area to discuss increasing the Minimum Expenditure Basket for those places (esp MiCs) where humanitarian actors operate. Waiving of conditionalities is another example of good practice or decreasing the threshold of documentation needed to prove eligibility.*

In terms of **social insurance**, there has been a remarkable uptick in measures recently. Countries like Egypt have recently approved general increases, while several others have introduced selective top-ups in favor of the lower income pensioners (such as the cases of Serbia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka and Tunisia). Other countries, like Costa Rica, Colombia, Kosovo and Mexico, have decided to anticipate pension payments. Social security contributions have been waived or subsidized in 49 programs – a level equal to paid sick leave measures. Unemployment benefits are present in 61 cases.

The number of **labor market interventions** is almost triple digit. Wage subsidies continue to dominate those interventions. Together with wage subsidies, 15 countries are strengthening their active labor market programs, particularly intermediation services and skills training. This is the case, for example, in China, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

- The **IMF has a [policy tracker](#)**; it gives an overview of the COVID situation in country and lists out the fiscal, monetary/macro financial and exchange rate/balance of payments interventions being discussed or implemented.
- **NEW: [ILO country response tracker](#)**. This is excellent to go through and get the holistic picture of what is happening in each country they have updated data for. For example, for Turkey under other measures, it lists ILO support to the Humanitarian Response Plan.
- **Social registries:** Charlie Goldsmiths and Associates have [google.doc to crowd source](#) to map social protection information management systems (Sub Saharan Africa information only).
- The **WFP office in the Caribbean** has a [dashboard \(for the Caribbean\)](#) on what SP measures countries are taking.

## Resources Update

- [Socialprotection.org](#) has set up a space on [Social protection responses to #COVID19](#) with a whole series of events, newsletters, mappings etc. The [newsletter](#) is a great resource to be able to see what's being reported in your region/country. The [GB cash sub group has a dedicated community page on the OC: Social Protection in Crisis Contexts](#).

- **CaLP** has a dedicated space on [CVA and COVID-19: resources, guidance, events and questions](#) and [CaLP produced guidance on CVA considerations for COVID](#). (page 9 is specific to SP/HCTs). See also this [excellent and practical tool](#) to assess the linkages between HCT and SP.
- **CCD** has a page on [Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash](#) with country case studies and guidance.
- **NEW:** [Mercy Corps Tipsheet: CVA and social protection systems \(COVID-19\)](#) (31 March but new to this newsletter).
- **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.

#### Looking Ahead

DATES	ACTIVITY	Organiser
13 May	<b>Webinar:</b> Responsible digital payments during COVID; examples from Peru, Jordan and Ghana. 1400 GMT. <a href="#">Register here</a> .	Better than cash alliance
12 May	<b>Weekly SP/HCT Hangout</b> 0800 EDT. Join <a href="#">here</a> (passwd: 754170)	Zehra Rizvi/Cecile Cherrier
May	<b>Product:</b> Grand Bargain Cash Sub Group paper launched	GB cash sub group
19 May	<b>Webinar:</b> Winds of change: Lessons and recommendations on the use of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for the Caribbean Atlantic Hurricane Season). <a href="#">Register here</a> . 10 am EDT	CaLP Americas
21 May	<b>Webinar:</b> GB sub group series webinar “Linking SP and humanitarian CVA – what do we really know and where to start? Findings from the CaLP commissioned high level briefing paper at the time of COVID-19”. 8 am EDT. <a href="#">Register here</a> .	GB cash sub group/CaLP/GFFO

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Please email [gbsubgroupsphct@gmail.com](mailto:gbsubgroupsphct@gmail.com) 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://socialprotection.org): <https://goo.gl/VYCaIT>
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 DFID and the **Online Community for Social Protection in Crisis Contexts** which is an unbranded, member-based online space on the [socialprotection.org](https://socialprotection.org) platform.

