IDS WORKING PAPER
Volume **2018** No **516**

Social Protection and Humanitarian Response: What is the Scope for Integration?

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Summary

Given the rise in humanitarian emergencies triggered by climate-related risks and conflict, often in contexts of chronic poverty and vulnerability, the international community is calling for the better integration of short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term development interventions. In this context, social protection is increasingly portrayed as a policy tool that can address chronic, as well as acute needs by delivering assistance in response to shocks through established, scalable systems. This paper lays out the key arguments for more integration between the humanitarian and social protection sectors, while discussing the potential tensions emerging from conflicting mandates and institutional structures. Whether or not more integration will provide more efficient and effective responses to crises depends on the type of shocks and the crisis context, as well as the capacity and coverage of the social protection programme to deliver to additional caseloads. Based on a review of the existing evidence, the paper concludes that important gaps need to be filled with regard to the technicalities of linking short- and longer-term interventions in humanitarian contexts, particularly in relation to mobile populations and refugees, and understanding better the political economy factors that facilitate bridging the humanitarian–development divide.

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Acknowledgements

Acronyms

CaLP	Cash Learning Partnership
CCT	Conditional cash transfer
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
CGD	Center for Global Development
DFID	Department for International Development
DRM	Disaster risk management
DSWD	Department for Social Welfare and Development
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office
EDE	Ending Drought Emergency
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net
FCAS	Fragile and conflict-affected states
FSIN	Food Security Information Network
GHA	Global humanitarian assistance
GSDRC	Governance and Social Development Resource Centre
HIP	Humanitarian Implementation Plan
HSNP	Hunger Safety Net Programme
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILO	International Labour Organization
INAS	Instituto Nacional da Acção Social [National Institute of Social Action]
INGC	Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades [National Institute of Disaster Management]
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MIS	Management information systems
MoI	Ministry of Interior
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NSNP	National Safety Net Programme
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
PILU	Programme Implementation and Learning Unit
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
SRSP	Shock-responsive social protection
TSI	Transitional Solutions Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
WFP	World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

1 Introduction

Despite the delivery of unprecedented levels of humanitarian aid in recent years, substantial needs have remained unmet due to the sheer volume of people affected by the increased frequency, severity, and protracted nature of crises and high levels of forced displacement. International humanitarian response rose from US$16.1bn in 2012 to US$27.3bn in 2016, yet UN-coordinated appeals in 2016 were still underfunded by 40 per cent (GHA 2017). The rise in numbers was driven, in part, by an escalation of conflicts in Yemen, South Sudan, and Syria, as well as being triggered by consecutive El Niño/La Niña-driven droughts that particularly affected countries in Southern and Eastern Africa (FSIN 2017). The range of crises driven by conflicts and natural hazards led to 65.6 million people being displaced (two-thirds of whom were internally displaced) and a total of 164.2 million in need of humanitarian assistance in 2016 (GHA 2017).

The rise in numbers of people requiring immediate humanitarian assistance in a context of limited funding demands more cost-efficient and effective crisis response mechanisms. Given the complex and protracted nature of crises, the large numbers of people experiencing long-term displacement, as well as the exacerbating impact that chronic poverty and vulnerability have on the impacts of shocks, the international community has called for the better integration of short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term development interventions. Better crisis prevention and response mechanisms, as well as the need to focus on long-term resilience building, form an integral part of the Agenda for Humanity and the Agenda 2030.[1]

One of the tools considered to have the potential to play the dual role of delivering crisis response, as well as addressing longer-term needs, is social protection. Social protection comprises a suite of interventions that aim to reduce poverty and vulnerability through the provision of social assistance, social insurance, and labour market policies. It is a key instrument for reducing poverty and vulnerability by protecting people from the impoverishing impacts of different social, economic, and lifecycle-based or climate-related risks on their livelihoods. Once consumption and food security risks are 'insured' through social protection, there is then the chance for social protection to unlock the productive capacity of otherwise highly risk-averse poor households. Furthermore, extending social protection as a right to citizens through government-led programmes contributes to the strengthening of a social compact between people and the state, and can have a transformative impact by reducing barriers to social inclusion.

There are clear differences between humanitarian assistance and social protection programmes. While humanitarian response is typically provided as a short-term and one-off support in the case of a sudden crisis, social protection is, by definition, provided as a predictable safety net that allows people to manage the risks to their livelihoods. Ideally, a contiguum of support and response would be provided to help poor and vulnerable households manage risk and stress across a range of circumstances and contexts. The term 'contiguum' refers to the parallel provision of relief, recovery, and development interventions. The need for a contiguum is now recognised by the humanitarian community, which challenges the linearity of the previous 'continuum' approach that underlined the sequenced approach towards delivering relief, recovery, and development interventions (Mosel and Levine 2014). This requires a range of *ex ante* interventions to be in place that assist people in managing moderate risks and provide them with access to the necessary support and

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[1]   The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) was also marked by a vocal number of humanitarian organisations who are opposed to this closer alignment of humanitarian assistance and development, precisely because it compromises humanitarian principles. In other words, not all the 'usual' humanitarian players are on board with shock-responsive social protection, or any agenda that brings these principles into further tension, with the feeling that humanitarians are already doing too much with too little and compromising themselves too often.

resources to strengthen their livelihoods. This will allow them to reduce vulnerability in the long term, as well as to build effective crisis response mechanisms which can provide assistance in times of large shocks.

Innovative programming in recent years has enabled social protection in different contexts to scale up assistance in response to large covariate shocks. This is facilitated by targeting systems and contingency funding that provide programmes with the ability to respond more quickly to acute needs in a crisis situation than conventional humanitarian responses. If designed adequately, well-functioning social protection mechanisms can deliver additional assistance in advance of a shock, and so prevent the shock from climaxing into a humanitarian crisis. In this sense, social protection replicates insurance markets in that it protects people from the negative impacts of a sudden shock. Similarly, in contexts where social protection is already in place, it can deliver *ex post* response faster and more cost-effectively than humanitarian emergency aid. Questions remain as to when and in what contexts social protection programmes can facilitate humanitarian response, and how they can contribute to bridging the humanitarian–development divide to build the longer-term resilience of people affected by a crisis, in particular migrant and forcibly displaced populations.

At the same time, it is important to question whether there are limits to the extent to which social protection programmes and humanitarian response can be integrated, especially as the two areas of intervention are, more often than not, grounded in different principles of provision. A political economy analysis is critical to understand the feasibility of integration given the range of different actors, interests, and political processes involved in each sector. The objective of this paper is to look at how linkages between social protection and humanitarian assistance play out in different contexts and in response to different shocks. To do so, the paper will first define shock-responsive social protection and humanitarian assistance and then describe the potential benefits of linking the two to address crises more effectively. Drawing on existing evidence and practice, the third section will outline two key issues that pose pertinent challenges for the implementation of national, large-scale, comprehensive shock-responsive social protection systems. These are: (1) differentiated responses corresponding to the scale and type of shock; and (2) the maturity of social protection systems. Based on this analysis, Section 4 maps out areas which require more attention in future research, policy, and programming to understand how to build more effective linkages between social protection and humanitarian assistance. These include: (1) bridging the gap between short- and long-term interventions (in humanitarian emergency contexts); (2) reaching populations on the margins; and (3) brokering the political economy of multi-stakeholder engagement across the social protection and humanitarian sectors.

2 Social protection and humanitarian assistance

Social protection emerged in the early 2000s as a policy response to dealing with vulnerability and poverty, particularly in the context of lower-income and developing countries. Over the last 18 years, the social protection agenda has evolved to include long-term safety nets and consumption provision through cash, food, and asset-based transfers; a whole range of different types of provision (including home-grown school feeding, public works, insurance packages); and packages of support that complement the utilisation of cash and assets (such as cash-plus models and graduation models that frequently include trainings, nutrition, and micro-finance components). The evolution of social protection interventions reflects the shifting thinking in what can be achieved through social protection. First-tier objectives have always been concerned with stabilising consumption of food-

insecure households, as well as reducing the need to sell off assets in the face of shocks and stresses. In addition to these objectives, second-tier objectives emphasise the role of social protection in helping households to become resilient to shocks and stresses and to move into productive, independent livelihoods. Recently, there has been a recognition that in order to achieve these objectives, social protection systems (rather than *ad hoc* programmes) need to be facilitated and established so as to ensure longevity of support (financially and politically), as well as to reduce inefficiencies in targeting and harmonise systems of payments and appeals, among other things. The focus on building social protection systems in contexts of recurring humanitarian crises and climate-related shocks has led to a recognition of the overlap in mandate, institutions, and target groups between the 'humanitarian' and the social protection sector. This has opened up opportunities for using social protection to deliver a contiguum of assistance by integrating the delivery of humanitarian assistance into its system.

2.1 'Shock-responsive' social protection

The notion of 'shock-responsive social protection' (SRSP) became popular in the years following the global financial, food, and fuel crisis in 2008/09, when social protection was used to buffer the effects of macroeconomic shocks on the poor in a range of different countries (e.g. IEG 2012; Bastagli 2014; McCord 2013). In low- and middle-income countries, the scale-up of social protection following the triple 'F' crisis was, in many cases, used to expand routine coverage of programmes and enrol beneficiaries for longer-term support that continued after the crisis (Andrew *et al.* 2012). More recently, the definition and conceptualisation of shock-responsive social protection has been framed mainly in relation to climate-related shocks and disasters and the need to address acute needs. SRSP in this context looks at the interface between social protection, humanitarian assistance, and disaster risk management (DRM) (Davies *et al.* 2009; Kuriakose *et al.* 2013; OPM 2015). In comparison to adaptive social protection or 'climate-smart social protection', the term SRSP focuses, in particular, on the ability of a social protection system to scale assistance up and down following a shock – either by increasing the level of assistance for existing beneficiaries or by expanding coverage temporarily to non-beneficiaries affected by the shock. These can be in response to different types of covariate shocks, including natural or man-made hazards, as well as situations of protracted crises (see Section 3 for a discussion on types of shocks). The typology developed by OPM (2015) (see Table 2.1) outlines different ways through which additional assistance in advance or after a covariate shock can be linked to a social protection system. These range from fairly integrated approaches (e.g. vertical and horizontal expansion) to the set-up of parallel systems (e.g. shadow alignment). In this way, social protection systems can become vehicles for the delivery of humanitarian assistance in direct response to a shock.

Table 2.1 Typology: options for shock-responsive adaptation of social protection programmes

Name of option	Description
Design tweaks	Adjusting a programme or system to integrate risks expected in a given context. This may include: • Relaxing programme guidelines during crisis times (e.g. waive conditions) • Expanding social protection support in at-risk areas
Vertical expansion	Increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing programme. This may include: • Adjustment of transfer amounts • Introduction of extraordinary payments or transfers
Horizontal expansion	Adding new beneficiaries to an existing programme. This may include: • Extension of the geographical coverage of an existing programme • Extraordinary enrolment campaign • Modifications of entitlement rules • Relaxation of requirements/conditionality to facilitate participation
Piggybacking	Using a social protection intervention's administrative framework, but running the shock-response programme separately. May include the introduction of a new policy.
Shadow alignment	Developing a parallel humanitarian system that aligns as best as possible with a current or possible future social protection programme.

Source: Authors' adaptation from OPM (2015) and O'Brien *et al*. (2018).

2.2 Humanitarian assistance

Humanitarian assistance is defined as material or logistical assistance provided to people in need with the primary objective to save lives and maintain human dignity after man-made crises and disasters associated with natural hazards (GHA 2017). Although the majority of humanitarian aid goes to emergency relief (in-kind/cash, material, and logistical assistance), humanitarian aid also covers disaster prevention and preparedness, and reconstruction and rehabilitation (OECD 2015). One of the key characteristics that distinguishes humanitarian assistance from development interventions, including social protection, are the four core humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence which mandate humanitarian actors to prioritise human need and dignity over any economic, political, religious, ideological, or other interests.

To ensure operational independence, humanitarian aid is traditionally channelled through multilateral organisations (UN agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs)) rather than through recipient governments (only 1.6 per cent of international aid in 2016 was channelled through governments) (GHA 2017). This highlights a key difference between social protection and humanitarian assistance, since the trend in social protection in low- and middle-income countries is towards setting up systems owned, and eventually financed, by national governments (ILO 2014; Devereux, Roelen and Ulrichs 2015). How or whether these systems become national depends on the political acceptance of financing social benefits to people in need. Social benefit payments from the state are typically restricted to a targeted portion of the citizen or resident population.

It has been argued that there are fundamental tensions between development and humanitarian sectors precisely because they are operated by different actors, different funding streams, and are based on different principles (Harvey 2009). While both aim to

address basic human needs, humanitarian principles were put in place specifically to reduce suffering in conflict situations, with strong roots in international humanitarian law and UN conventions (Haider 2013). Delivering humanitarian assistance through social protection programmes that are managed by government agencies could jeopardise the principles of operational independence, impartiality, and neutrality. In crisis contexts, it would, thus, be inadequate to deliver humanitarian assistance through (government-led) social protection programmes, since the impartial and neutral delivery of aid could be obstructed, and vulnerable groups could be intentionally excluded (especially if they are fighting for the 'wrong' side). Delivering assistance through social protection systems that are designed for citizens, by definition, exclude certain groups of non-citizens, such as refugees or internally displaced people. The challenges of linking the two sectors are not only technocratic, but require reconciling a number of more fundamental differences in terms of principles and approaches (Winder Rossi *et al.* 2017).

To bridge the gap between humanitarian assistance and development programmes, the different sectoral approaches and principles could be seen as complementary rather than divisive, in order to deliver assistance through governance structures that are impartial and able to address all people in need (Harvey 2009). As we will discuss below, this aspirational goal is a tall order. Despite clear evidence on the protracted nature and recurrence of humanitarian crises, the majority of funding continues to be short-term year-on-year appeals, despite the chronic nature of vulnerability and the need for longer-term interventions to address this – which is where calls for better integration with social protection come in.

2.3 The case for linking humanitarian assistance and social protection

One argument put forward for linking social protection and disaster response goes as follows: if development is viewed as an uneven, non-linear trajectory which can be affected by a range of different shocks that risk undoing any progress made, development interventions can internalise these into their planning so as to reduce the risk of fallbacks (Pelham, Clay and Braunholz 2011; Davies *et al.* 2009). In other words, long-term planning for social protection will provide insurance against downturns and help vulnerable people ride out times of moderate shocks without returning to a state of desperation. This also aligns with a more dynamic understanding of poverty, where people can move in and out of poverty depending on changing circumstances in their lives and exposure to risks. In times of extreme shocks, additional assistance is required, which goes beyond what regular social protection can cover.

Based on this, there are three arguments put forward to link the two sectors. First, there is a recognised need to address chronic vulnerability which provides the context for recurring humanitarian crises. In 2015, 18 of the 20 largest recipients of international assistance were long- or medium-term recipients. Of the 13 countries who placed a UN-coordinated appeal in 2016, six had placed appeals every year since 2007 (GHA 2017). In contexts with low government capacity and high levels of fragility, humanitarian actors are stepping in to address needs emerging from a situation of chronic poverty and vulnerability. Rather than continuing to provide short-term assistance, social protection can reduce vulnerability and poverty in the long term, which reduces the likelihood of a disaster or crisis situation, and consequently the need for humanitarian aid.

Second, evidence suggests that crisis response to drought emergencies through existing, robust social protection systems can be faster and more cost-effective than conventional humanitarian responses. When scalable systems are in place, emergency assistance can reach people in a short period of time. The Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) is able to deliver emergency assistance within ten days of declaring an emergency, compared to the three to nine months it takes a UN-led humanitarian response (Hobson and Campbell 2012; NDMA 2016). In Ethiopia, a World Bank review estimated that assistance through the

Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) in response to the food crisis in the Horn of Africa in 2011 was cost-efficient, at US$53 per beneficiary compared with US$169 delivered through 'conventional' UN-coordinated humanitarian assistance (World Bank 2013). Increasing the speed of response also reduces the overall cost of humanitarian crises. A cost-benefit analysis of the regional-risk pooling mechanisms, the African Risk Capacity, calculated that the cost of response four months after a failed harvest averaged US$49 per household, compared with US$1,294 after six months (Clarke and Hill 2013).

Third, setting up parallel data collection, monitoring, and delivery systems leads to a duplication of efforts. Harmonising systems is more difficult when assistance is provided in-kind, whereas cash provides an opportunity to harmonise delivery systems due to its fluidity and fungibility. Different actors can channel their humanitarian assistance funds through common platforms that use the same databases for targeting and delivery mechanisms. In Jordan, for instance, UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) use one targeting mechanism (the Vulnerability Assessment Framework) to identify vulnerable refugees who then receive cash assistance from the same collection point using biometric data as ID (Schimmel 2015). Cash facilitates coordinated and more efficient delivery mechanisms which reduces the fragmentation, duplication, and lack of coordination that is often found in in-kind humanitarian assistance (ODI and CGD 2015). The harmonisation of cash-based systems works well where there is one target group that receives different types of assistance (e.g. refugees). In some cases, there can be an overlap between social protection caseloads and humanitarian caseloads; for instance, in contexts of drought-induced food insecurity where social assistance reaches chronically food-insecure people, while humanitarian assistance (or emergency scale-ups) reaches seasonally food-insecure people. In these contexts, linking the delivery and targeting systems of humanitarian and social assistance can maximise existing resources from both sectors and invest them into the set-up of permanent systems which register vulnerable groups and scale assistance up and down depending on need. As will be discussed below, this might be less straightforward in contexts where the social protection caseload is different from the humanitarian one.

While there is much scope for building synergies between the two sectors, there is the risk that using the same mechanisms can lead to a change in eligibility for assistance. Using social registries to target vulnerable groups for emergency response can lead to exclusion of social assistance recipients who are considered to be 'already covered'. In Mozambique, for example, there have been cases where the National Institute of Disaster Management (INGC) considered beneficiaries of the social assistance programmes delivered by the National Institute of Social Action (INAS) to be in no need of additional assistance after a disaster. The value of the cash benefit provided under the INAS is less than a third of that of humanitarian response and it is thus questionable whether it is sufficient to address the acute need following a shock (Kardan *et al.* 2017a). Similarly, in the Philippines, humanitarian agencies used the Department for Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) social registry in efforts to coordinate assistance, but some agencies purposely excluded recipients of the CCT Pantawid programme from humanitarian assistance following Typhoon Haiyan, since they considered them covered. In other words, there is a reluctance to allow beneficiaries to 'double dip'; however, often the value of the social protection transfers is not adequate in the context of acute need. Other humanitarian agencies responding to Typhoon Haiyan included them on the grounds that they were already identified as being particularly vulnerable (Smith *et al.* 2017). Similarly, harmonising targeting mechanisms can lead to a change in eligibility criteria as the targeting methodologies will identify different households/people as eligible. Depending on the context, this can be an obstacle for humanitarian actors to agree to delivering assistance through social protection systems (O'Brien *et al.* 2018).

Consequently, it is important to understand under what circumstances better coordination between the humanitarian and the social protection sector can lead to more effective, yet

inclusive and needs-based response for vulnerable people, to ensure that all are covered adequately and protected from the range of risks that can jeopardise sustainable poverty reduction in the long term. While duplication of efforts should be reduced, and resources maximised to reach as many people in need as possible, the benefits of overlapping different types of support in crisis times should not be ruled out in fear of 'double-dipping'.

3 Considerations for delivering humanitarian assistance through social protection

While the potential benefits of linking social protection and humanitarian assistance are compelling, there are a number of issues that need to be considered to evaluate how these linkages could be operationalised in different contexts. Some of these issues are outlined in this section under the two overarching headings of: (1) type and scale of shock, and (2) context and maturity of social protection systems.

3.1 Type and scale of shock

While there is currently a strong interest at the global policy level to introduce shock-responsive elements to existing social protection programmes, or to set up social protection systems from the start with the capacity to scale up, there is little discussion around the type and scale of the shocks social protection programmes are meant to respond to (McCord 2013). An analysis of the types of shocks can provide important insights into how and when programmes can address acute needs and facilitate more effective alternatives to *ad hoc* humanitarian assistance.

SRSP is most frequently referred to in connection to disasters triggered by natural hazards. These can be defined as naturally occurring physical phenomena caused either by rapid or slow onset events and cover geophysical (earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, and volcanic activity), hydrological (avalanches and floods), climatological hazards (extreme temperatures, drought, and wildfires), meteorological (cyclones and storms/wave surges), or biological hazards (disease epidemics and insect/animal plagues) (IFRC 2017). The risk level of natural hazards can be further classified according to their impact, frequency, and speed of their onset (Pelham *et al.* 2011). Hurricanes and cyclones are rapid onset and high impact, while droughts are slow onset and high frequency.

In a comparative analysis, Pelham *et al.* (2011) found that high-frequency natural events only evolve into disasters in low-income countries, whereas in middle- and high-income countries only medium- and low-frequency, but mainly quick onset and high-impact events led to disasters (e.g. Hurricane Katrina in the US, the Kobe earthquake, floods in Germany). Climatic shocks such as droughts, erratic rainfall, or extreme temperatures that have a high frequency thus turn into disasters in contexts with high levels of socioeconomic vulnerability and poverty, and little capacity of governments to prepare and respond. It is in these contexts, and in response to slow onset and high-frequency climate-related events, that social protection has a high potential to *prevent* disasters, because the recurrence of shocks and lack of protection is one of the key drivers of poverty. The humanitarian caseload in those cases is very similar to the social protection caseload and assistance protects both groups from further impoverishment. In the case of quick onset shocks (such as an earthquake), *ex post* scale-up can assist people in coping with the negative impacts of the shock, ensure basic needs are met, and prevent negative coping strategies with longer-term impoverishing consequences. However, these shocks affect a wider group of the population that crosses income groups, including better-off households, which means that delivering assistance through social protection systems will not cover all the people affected.

To provide effectively for all in need, the size of the transfer needs to be adequate in relation to the scale of the shock. So, for instance, while the PSNP support in 2008 was adequate during normal seasons and allowed beneficiaries to increase their asset base, it was not sufficient during extreme shocks. Following the 2008 drought, beneficiaries fell below their pre-entry poverty levels (but fared better than non-beneficiaries) (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2010). In these cases, additional funding for vertical scale-up of assistance is required to buffer existing beneficiaries from unexpected large shocks. Several programmes have institutionalised contingency funds for vertical scale-up, such as calamity grants in Guatemala's conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme Bono Seguro, or the emergency grant in Ecuador's Bono de Desarrollo, which increase the support for CCT recipients following a climate-related shock such as drought (Beazley, Solórzano and Sossouvi 2016; World Bank 2016). Ethiopia's PSNP and Kenya's HSNP have also integrated contingency funding into their programming which enables either an increase in the size of the transfer, or an extension of the number of months in which the seasonal safety net is provided to beneficiaries (e.g. Slater and Bhuvanendra 2013). Vertical scale-ups have also been provided following lower frequency (but high-impact) climate shocks, such as the 2015 earthquake in Nepal where the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) delivered a top-up grant to existing social assistance beneficiaries, or in Fiji and the Philippines where top-up payments were made following tropical storms (Kukrety 2016; Doyle 2017, cited in OPM 2017; OPM 2017; Zimmerman and Bohling 2015).

Vertical scale-ups, however, only reach existing social protection caseloads, whereas horizontal scale-ups can cover humanitarian caseloads that are at risk of deteriorating their living standards after a shock. When thinking about integration of social protection and humanitarian assistance, the capacity of programmes to expand horizontally is arguably the most relevant type of scale-up as it extends support to address short-term acute needs of populations that are otherwise not covered by social protection. Horizontal expansion of social protection to new caseloads occurred in many Latin American countries (Colombia, Costa Rica, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru) in response to the 'Triple F' crisis (Bastagli 2014; Beazley *et al.* 2016; Grosh *et al.* 2013, cited in Bastagli 2014). Rather than being temporary assistance, in many cases, the expansion was used to enrol new routine beneficiaries into programmes.[2] The HSNP and the PSNP are two of the few programmes that have the capacity to systematically scale up and down horizontally to humanitarian caseloads, which in both cases are households at risk of drought-induced food insecurity. In both cases, the support to new caseloads is temporary and is scaled back after the emergency passes.

Looking at the types of shocks and the evidence on social protection scale-up in humanitarian contexts, a few observations can be made. First, there are significant differences between vertical and horizontal scale-ups in terms of their reach and purpose. Vertical scale-ups work as 'crisis modifiers' where top-ups are provided to existing beneficiaries to ensure that the protective function of social protection is guaranteed in times of crisis. Horizontal scale-ups are the ones where additional humanitarian assistance can be provided through social protection programmes to new households that are vulnerable and affected by a shock. Vertical scale-ups are easier to implement since they 'only' require additional funding, which can then be channelled through existing delivery mechanisms (and no re-targeting is required). In addition to contingency funding, horizontal scale-ups, on the other hand, require social registries, targeting, and delivery mechanisms that are able to reach new recipients quickly. From the cited examples of horizontal scale-ups, this has only happened in cases where the humanitarian caseload was similar to the routine social

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[2]   This is not to say that expansion of programmes does not occur in relation to climate-related triggers. In Lesotho, for instance, the Child Grant was expanded following the 2011 drought to a new set of beneficiaries. In this case, the emergency response was used to implement the already-planned programme roll-out (Niang and Ramirez 2014).

protection caseload in terms of their vulnerability profile. The HSNP, for instance, ranks all households in drought-prone countries according to their wealth status. Routine HSNP recipients are those who are the poorest, and the emergency caseload consists of pre-identified households in a slightly higher 'wealth/asset' category (NDMA 2016). In some Latin American programmes, social assistance was extended to households which were considered poor following the same eligibility criteria as beneficiaries.

Horizontal expansion of social protection is easier in contexts where the targeting mechanisms and data management systems can easily identify population groups that are vulnerable to shocks. Registries that capture the poverty levels of households can identify those who are just above the poverty line, but are at risk of falling into poverty following a shock. Categorically targeted programmes, on the other hand, might not have the necessary data to identify vulnerable households falling outside the categories. In cases where the shocks leading to humanitarian crises are closely intertwined with poverty dynamics, SRSP can prevent crises from happening, e.g. famine can be prevented in drought-prone regions through effective safety nets (Cherrier 2014). In the case of low-frequency, quick onset, and high-impact events (e.g. earthquakes) social protection programmes might not be able to prevent the disaster, but they can provide financial assistance to beneficiaries to recover faster (Pelham *et al.* 2011). To assess whether social protection can reach vulnerable populations affected by shocks, the following questions need to be addressed: can social protection programmes cover humanitarian caseloads of households and populations that have a different profile than long-term safety net beneficiaries? Are social protection systems in a given context able to efficiently reach people affected by high-impact disasters?

3.2 Context and maturity of social protection systems

One of the key challenges of preventing and responding to humanitarian needs through social protection is that the countries which are most likely to require assistance are the least likely to have functional, large-scale social transfer programmes in place at present or in the next years or decades. Most of the examples highlighted above come from country contexts where some form of social protection programme or systems were already in place before scalability mechanisms were attached.

To understand the potential of setting up SRSP systems in different contexts, a range of typologies have been developed. OPM (2015) categorises countries based on the level of 'maturity' of a social protection system which is defined by the level of national interest and commitment to establish a social protection system or to expand an existing one. The six categories range from a 'non-existent' to a state-led mature system (with intermediary categories being internationally-led, state-led interest, state-led commitment, and state-led expanding) (OPM 2017).

Government interest alone is not enough to understand the capacity of a system to be shock-responsive, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS). The Sahelian belt of West Africa, for instance, is characterised by structural food and nutritional insecurity with welfare and humanitarian support restricted to address crises. Although there is the political will to put in place national social transfer systems, these have not yet been established (Cherrier 2014). Post-conflict countries which had social protection systems in place prior to the conflict are more likely to rebuild systems on the basis of existing knowledge and a cultural understanding of the governments' responsibility to provide social welfare. Despite all falling under the category of FCAS, Bosnia and Herzegovina had higher capacity to rebuild its pension systems post-conflict, while South Sudan and Somalia are low-capacity countries with a weak enabling environment and limited or absent social assistance provided by the government (Ovadiya *et al.* 2015).

Even when countries have government-led or supported social protection programmes, this in itself does not indicate their potential to become shock-responsive. Winder Rossi *et al.* (2017) look at the potential of social protection programmes in different contexts to integrate crisis response and resilience-building components. They developed a typology which highlights that although social protection programmes or systems exist that are institutionalised within state structures, they might not yet be flexible enough to adapt in the case of a crisis to incorporate additional caseloads. Depending on the capacity of existing social protection programmes, it might make more sense to first strengthen their core protective functions to routine recipients, before aiming to add shock-responsive elements to them (Ulrichs and Slater 2016). Research undertaken by OPM in Mozambique, Lesotho, and countries in the Sahel highlights the need for existing programmes to first perform their core functions effectively and address targeting e.g. inaccuracies, and staff and resource shortages, before aiming for cross-sector coordination with humanitarian assistance or disaster risk management agencies (O'Brien *et al.* 2017; Kardan *et al.* 2017a; Kardan *et al.* 2017b).

Addressing capacity issues of social protection programmes is critical to ensure realistic expectations of what they can achieve in different contexts, but also to set up social safety nets in a way that can facilitate sustainability in the long term. Given the general support for social safety nets in the Sahel in recent years, as well as an increasing use of cash-based humanitarian assistance, humanitarian actors have tried to fill the void of existing national systems by extending cash-based humanitarian assistance beyond the peak of the crisis through the provision of seasonal safety nets and development programmes. Cherrier (2014) argues that this has led to 'anomalies' in the current system, where humanitarian actors have taken charge of households suffering from chronic vulnerability by setting up parallel social safety net initiatives. This is problematic since it makes chronically food-insecure households dependent on humanitarian assistance, which is still short-term and unpredictable.[3] Having humanitarian actors responding to food insecurity further adds to a skewed perception that food crises are temporary rather than structural (Cherrier 2014).

In low-capacity contexts, the division of labour between humanitarian and development actors needs to be clearly delineated to find long-term solutions to chronic poverty and vulnerability and recurring humanitarian crises. In cases where the social protection system is shattered or severely weakened, emergency response interventions will have to be provided while at the same time nascent social protection programmes need to be developed. Where state-led social protection systems exist which provide assistance but have no or limited capacity to respond to shocks, development partners can work with the government to enhance the capacity of systems to respond to crises in an inclusive way (e.g. without excluding population groups on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, or political affiliation) (Winder Rossi *et al.* 2017). In cases where social protection systems are not adequate in identifying and reaching groups of the population affected by shocks, humanitarian assistance will need to be delivered in parallel.

4 Emerging areas for future programming and research

The following three areas have been identified based on their relevance for improving our understanding of potential bottlenecks to linking humanitarian assistance and social protection. They are not exclusive and many other areas remain that merit future research, e.g. issues around evaluating the impact of humanitarian assistance or scale-up payments

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[3] It is important to note that this is sometimes a response to a lack of other actors on the scene addressing root causes, not just because of mission creep.

on recipients' vulnerability to shocks, the technicalities of setting up systems that link social assistance and emergency preparedness plans, and funding mechanisms for shock-responsive social protection.

4.1 Bridging short-term response and long-term structures

Much of the 'shock-responsive' literature to date has emphasised the movement and gradual replacement of short-term response with long-term flexible systems. While this is a worthy cause in general, as shown above in the case of Ethiopia there remains a need for both short- and long-term response. Sometimes the short-term response will not take place through a mature system of social protection, either because the shock environment (i.e. conflict and crisis) might not allow it, because the social protection coverage and target groups are incompatible with the population affected, or because the scale of the shock is too large to be manageable through a social protection system. In these cases, interventions must rely on the wealth of experience offered by decades of humanitarian intervention, but at the same time be delivered within a vision for the future that encourages the establishment of systems of provision and preparedness. Recognising the continuing need for humanitarian response, especially in contexts where social protection systems are fragile and non-existent, will lead to an appreciation of the value added of both humanitarian support and longer-term development work.

To harness the benefits of linkages between social protection and humanitarian assistance, ultimately systems have to be set up that coordinate the provision of short- and long-term interventions to address a range of needs. Initially described as a continuum from relief to development, it is now recognised to be a contiguum where relief, recovery, and development interventions need to be provided in parallel to address the coexistence of acute needs and structural factors that increase vulnerability to shocks (Mosel and Levine 2014). The question is thus not necessarily how to move from short- to long-term support, but rather how to put in place sustainable structures and systems that can deliver both depending on the needs.

As discussed, social protection programmes can contribute to the relief and rehabilitation objectives of humanitarian assistance through their protective functions. Doing this through nationally-led systems ensures the sustainability of the support and moves away from dependence on short-term humanitarian funding. Social protection programmes can also link vulnerability reduction with livelihood promotion, either through programmes with graduation objectives, or by fostering linkages to complementary programmes, e.g. skills building and productive asset building (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler 2015), and in that way build the bridge between relief and rehabilitation and development. A constraint to achieving this is the continuous dominance of short-term funding of humanitarian responses, despite efforts to increase multi-year financing (GHA 2017). In fragile and conflict-affected countries, donors are reluctant to enter into long-term commitments (Harvey 2009). Yet predictability of support is essential for populations affected by disasters who want to rebuild their livelihoods. As discussed above, challenges to achieve this are in part linked to the distinct mandates and principles underpinning humanitarian assistance and social protection.

As argued by Winder Rossi *et al.* (2017), there is a critical need to support nationally-led responses, to bring in diverse financing sources and to upgrade humanitarian systems in order to anticipate crises, coordinate responses, and mobilise funding, taking advantage of the potential of cash-based programming to make such responses more cost-efficient and effective. Future work and research should investigate cases of best practice and worst practice in delivering humanitarian relief and social protection support in the same regions and to the same households. There is much space for learning and innovation in this area.

4.2 Reaching populations on the margins

In the last few years, migrants and forcibly displaced populations have attracted enormous media attention, as climate-related disasters, political conflicts, and economic inequality push more and more people to move away from their homes to seek refuge and opportunities in other places, both nationally and internationally. The rise of the far right in a number of Western nations, together with nervousness about the financial and institutional capability of 'receiving' locations to adequately respond to the needs of these large-scale population movements, means that the space for thinking about the rights and needs of people on the move has become limited and also increasingly political. Nonetheless, it is precisely because of these global trends that the plight of migrants and forcibly displaced populations is becoming more precarious and vulnerable. Within the context of the global SDG agenda and the focus on 'leave no-one behind', there is an urgency to promote dialogue on the rights and needs of different mobile populations. Protecting these groups against insecurity and deprivation requires commitment at both political and technical levels.

Migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) face a range of vulnerabilities, some specific to their reasons for moving and some specific to their legal status. Other vulnerabilities are not 'migrant' or refugee specific, but due to the sectors or types of work they find themselves in, migrants may be particularly exposed to risks associated with precarious low-wage employment. Vulnerabilities may also be influenced by an individual or a group's characteristics (e.g. gender or age), and may change over time and through different stages of a journey. Their needs are similarly diverse as are the contexts (environmental, cultural, and political) to which they move or settle into.

Despite trends of long-term displacement, there is still a deeply-rooted notion that the needs of displaced populations can only be addressed through humanitarian means, which provides an obstacle to achieving sustainable solutions.[4] It is thus necessary to integrate the needs of displaced people into strategies that aim to bridge humanitarian and development programmes. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the World Bank are piloting the Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) in Eastern Sudan which aims specifically to provide a strategy for transitioning the protracted refugee situation into more sustainable solutions through the provision of access to basic services and livelihood programmes (UNDP and UNHCR 2013). In Egypt, UNHCR piloted, together with the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), a graduation project for refugees to build sustainable livelihoods (Raimondi 2015).

In relation to social protection, there are few examples where displaced populations and refugees have been integrated into longer-term social assistance programmes for nationals, or where programmes are designed to target both refugees and host communities. Brazil is an interesting case, where Bolsa Familia has been expanded to non-citizens, including refugees from Syria. In 2015, 16,000 families with foreign nationals had been included in the programme (Beazley *et al.* 2016).

In Jordan and Turkey, cash transfer programmes for refugees have been set up as parallel humanitarian assistance programmes, yet in close alignment with national social protection systems. The ECHO-supported Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) in Turkey reaches 1 million refugees and builds on the social assistance administrative processes of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy (ECHO 2016; OPM 2017). The objective of this close alignment is to guarantee longer-term national ownership and thus sustainability of the

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[4]   This is sometimes because host governments do not want to legitimise or normalise refugee status by providing them with social protection measures normally reserved for citizens. This is why durable solutions are still complicated to achieve. It is also a reason given by governments to block the delivery of humanitarian biometric ID cards, as this legitimises the status of the refugee or IDP (for example, World Food Programme (WFP) SCOPE ration cards in Sudan).

programme, which will continue to receive support from humanitarian actors, and with payments being managed by the Turkish Red Crescent. UNICEF is, for example, using the ESSN to deliver additional cash transfers for refugee households with children which has adapted its design, targeting process, and grant size to those of the national CCT for Turkish children (OPM 2017).

In Jordan, social assistance for refugees is closely aligned with national programmes and policies (Hagen-Zanker, Ulrichs and Holmes 2018). Although the programmes for refugees are mainly financed and managed by local and international humanitarian organisations, refugees have access to subsidised basic services once they have registered with UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior (MoI). To ease social tensions with host communities after a large influx of refugees following the Syrian crisis, the Jordanian government requires a proportion of humanitarian aid targeted at refugees to benefit vulnerable Jordanians. In 2012/13, approximately 30 per cent of humanitarian aid was allocated to nationals, who were identified through the Jordanian government's targeting system but received support from local and international organisations (Röth, Nimeh and Hagen-Zanker 2016; Healy and Tiller 2013).

The plight of migrants and displaced populations shows clearly the continuing need for humanitarian response and programming. Displaced populations are rarely catered for within the provision of nationally-owned and resident-targeted social protection systems, in part due to a reluctance from governments to legitimise refugees' status by integrating them into national programmes. The few shock-responsive social protection systems on offer are not designed to cater for mobile populations (excepting the examples reviewed above). Given the increasing numbers of refugees (21.3 million in 2016) and internal migrants (763 million including IDPs) (UN DESA 2013), there is a humanitarian and development mandate to design and deliver social protection for these people. Social protection is fundamentally a policy response to vulnerability. Given the different vulnerabilities that mobile populations face, there will be a range of different social protection responses to these. Different forms of social protection will be needed by different groups at different stages of their journey and after arrival in a place of destination. Legal or illegal entry, or presence, in a territory or state is just one factor that influences access to social protection. Other factors, including operational, political, and financial factors that affect the coverage, adequacy, and portability of benefits may restrict the scope of social protection in practice and this is also considered.

4.3 The political economy of multi-stakeholder collaboration

The literature on shock-responsive social protection at large focuses on technical issues around setting up appropriate mechanisms that either facilitate coordination with disaster risk management agencies and/or allow social protection programmes to scale up assistance through appropriate targeting, delivery, and management information systems (MIS). An area that has been widely overlooked or insufficiently covered is the political economy of putting in place shock-responsive social protection systems and fostering linkages between short-term humanitarian assistance and longer-term programmes. This is a particularly critical area due to the large number of local, national, and international actors – each with their own interests, funding priorities, and institutional set-ups, that will be required to collaborate and coordinate to ensure more effective linkages between humanitarian assistance and social protection (O'Brien *at al.* 2017).

This not only applies to the number of actors across sectors, but even within sectors. If we take social protection, for instance, reference is often made to national social protection systems which implicitly assumes that there is some sort of sectoral coherence. In reality, the majority of social protection sectors in low- and middle-income countries are highly fragmented and are finding themselves in processes of sectoral harmonisation, where programmes operated by different agencies and under different operational guidelines are

being brought together under national social protection strategies. Processes of harmonisation can be challenging in contexts where social protection programmes have been in place for several years and which were set up in parallel with different targeting and delivery mechanisms.

Examples of 'shock-responsive' social protection systems often refer to specific programmes that are situated within that wider, fragmented social protection landscape. In Kenya, the HSNP is one of four flagship programmes under the National Safety Net Programme (NSNP) – yet it is the only one with the capacity to deliver emergency assistance following a drought. Currently there are few linkages between the HSNP and the operational systems of the other categorically targeted programmes (and there is limited recognition among national and international stakeholders of the contributions other cash transfers make to people's capacity to absorb shocks) (Ulrichs and Slater 2016). The fragmentation is often further driven by donor policies which continue to work in silos. In Lesotho, the potential for better linkages between national social protection agencies and the disaster management authority is inhibited by individual donors' bilateral collaboration with different national agencies, rather than encouraging multi-donor platforms and incentivising multi-sector coordination at the national level (Kardan *et al.* 2017b).

The institutional identity of national agencies implementing social protection programmes is another factor that can make or break better coordination with humanitarian or disaster management agencies. Kenya's HSNP is managed by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) which is the main coordinating entity for the national Ending Drought Emergency (EDE) framework. It is thus strategically well positioned to manage a social safety net programme that not only addresses chronic food security, but also links to national early warning systems and emergency response plans (Ulrichs and Slater 2016). Similarly, in the Philippines, the main agency in charge of social protection also has to coordinate humanitarian response and DRM (Smith *et al.* 2017). Although there are still intra-departmental coordination challenges, the opportunity for integrating shock-responsive elements into existing programmes is far greater in the Philippines than in contexts where social protection and humanitarian assistance are operated through different agencies which manage social protection programmes for categorically vulnerable groups, such as children or older people. For those agencies, the incentives of addressing vulnerability to natural disasters are low, since this falls outside of their mandate. In Lesotho, while there is strong political will to expand the Universal Old Age Pension and the Child Grant, there is little interest in adapting these programmes to be shock-responsive (which explains why there is little collaboration at the national level between social protection and DRM) (Kardan *et al.* 2017b).

The humanitarian sector faces its own challenges around the coordination of multiple actors responding to certain crises. The increasing interest in cash-based approaches is considered to be an opportunity to increase coordination across agencies, which can now rally around a transfer modality that is more flexible and fungible than in-kind assistance (CaLP 2014). Initiatives like the Cash Working Groups initiated by Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) aim to coordinate cash transfer programmes implemented mainly in the context of humanitarian emergencies. Cash working groups tend to focus on the technical issues linked to cash transfers, but a recent evaluation in the Sahel highlighted the added benefit of the groups' participation through strategy development to contribute to policy processes (CaLP 2016; O'Brien *et al.* 2017). A cash working group was also set up in the Philippines in 2012 and revived after Typhoon Haiyan to coordinate cash-based disaster response (Smith *et al.* 2017).

Adding a political economy lens to the multi-stakeholder coordination required for better integration between humanitarian, disaster risk management, and social protection systems is critical to understand potential bottlenecks rooted in the competition of actors and different

interests. For instance, which policy processes are required to move from short-term annual humanitarian assistance to multi-year funding that can link with longer-term development interventions? What kind of institutional structures need to be in place for this to work and at what level? What is the role of state and non-state actors in promoting coordination between humanitarian assistance and social protection?

5 Conclusion

The case made for linking humanitarian assistance to social protection programmes, through social protection systems, is compelling. It can be more cost-effective and efficient as assistance delivered through existing systems can reach vulnerable groups faster and prevent or alleviate humanitarian crises. It also provides an entry point for building a contiguum of response to acute and chronic needs, and thereby bridge the gap between the humanitarian and development sectors. There are, however, equally good reasons for why more integration between the two sectors has not happened yet. Focusing in on these, and understanding under what conditions and in response to what kind of shocks and through what types of social protection systems it makes sense to deliver humanitarian assistance is pivotal in developing strategies that provide sustainable solutions to build resilience. More evidence is also needed as to whether SRSP is more effective in terms of reducing vulnerability to shocks, as well as building long-term resilience. Currently, arguments for shock-response focus largely on the benefits of more efficient systems, rather than on contributions to larger goals on poverty reduction. Also, linking humanitarian assistance with social protection systems will not always be the best solution, which is why it is necessary that a nuanced understanding of the opportunities and limitations of synergies informs policies and programmes.

To obtain this, important knowledge gaps still need to be filled – two of which were covered in the paper. First, the persistence and scale of large-scale displacement driven by conflict and climate shocks requires strategies that recognise the mobility of highly vulnerable groups, and the challenges this poses for integrating them into national social protection (and development) schemes. This is an area that needs to be explored, particularly when thinking about ways to operationalise the humanitarian–development nexus. Another area that needs further exploration are the political economy factors that enable or hinder better integration between humanitarian responses and social protection systems. Second, while significant advances have been made in the last decade in understanding the technical requirements for scalable, shock-responsive social protection systems, less attention has been paid to the political contexts and the processes (including state, non-state, and international actors) that lead to the establishment of systems able to provide short- and longer-term assistance. Given the different institutional settings, principles, and objectives guiding social protection and humanitarian sectors until now, a political economy lens needs to be applied in different contexts to understand the feasibility of better integration between the two.

Against the current backdrop of international agreements calling for more integrated, systemic approaches to increase resilience to shocks, the rising interest in shock-responsive social protection systems across regions provides an ideal moment for research to fill these gaps and inform policy and programming.

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