

Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash Transfer Links - Update #08 (18 to 24 May 2020)

Highlights this week

- **Grand Bargain Cash Sub Group on Linking Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash Transfers Statement:** The [one pager](#) (under key documents on the GB sub group page in the OC for SP in crisis contexts), lists key 'asks' of signatories to effectively mitigate the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. The signatories are asked to realise the Grand Bargain commitments to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response and 'leave no one behind'. The four actions are:
 1. Scale up the use of cash where appropriate, in both the humanitarian and social protection response, to meet the needs of people affected by COVID-19;
 2. Deliver humanitarian cash by using, linking or aligning with local and national social protection systems, where possible and appropriate;
 3. Rapidly undertake coordinated preparedness and planning to ensure cash can be used to best effect; and
 4. Partner with local and national organisations and reinforce capacities as needed, to support effective and timely implementation of a humanitarian cash response linked with social protection systems.
- **Good practice**
 - **The [SP links weekly email](#)** (summarised below each week), has a section on "how" countries are implementing social protection programs in response to Covid-19. The edition offers a special feature on [emerging delivery practices](#) in relation to cash transfer payments (Government to Person: G2P). This includes both global practices as well as country-level illustrations of how payments and digital cash transfers are being designed and implemented in 6 countries. Lessons to be learned here from Pakistan, Brazil, Ecuador, Colombia, Jordan and Peru. Relevant for humanitarian actors who are also looking for solutions on delivery with physical distancing requirements. It is recommended to read through the few pages of introductory materials in the document to also get the highlights on the [key messages on delivery](#): an ecosystem is needed, how governments are relaxing their own regulations and working with the private sector to simplify KYC requirements, increasing cash out options, how data security and protection is being addressed and how short term quick solutions with fewer requirements are being replaced with more involved options.
 - **Venezuela Regional Response:** The [Regional Response Plan](#) (RRMP) for Venezuela has been revised in light of COVID 19 with Multi Purpose Cash as the first section of the report. As the report states: *...national capacities and host communities are being stretched to a breaking point, and regional solidarity and political will are being challenged in the face of limited international support, particularly as the economic impact of the Coronavirus pandemic begins to be felt across the region. With State capacities under extreme pressure, social service provision at its limits and xenophobic trends on the rise, there is an urgent need to complement states' efforts to support host communities. Additional support is essential to meet both immediate, humanitarian needs and to address longer-term development gaps to facilitate the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and migrants as an opportunity for all.* This coming week there is a [virtual donor conference](#) with an emphasis on all actors being invited to the table (government, hum/dev international support). The [Covid flash update from 22 May](#) provides the headline news by country and how partners are working (often times with government) on the refugee response with the additional complication of COVID 19.
 - **Repurposing of Joint SDG Funds:** The Joint SDG Fund in the Caribbean is being repurposed for COVID 19. As per the statement released: *Given the unprecedented social and economic impacts of COVID-19, the programme is being repurposed to strengthen the governments' COVID-19 response. The global "Joint SDG Fund" is providing USD 3 million for this effort, with an additional USD 1.75 million contributions from all partner agencies - UNICEF, WFP, ILO, UNDP and UN Women. This UN intervention is supporting governments' COVID-19 response through: scaling up existing public assistance to increase both the reach and level of support offered to those who need it most; conducting assessments to assist in determining the indirect impacts of COVID-19; identifying those in need and respective response activities; and strengthening the National Insurance Scheme of Barbados to gauge the impacts on its financial sustainability, enhance its information management and monitoring capacity and facilitate public access and improve communication.*
 - **Jordan, [cash for government/ILO public works programme using humanitarian delivery platform \(Common Cash Facility\)](#).** The CCF was set up some years back by UNHCR to provide humanitarians working in cash a common delivery platform; excellent example of how it's now being used, as one of many mechanisms the Government of Jordan has deployed in order to reach those who need assistance.
- **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).

Articles/Blogs/Research

- **CaLP Blog [Linking Social protection and humanitarian cash \(and \[webinar recording\]\(#\)\)](#)**: The blog (and the webinar which was held on 21st May as part of the GB Sub group series), ask the thorny questions of why linking remains hard, is it appropriate in all cases (spoiler alert: it's not), what happens in those places where it's hard to reach people and beyond technical fixes, what is needed to equip practitioners with the skills required for this (think approaches over technocratic solutions).
- **Report: [CaLP Caribbean Lessons Learned and Recommendations for CVA \(plus \[webinar\]\(#\)\)](#)**: CaLP Americas launched a report on cash and voucher assistance in the Caribbean ahead of hurricane season on 19th May which includes considerations for working with governments.

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. 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. **As of May 22, 2020**, 190 countries and territories have planned, introduced or adapted social protection measures in response to COVID-19. New entries since last week include Cambodia, Cyprus, the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#), Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Monaco, [Mozambique](#) and Suriname. Cash transfers continue to lead responses. The paper continues to provide information on social insurance and labour market interventions (both area using cash as well), and as highlighted above under good practice, there is an excellent analysis on how the challenge of delivery of payments is being tackled by governments. We highlight two other interesting aspects to help humanitarians think about programming and where investments/programmes can best add value.
Regions are scaling up cash transfers at different levels and pace. Asia is region with the highest absolute number of beneficiaries of cash transfers coverage, including EAP (first) and SAR (second). The lowest number is registered in Sub-Saharan Africa. In terms of share of the population covered, North America is the highest (22% of the population), while only 2% of Sub-Saharan Africa's is covered by planned or actual cash transfers reported for Covid-19.
Spending in social protection is over half-trillion globally. Countries are spending an average of \$45 per capita in social protection COVID-19 response. Our estimates indicate a level slightly higher than half-trillion (541 billion) in US dollars. Importantly, not all countries report on cost figures, and some are planned volumes. The bulk of spending includes universal or quasi-universal cash transfer programs in countries like Japan and the United States. Social assistance spending equals \$541.7 billion, \$484 of which in HICs. For the moment, LIC are investing \$247 million in social assistance, while MICs about \$56 billion (\$23 billion of which in India). Defined in these terms, the overall global volume of social protection response to COVID-19 is 0.6% of global GDP (nearly \$85 trillion). In terms of per capita spending, this ranges from \$1 in LICs to \$99 in HICs, and from \$5 in Africa and MENA to \$297 in North America. *(This is being highlighted as social protection is often talked about as being 'too expensive' to implement and this response has provided evidence that it is not only needed but can be funded when required i.e the political will is there).*
- **[The tracker of all trackers](#)**: This started as a twitter thread and now has a github 'home'; it's a collection of COVID-19 policy trackers and data. It covers cross-country research in the areas of non-pharmaceutical interventions, economic and social policy responses, public attitudes, politics and media coverage. Contact [Lukas Lehner](#) for more info/to contribute.
- **[ILO Social Protection Monitor](#)**: This presents the latest global social protection policy trends based on media announcements. This update covers January to June 2019. And this [live tracking](#) is updated weekly.

Resources Update

- **New CaLP Resource: [Readiness checklists for Cash Working Groups in light of COVID 19](#)** (includes working with social protection systems).
- **New CARE Resource: [Gender Implications of Cash Transfers in Malawi](#)**. This study is from large-scale cash response to Cyclone Idai in 2019—largely operated through international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs)—the study also compared gendered impacts of the government program and NGO humanitarian response. NB: [Care](#) and [Women's Refugee Commission](#) co-lead the gender and cash stream of the Grand Bargain Cash Workstream; reach out to them for resources on gender and cash.
- **New: [Venezuela Response Cash Based Working Operational Guidance](#)**: Includes working with national governments and integration of refugees and migrants in SP response, as possible.

- [Socialprotection.org](https://socialprotection.org) has set up a space on [Social protection responses to #COVID19](https://socialprotection.org/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).
- CCD has a page on [Social Protection and Humanitarian Cash](#) with country case studies and guidance.
- **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
26 May	Webinar: Impact of COVID-19 on public works programs: policy options in the short and medium term. 8 am EDT. Register here	Sp.org COVID series
27 May	Weekly SP/HCT Hangout 0800 EDT. Join here (passwd: 754170)	Zehra Rizvi/Cecile Cherrier

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Please email 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 DFID and the **Online Community for Social Protection in Crisis Contexts** which is an unbranded, member-based online space on the socialprotection.org platform.*

