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Linking social protection and humanitarian response – best practice

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Question

What are the lessons learned from social protection programmes which aim to bridge humanitarian and development objectives? How were these programmes designed, what were the risks, how were they mitigated and what programme documents and evaluations are available? Focus on alignment of humanitarian assistance with national social protection systems.

Contents

1. Summary

This review looks at the alignment of humanitarian response in refugee crises with national social protection systems. It examines the experience of three countries dealing with protracted refugee situations: Turkey, Lebanon and Cameroon, and also identifies lessons from other literature.

The number of people affected by crises and disasters continues to rise, and humanitarian refugee crises are becoming more and more prolonged. This has led to recognition of the need for a different approach to year-on-year humanitarian assistance, and specifically, of the **need to bridge the humanitarian-development divide**. **Social protection offers a way to do this**. The European Commission (ECHO, 2018: 2) defines social protection as:

> a set of policies and actions that enhance the capacity of all people, but notably poor and vulnerable groups, to escape from poverty (or avoid falling into poverty), and better manage risks and shocks. In crisis or shock situations, social protection interventions are primarily a means to help meeting immediate needs and reducing mortality and human suffering.

There are a **number of ways in which social protection and humanitarian responses can be linked**:

a) using existing social protection programmes to prevent/manage disasters;

b) using humanitarian response to build social protection systems, particularly in situations of extreme fragility where social protection systems are absent or very weak;

c) in situations of forced displacement, social protection can become a cornerstone of strategies to reduce vulnerability and promote self-reliance.

This review focuses on the latter, which entails **alignment of humanitarian response for refugees with national social protection systems**. This **has large potential benefits** for national and humanitarian partners, as well as donors, including:

- use of common platforms and tools to improve transparency, efficiency and accountability;
- enhancing shock-responsiveness of national social protection systems;
- incentivising donors (through improved performance) to provide financial support and set up a more coherent, cost-effective and sustainable financing architecture.

However, **there are also significant challenges**, including:

- most national social safety nets are not accessible to non-nationals;
- governments rarely have capacity, tools and processes in place that can adapt to the impacts of mass displacement shocks;
- difficulties in data analysis, accountability and coordination across multiple safety nets and numerous ministries;
- differences in funding of humanitarian and government safety nets in terms of duration, political requirements, objectives and conditions.

In the context of the humanitarian response to the Syrian refugee crisis, there have been considerable innovations in social assistance interventions with regard to approaches, tools and

systems. Most notably the widespread use of cash-based interventions, common vulnerability and targeting methodologies, common delivery systems and technology for identification and cash delivery. There has also been considerable progress in terms of promoting resilience among affected people. There is **huge potential to implement these initiatives at scale and promote more inclusive and sustainable social protection for all**.

This review found three examples of humanitarian refugee responses being aligned with existing national social protection systems.

Turkey and Syrian refugee response

Turkey has received some 3.6 million Syrian refugees – the largest number of refugees in a single host country in the world. Handling of the response changed significantly as the Syrian refugee crisis became more protracted, moving from traditional humanitarian assistance to supporting a nationally led response. The 3 billion Euro Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT) was set up in 2015 to ensure that the **humanitarian and longer-term development needs of refugees and host communities are addressed in a comprehensive and joined-up manner**.

Turkey has historically had strong social protection programmes, especially in social assistance. However, these were not adequate to deal with the scale of the Syrian refugee crisis. In November 2016, the **Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN)** was set up. Supported by the FRiT, the ESSN provides long-term cash transfers to Syrian refugees and increases their self-reliance as well as improving their access to education (see below). As of November 2018, it served 1.4 million out-of-camp refugees in Turkey, disbursing 120 Turkish Lira (TL) per month for each member of the family (Seyfert, 2018). It targets those considered the most vulnerable: single-parent families; families with over four children or with elderly or disabled dependents; elderly people on their own; and single women.

A number of factors have contributed to the success of the ESSN but it has also faced challenges. Success factors include:

- Turkey has a well-developed banking system and a culture of paying by card, greatly facilitating use of a cash transfer like the ESSN;
- The ESSN was designed in conjunction with the Government of Turkey, and builds on existing national systems and processes. This enabled it to reach beneficiaries relatively quickly, to save costs and to develop more appropriate, effective, durable solutions to the protracted crisis;
- The ESSN places considerable focus on social cohesion between refugees and locals. Thus transfers are carefully calibrated to ensure they are not more generous than the social protection available to Turkish citizens under their own national scheme;

With regard to challenges:

- There were initial implementation issues (because of the scale of the programme) and changes had to be made to deliver support to the increased number of people in a timely manner;
- Refugees need to have an official address and to register with Turkey's national identity card provider before they are able to have an ESSN card. This and the fact that refugees must apply for the ESSN means the most vulnerable are more likely to be excluded;
- Due to the homogenous nature of the Syrian refugee population, targeting (differentiating between poor and non-poor households) is very difficult;

- Recognising that refugees have a range of non-cash related needs there is <u>coordination with other refugee assistance programmes</u>, including child protection services and labour market programmes. However, the <u>cash transfer application does not systematically link applicants to such services</u>, replicating a weakness in the national system (Turkish citizens in need of cash assistance and social care have to apply at two different centres).

Monitoring analysis has demonstrated considerable improvements in outcomes among ESSN-assisted people, including in food security, debt and coping strategies, but high inflation has led to concerns that the current transfer value is not sufficient to meet the needs of beneficiaries.

The ESSN is linked to Turkey's Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) programme, a national programme available to poor Turkish children. It was expanded in 2017 to include all refugee children: it uses the same transfer amount, payment frequency and conditionality as for Turkish children and is implemented through government bodies.

Lebanon and Syrian refugee response

As of October 2018, Lebanon was hosting an estimated 1.5 million Syrians (GoL & UN, 2019: 8). The **presence of such large numbers of refugees has caused deepening poverty in Lebanon** and exacerbated pre-existing development constraints. The challenge in Lebanon has therefore been to address the needs of refugees *and* to support the growing numbers of Lebanese pushed into poverty as a result of the crisis.

In May 2012, at the request of the Government of Lebanon, the World Food Programme (WFP) began delivering **food assistance to Syrian refugees using paper vouchers; this was later scaled up and the transfer modality shifted to an electronic card**. The system enables targeted beneficiaries to purchase food commodities at WFP-contracted shops only (currently over 480). By December 2013, more than 500,000 refugees had received an electronic food voucher and in 2017, the number of assisted beneficiaries reached 680,000 (Gentilini et al, 2018: 29).

However, by early 2014 there was **increasing evidence of growing tensions among poor Lebanese families and refugees** residing within the same communities. This was primarily because Lebanese families were ineligible to receive WFP e-card assistance.

In response, and to help mitigate the impact of the refugee influx on Lebanon, **e-card food vouchers were introduced for poor Lebanese families through the national system, the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP).** In November 2014, the NPTP was scaled up through the **Emergency NPTP project (E-NPTP).** The aim was to help alleviate extreme poverty experienced by vulnerable Lebanese and reduce tension between Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees by providing a level of assistance parity received by refugees.

Based on funding availability, the most vulnerable 5,076 households from the NPTP beneficiary database (27,209 individuals) were initially deemed eligible to receive the e-card. Coverage was expanded each month, and the number of NPTP beneficiary households receiving food assistance through the e-card reached 10,008 households (52,724 individuals) in December 2016.

There is considerable harmonisation between the WFP e-card programme and E-NPTP:

- Both Syrian refugees and E-NPTP households are eligible to use them within the 480 WFP-contracted shops across the country.

- To ensure not to overwhelm contracted shops, the dates of card loading are separate for Syrian refugees and Lebanese participating in NPTP.
- The value of the unconditional cash transfer received monthly by each group of beneficiaries through the e-card is also harmonised to avoid potential social tensions which could arise.

Cameroon and Central African Republic (CAR) refugee response

Cameroon is host to over 250,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) (UNHCR, 2018b: 1), the majority of whom live in extreme poverty. **UNHCR launched the Transitional Safety Net project in 2018.** It is designed to provide continuous and predictable support to select CAR refugees over a two-year period, contributing to **meeting their basic needs and enabling them to start income-generating activities** and reduce their dependence on external aid. As well as regular monthly payments, once a year families also receive a larger cash grant to invest in livelihoods activities of their choice (e.g. buying seeds, tools, small livestock). In addition, financial training and support are provided to start income-generating activities, and referrals to protection services are made for those identified as having specific vulnerabilities.

The Transitional Safety Net has been designed to align with Cameroon's national social safety net system. Refugees are eligible for inclusion in the national system, and the Transitional Safety Net approach is complementary: providing the same transfer value, duration and using a similar targeting approach. Consequently, families supported by UNHCR receive the same amount of assistance as the refugees and Cameroonians supported through the national social safety net. There is also alignment between geographic coverage of refugees by the Transitional Safety Net and the national social safety net.

The Transitional Safety Net project is designed as a transitional measure within the humanitarian-development nexus to accompany the shift from a humanitarian approach to a shock-responsive nationally-owned safety net approach. The exit strategy of the Transitional Safety Net has three main components including refugee inclusion in national social protection systems, and paving the way for donors to shift, in a phased approach, from funding external actors (such as UNHCR) to deliver humanitarian aid, to providing direct support to the Cameroonian government to assist refugees and refugee hosting areas.

Lessons from other literature

This review identified a number of studies making recommendations for alignment of humanitarian assistance with national social protection systems. Key among these are:

- The decision to align with national systems should not come as an afterthought, but rather should be part of an overall response strategy, starting from preparedness. Even where the national social safety nets are weak, alignment of cash assistance – and ideally refugee inclusion – should be considered at the onset of the interventions.
- Leadership and engagement of national authorities must be the norm, not the exception. The entry point for assistance in the country should always be the national government.
- Where appropriate and possible, the existing social protection system should be used for provision of humanitarian assistance and contribute to resilience building.
- Key preconditions for alignment are mapping the access of non-nationals to basic rights, such as documentation, access to land and employment. In situations where refugee rights are restricted alignment must be preceded and/or accompanied by advocacy.

- The absorptive capacity of national systems also needs to be considered. National social protection schemes in low and middle-income countries may be stretched financially, institutionally, and administratively, even before the transfer of beneficiaries previously supported by humanitarian assistance. Therefore, absorption of these additional beneficiaries by social protection systems should be carefully calibrated.

- Robust data is required in the alignment process, in particular when aligning with the social registry or the targeting approach.

- Lessons learned from humanitarian cash assistance, such as transfer mechanisms or innovative technology, can be transferred to the national system in situations where it is being developed or strengthened.

- Refugees might well need assistance in the inclusion process. Social assistance is often applied for, a process in which non-nationals may require support from humanitarian or development actors, or the authorities themselves.

- There is a need for better documentation of lessons, performance and knowledge sharing in humanitarian assistance.

This review drew on a mixture of academic papers and grey literature, notably reports by development agencies. As well as a dearth of examples in which humanitarian responses have been aligned to existing national social protection systems, it found a lack of evaluations of programmes. The literature was largely gender-blind with little reference to people with disabilities.

2. Linking social protection systems with refugee humanitarian response

Importance

The number of people affected by crises and disasters continues to rise. One 2018 estimate put the number of people forcibly displaced at over 65 million, with 130 million relying on humanitarian aid (ECHO, 2018: 1). Sabates-Wheeler (2019: 3) writes that there are an estimated 244 million people living in a country other than that of their birth, including 21.3 million refugees who have fled war and persecution, as well as other populations that have been displaced as a result of insecurity, natural disaster or the effects of climate change. Furthermore, the numbers of people in situations of protracted displacement is rising: more and more refugee crises involve little prospect of people being able to return to their homeland in the short- to medium-term.

As humanitarian refugee crises have become more and more prolonged, there is recognition of the need to take a different approach. Year-on-year renewal of humanitarian assistance is costly, inefficient, and does little to meet the long-term needs of refugees. What is needed is 'improved coherence between humanitarian and development actions, and closer cooperation to create long-term and sustainable responses which include livelihood opportunities for crisis-affected people' (ECHO, 2018: 1).

One key way to bridge the humanitarian-development divide and respond to protracted crises is through social protection. Social protection is, fundamentally, a response to vulnerability: refugees (and other forcibly displaced populations) face a range of vulnerabilities related to their reasons for moving, their legal status, the places and sectors in which they find themselves, and/or an individual or group's characteristics (e.g. gender, age) (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019: 5). As

a policy instrument for dealing with vulnerability, social protection is thus particularly pertinent to refugees in situations of protracted displacement (Sabates-Wheeler, 2019). Moreover, 'The robust, yet widely flexible delivery mechanisms of social protection make this policy instrument particularly attractive. Scaling up social protection systems has been identified as one of the core avenues to enhance the resilience of vulnerable populations' (ECHO, 2018: 1).

This is reflected in the diverse international commitments promoting social protection in humanitarian responses:

- Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development commits countries to expanding coverage of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including refugees (SPIACB, n.d.: 1).
- The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit also yielded a commitment to 'support the further expansion and strengthening of social protection systems (…) as a means of responding to shocks and protracted crises' (ECHO, 2018: 2).
- The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (2016) called on governments, humanitarian and development actors to 'invest in the development of social assistance delivery mechanisms while strengthening capacity at national and sub-national levels' and to 'develop strategies for the protection of refugees within the framework of national social protection systems' (UNDG, 2018: 2).
- The ILO recommends 'promoting decent work, social protection and employment opportunities for refugees and host communities' (UNDG, 2018: 2).
- The 2017 International Conference on Social Protection in Contexts of Fragility and Forced Displacement held in Brussels reiterated the need to promote joint humanitarian and development action for collective outcomes, strengthen national social protection capacity and systems; and ensure adequate financing and a coherent funding architecture (UNDG, 2018b: 1).

Approaches to link social protection and humanitarian assistance

There are a number of situations in which social protection and humanitarian responses can be linked to bridge the humanitarian-development divide (ECHO, 2018: 2; SPIACB, n.d.: 2):

a) Using existing social protection programmes to prevent/manage disasters: social protection can be used to build capacity at individual, household, community and national levels to withstand the negative impact of shocks, and can be scaled up to respond in times of disaster/crisis. Oxford Policy Management have developed a typology of options for shock-responsive adaptation of social protection programmes, detailed in Table 1.

b) Using humanitarian response to build social protection systems: particularly in situations of extreme fragility, where social protections are absent or very weak 'humanitarian interventions can be used as a window of opportunity to trigger investments in the development of "nascent" safety nets or social assistance structures'. 'While building national social protection systems has traditionally fallen under the remit of development, the humanitarian community can play an important role in aligning with and complementing these efforts';

c) In situations of forced displacement, social protection can become a cornerstone of strategies to address protracted displacement, including that of IDPs and refugees. This will entail alignment of humanitarian responses with national social protection systems.

Table 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: Sabates-Wheeler, 2018: 9, licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

The literature gives numerous examples of use of existing social protection programmes to address disasters. After Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in November 2013, the country's flagship conditional cash transfer programme, Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program (4Ps), was used to distribute aid to those affected (Gentilini et al, 2018: 18). The 4Ps was already reaching some 4.5 million households: both UNICEF and WFP funded top-up payments to some beneficiaries to help meet their immediate needs and facilitate recovery (Gentilini et al, 2018: 9). Working through government systems to provide post-disaster humanitarian response was cost-efficient, though households living in the area and not on the programme had to be reached through separate interventions.[1]

There are also some examples of national social protection systems developing out of humanitarian responses. In Mauritania, the knowledge, tools and practices of NGOs, international humanitarian actors, and donors was identified, institutionalised and scaled up by the government, leading to the development of a National Social Registry and a cash transfer programme (Tekavoul) targeting 100,000 poor households across the country (Gentilini et al, 2018: 22). In Ethiopia, decades of experience with past (pre-2005) Employment Guarantee Schemes was leveraged to form the institutional and programmatic backbone of (post-2005) public works under the Productive Safety Net Program (Gentilini et al, 2018).

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[1] For more information see Aldaba, F. (2019). *Linking Social Protection and Humanitarian Assistance in the Philippines.* World Bank Social Protection Policy Note No. 17. World Bank Group. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/189591553880437179/Linking-Social-Protection-and-Humanitarian-Assistance-in-the-Philippines

Alignment of humanitarian assistance with national social protection systems

This review focuses on the alignment of alignment of humanitarian response for refugees with national social protection systems. UNHCR (2018a: 6) argue that'the more displacement is protracted, the more humanitarian objectives should align with social protection objectives'. A UNDG working paper identifies large potential benefits for national and humanitarian partners, as well as donors, to promote and support better alignment between humanitarian assistance and national systems (UNDG, 2018: 4):

- From the perspective of governments, huge gains can be achieved from utilising common platforms and tools that have been tested and proven to contribute to improved transparency, efficiency and accountability.

- Governments could also benefit from embedding humanitarian mechanisms to enhance the shock-responsiveness of national social protection systems and to enable these to respond to future disasters.

- Performance improvements resulting from enhanced capacity could incentivise donors to provide financial support that could help overcome funding constraints. Working through common systems could improve the predictability of financing and the sustainability of their programmes, while ensuring that refugee needs are addressed through sustainable systems that rely less on short-term humanitarian funding.

- Lastly, for donors, alignment between the two systems based on the use of common systems and tools, would provide the incentive for a more coherent, cost-effective and sustainable financing architecture.

However, a UNHCR mapping of 18 countries with refugee populations identifies challenges to alignment of humanitarian cash assistance and social safety nets (SSN) (UNHCR, 2018: 2):

- The majority of national social safety nets are not accessible to non-nationals. When refugees are granted partial access to SSN, full access is often limited due to restrictive legal frameworks. In addition, refugees do not always have access to services.

- Governments rarely have capacity, tools and processes in place that can adapt to the impacts of mass displacement shocks.

- Complex targeting, across multiple safety nets, coordinated by numerous ministries make data analysis, accountability and coordination challenging.

- Funding of humanitarian and government safety nets often differ in terms of duration, political requirements, objectives and conditions, making alignment challenging.

The UNDG paper also highlights significant challenges and enabling conditions that need to be met including (UNDG, 2018b: 2):

- <u>Establishing new and creative financing</u> that helps to pool and bridge humanitarian and development funding, channels funds to cover gaps in national systems, and provides multi-year, predictable support and enhanced knowledge-sharing. [Enhanced linkages between humanitarian and development funding streams would also enable the needed longer-term investments for strengthening, building or rebuilding integrated national social protection systems.]

- More robust evidence-building and learning from social protection/assistance interventions, also to secure effective and differentiated approaches that account for contextual specificities at country level. In particular on:
  - the relationship between displacement, vulnerability and poverty to inform the articulation of more harmonised targeting methodologies;
  - the differential impact, including gender impact - of various social protection measures and delivery models and in various contexts;
  - the economic and social security benefits of participation of displaced populations in the labour markets;
  - conditions under which the delivery of basic services and social protection contribute towards state legitimacy and social cohesion.

The UNDG paper (2018b: 3) stresses that, 'Leveraging and investing resources in monitoring and evaluation, as well as in high quality research by all stakeholders, is required to generate a systematic evidence base that will then pave the way for improved effectiveness in social protection policy-making and programming whilst making the 'business' case to enable governments to expand social protection coverage'.

Potential for alignment in Syrian refugee crisis

In the context of the humanitarian response to the Syrian refugee crisis, there have been considerable innovations in social assistance interventions with regard to approaches, tools and systems. Key among these is the widespread use of cash-based interventions and the development of common vulnerability and targeting methodologies, common delivery systems and technology for identification and cash delivery (UNDG, 2018: 3). These innovations have been largely successful in promoting improved transparency, eliminating fraud and ensuring efficiency, while delivering to the most vulnerable. Furthermore, social protection responses have already made important strides towards enhancing their contribution to the resilience of affected people and communities on a more comprehensive and sustainable basis. This includes: increased use of multi-purpose cash transfers; efforts to integrate cash-assistance with other social support services; linking cash assistance with the expansion of sustainable livelihoods for refugees and host communities, as well as efforts to advocate for and promote policy changes that allow for refugees to access work permits and social security (UNDG, 2018b: 2).

If implemented at scale, these initiatives have huge potential to promote more inclusive and sustainable social protection for all (UNDG, 2018). However, to date little attention has been given in the annual Regional Response and Resilience Plans (3RP) and related national response plans to the strengthening of national social protection systems, and in particular national social safety nets, as an integral part of the response to the crisis (UNDG, 2018: 6).

3. Turkey and Syrian refugee crisis

Background

As a result of the conflict in Syria, Turkey has received some 3.6 million Syrian refugees – the largest number of refugees in a single host country in the world (3RP 2019-2020: 5). Over 90% of the refugees in Turkey live outside of camps; though dispersed across all provinces they are largely found in three provinces in the southeast, and in Istanbul (over 500,000 Syrian refugees)

(EC, 2019: 91; 3RP: 5). Initially in 2012, the response to the refugee crisis was managed through traditional humanitarian response mechanisms: some USD 80 million of funding was channelled through international and civil society organisations (EC, 2019: 91).

As the Syrian refugee crisis became more protracted significant changes were made in the handling of the response (EC, 2019: 91):

- From 2013 onwards, the response strategy of the humanitarian community was consolidated through the annual Regional Response and Resilience Plans (3RP). This coordinated the support from UN and NGO partners to the Government of Turkey in the sectors of food security, education, protection, basic needs, livelihoods, health and nutrition.

- Given the strong social protection systems in place across Turkey *(see below)*, and once it became clear that the displacement crisis was likely to become protracted, the 3RP transitioned from an externally driven plan to provide increased support to national and local systems, to enable a nationally led response while continuing to directly provide services and humanitarian assistance.

- In 2015, the 3 billion Euro (La Rosa et al, 2017) Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT) was established, designed to ensure that the humanitarian and longer-term development needs of refugees and host communities are addressed in a comprehensive and joined-up manner.

International resources increased considerably, reaching USD 795 million in 2017 (EC, 2019: 91), but it is the Turkish government that has shouldered the bulk of the financial burden of the refugee response in Turkey: the latest estimates put its investment in hosting Syrian refugees at USD 37 billion (3RP, 2019: 5).

Turkey has historically had strong social protection programmes, especially in social assistance, with robust administrative systems that enabled comprehensive registration, enrolment, assessment and grievance-redress processes across multiple programmes (EC, 2018: 91). However, these were not adequate to deal with the scale of the Syrian refugee crisis.

Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN)

In November 2016, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) was launched. Supported by the FRiT, the ESSN provides long-term cash transfers to Syrian refugees and increases their self-reliance as well as improving their access to education (see below). As of November 2018, it served 1.4 million out-of-camp refugees in Turkey, disbursing 120 Turkish Lira (TL) per month for each member of the family (Seyfert, 2018; WFP, 2019: 2). Families also receive periodic 'top-ups'; refugees with severe disability receive an additional monthly top-up of TL 600 (WFP, 2019: 2). It targets those considered the most vulnerable: single-parent families; families with over four children or with elderly or disabled dependents; elderly people on their own; and single women (La Rosa et al, 2017; WFP, 2019). The majority of beneficiaries are Syrian, but it also helps refugees and asylum-seekers from other countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia (La Rosa et al, 2017).

The fact that Turkey has a well-developed banking system and a culture of paying by card greatly facilitates use of a cash transfer like the ESSN. Another requirement is that beneficiaries know the value of cash and how to budget – Syrian refugees (and others: Afghans, Somalis) understand this (La Rosa et al, 2017).

The ESSN was designed in conjunction with the Government of Turkey. Indeed, 'The government's leadership in the response from the beginning, its willingness to engage in partnerships with international organisations and to compromise on aspects of programme design was a critical factor enabling the provision of cash at scale in Turkey' (EC, 2019: 91).

The programme is run through Turkey's existing social assistance offices, the local branches of the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policy (MoFSP), in collaboration with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) (La Rosa, 2017; EC, 2019). It also works in close partnership with the Turkish National Disaster Management Authority as well as other government bodies such as the Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) and Directorate General of Population and Citizenship Affairs (DGPC) (La Rosa, 2017; EC, 2019). The roles of the respective partners are as follows (WFP, 2019: 2):

- The DGMM and DGPC are responsible for ID issuance and address registration respectively, both ESSN prerequisites;
- The MoFSP processes applications for the ESSN;
- TRC manages the delivery of the programme nationwide, working with the MoFSP and its welfare centres;
- WFP provides oversight and technical support and plays a key role in coordinating with other responders in Turkey;
- ECHO funds the ESSN; it and the MoFSP co-chair the ESSN Governing Board and provide strategic direction for the programme.

The fact that the ESSN builds on existing national systems and processes enabled it to reach beneficiaries relatively quickly, to save costs and to develop 'more appropriate, effective, durable solutions to the protracted crisis' (EC, 2019: 91).

A 2018 evaluation of the ESSN by Oxford Policy Management (OPM) found that some elements of the transfer, in particular managing applications and running the applicant database, relied on the national system, while other elements, such as the rationale behind the transfer amount, monitoring and evaluation, and beneficiary communication were managed by humanitarian agencies (Seyfert, 2018). Rather than being involved in direct delivery, the latter's role was in liaising with government to advocate for inclusion of the most vulnerable, and in connecting applicants to the transfer by providing 'handholding' support throughout the application process (Seyfert, 2018).

Challenges

Implementation of the ESSN has faced issues. Changes were made to implementation systems soon after the programme started so as to deliver support to the increased number of people in a timely manner (EC, 2019: 91).

Refugees need to have an official address and to register with Turkey's Nufus (the national identity card provider) before they are able to have an ESSN card; and after that applications can take up to nine weeks to process – as of 2017 efforts were being made to address this (La Rosa et al, 2017). However, the OPM evaluation noted that, due to its scale, 'the ESSN is based on households applying for the transfer, which entails compiling a number of documents and

formally applying….refugees who cannot obtain the required documents are more likely to be vulnerable and are more likely to be excluded' (Seyfert, 2018).

The ESSN places considerable focus on social cohesion between refugees and locals. Thus, transfers are carefully calibrated to ensure they are not more generous than the social protection available to Turkish citizens under their own national scheme (La Rosa et al, 2017). Using humanitarian principles of basic needs would have resulted in a higher transfer amount compared to that received by poor community households: the final amount represented a compromise between humanitarian principles and considerations of fairness in respect to host country welfare systems (Seyfert, 2018).

The OPM evaluation also found that, due to the homogenous nature of the Syrian refugee population, targeting (differentiating between poor and non-poor households) was very difficult. The difference between poor and non-poor households comes to a few dollars a month and families move in and out of poverty: receiving the benefit means that beneficiary households are better off than non-beneficiary households (Seyfert, 2018).

Recognising that refugees have a range of non-cash related needs, there is coordination with other refugee assistance programmes, including child protection services, labour market programmes, and legal services to grant and enforce their right to stay in Turkey and to access public services including health, education and social assistance (EC, 2019: 92; WFP, 2019). However, the OPM evaluation noted that the cash transfer application did not systematically link applicants to protection and social care services (such as disability services, sexual- and gender-based violence protection services, or psychosocial counselling). 'This is an instance where a weakness in the national system is replicated in the ESSN….Turkish citizens in need to both cash assistance and social care have to apply at two different centres' (Seyfert, 2018).

Monitoring analysis has demonstrated considerable improvements in outcomes among ESSN-assisted people, including in food security, debt and coping strategies (WFP, 2019: 2). However, high inflation rates (25% in September 2018) mean progress has started to reverse: families are still better off than before they started receiving the ESSN but there are concerns the current transfer value is not sufficient to meet the needs of beneficiaries (WFP, 2019).

Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE)

About one-third of the Syrian refugees in Turkey are children, so supporting education is a priority (La Rosa et al, 2017). Thus, there are particularly strong synergies between the ESSN and Turkey's Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) programme. This is a national programme available to poor Turkish children from 2003 (La Rosa et al, 2017). It was expanded in 2017 to include all refugee children: during the 2017/2018 school year, 368,090 Syrian children (61% of those enrolled) benefited from the CCTE programme (3RP, 2019: 6). The CCTE uses the same transfer amount, payment frequency and conditionality as for Turkish children (European Commission et al, 2017b: 3). Like the ESSN, the CCTE is implemented through government bodies: the MoFSP, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the Turkish Red Crescent and UNICEF (La Rosa et al, 2017). It was designed to complement and build on the ESSN's operational modalities and structures (European Commission et al, 2017b: 3). In the words of a senior UNICEF official, 'The systems were already there, in terms of application, registration procedures and information management systems. That means opportunities to reach beneficiaries, fast' (cited in La Rosa et al, 2017).

The CCTE programme includes a strategic child protection component to ensure the continued school enrolment and attendance of the most vulnerable refugee children as well as their referral to child protection services, when needed (3RP, 2019).

4. Lebanon and Syrian refugee crisis[2]

Background

As of October 2018, Lebanon was hosting an estimated 1.5 million Syrians who had fled the conflict in Syria (including 950,3341 registered as refugees with UNHCR) (GoL & UN, 2019: 8). The presence of such large numbers of refugees has put host communities under strain. The conflict in Syria has significantly impacted Lebanon's social and economic growth, caused deepening poverty and humanitarian needs, and exacerbated pre-existing development constraints in the country (GoL & UN, 2019: 8). Moreover, at the end of 2015, the crisis had cost the Lebanese economy an estimated USD18.15 billion due to the economic slowdown, loss in fiscal revenues and additional pressure on public services (GoL & UN, 2019: 8). The challenge in Lebanon has therefore been to address the needs of refugees *and* to support the growing numbers of Lebanese pushed into poverty as a result of the crisis.

Prepaid electronic cards for Syrian refugees

In May 2012, the Government of Lebanon requested WFP to return to Lebanon to address the food and nutrition needs of the growing population of Syrian refugees in the country. WFP began delivering food assistance to Syrian refugees in June 2012 using paper vouchers. WFP scaled up and expanded its assistance program in 2013, and shifted its transfer modality from the paper voucher to an electronic card providing assistance. Functioning markets, technical capacity, adequate banking services and infrastructure throughout the country allowed for this change. By December 2013, more than 500,000 refugees had received an electronic food voucher redeemable in local shops throughout the country, contributing to developing value chains and having a positive impact on the Lebanese economy. In 2017, the number of assisted beneficiaries reached 680,000 following a series of validation and targeting exercises.

The Banque Libano Française is the financial service provider of the prepaid card system used for registered Syrian refugees. The system enables targeted beneficiaries to purchase food commodities at WFP-contracted shops only. As of today, over 480 retailers throughout Lebanon contracted by WFP have a devoted point-of-sale device to process beneficiaries' e-cards. For the successful roll-out of this innovative approach, WFP relied on the guidance and support of the Lebanese Central Bank. To receive assistance from WFP, Syrian refugees must be registered with UNHCR. WFP provides e-cards to targeted refugees in Lebanon based upon their refugee status and eligibility for assistance, as determined by the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (a multisector analysis that WFP conducts annually with UNHCR and UNICEF).

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[2] This write-up is largely drawn from Gentilini et al, 2018: 29-31. Unless otherwise stated, all references are from here.

Challenges and responses: strengthening national system

By early 2014, at the height of the influx of refugees into Lebanon, and with the WFP e-card food voucher programme in full swing throughout the country for refugees, there was increasing evidence of growing tensions between poor Lebanese families and refugees residing within the same communities. This was primarily due to the fact that Lebanese families were ineligible to receive WFP e-card assistance. These growing tensions were further identified by regular field visits conducted by the World Bank team, the Ministry of Social Affairs' (MOSA's) social workers, as well as WFP.

In response, and to help mitigate the impact of the refugee influx on Lebanon, the World Bank proposed to the government the introduction of the e-card food vouchers for poor Lebanese families, and approached WFP. Both the World Bank and WFP saw the importance of this step not only in terms of a means of reducing poverty and tension among the two communities, but also to strengthen the national system, the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP).

Lebanon's NPTP, supported by the World Bank, was launched in October 2011 to provide fee waivers for health and education targeted at the poorest and most vulnerable Lebanese households—coverage that continues today for 105,000 households. In November 2014, the NPTP was scaled up through the Emergency NPTP project (E-NPTP) with the support of an USD 8.2 million grant from the Lebanon Syrian Crisis Trust Fund. A second phase of support was provided through a USD10 million grant in 2016 (Additional Financing to the E-NPTP—World Bank). By introducing food assistance via the e-card food voucher to NPTP beneficiaries, the scale up aimed to help alleviate extreme poverty experienced by vulnerable Lebanese and reduce tension between Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees by providing a level of assistance parity between the two.

NPTP also included financing operational support, training and capacity development assistance for MOSA from WFP to assume the overall responsibility for the implementation of the food voucher programme. This was provided within the following areas: (i) beneficiary sensitisation on the use, maintenance and operation of the e-card; (ii) distribution of e-cards to beneficiaries; (iii) assessment, monitoring (pre-assessment baseline, post-distribution monitoring and sampling) and reporting tools; (iv) beneficiary data management; and (iv) fraud detection techniques.

Based on funding availability, the most vulnerable 5,076 households from the NPTP beneficiary database (27,209 individuals) were initially deemed eligible to receive the e-card. Since August 2016, coverage of the e-card food voucher has been expanding at a rate of approximately 1,000 households per month. As such, the number of NPTP beneficiary households receiving food assistance through the e-card reached 10,008 households (52,724 individuals) in December 2016.

Both Syrian refugees and NPTP households benefiting from the WFP e-cards are eligible to use them within the 480 WFP-contracted shops across the country. To ensure that contracted shops are not overwhelmed, there are separate dates for card loading for Syrian refugees and Lebanese participating in NPTP. Therefore, refugee e-cards are loaded on the fifth of every month, while NPTP e-cards are loaded on the 15th of each month. The value of the unconditional cash transfer received monthly by each group of beneficiaries through the e-card is also harmonised, so as to avoid any social tensions which could arise. As such, the value of the NPTP voucher has ranged between USD 27 and USD 30 per household member per month,

capped at six household members. For refugees, the voucher value has remained stable at USD 27 since February 2016.

5. Cameroon and Central African Republic refugee crisis

Background

Cameroon is host to over 250,000 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) (UNHCR, 2018b: 1), who came to the country in two major movements of forced displacement: the first in the mid-2000s and the second following communal violence in CAR in 2013 and 2014. Most of the CAR refugees are found in the eastern part of Cameroon (UNHCR, 2018b: 1). While refugees in Cameroon enjoy many of their fundamental rights, such as the right to work and the right to education and healthcare, the majority live in extreme poverty (UNHCR, 2018b). A November 2018 vulnerability analysis found that over 90% were living under the survival poverty line (UNHCR, 2018b: 3).

Transitional Safety Net

UNHCR, recognising that refugees needed help to meet their basic needs as well as to develop meaningful livelihoods, launched the Transitional Safety Net project in 2018. It is designed to provide continuous and predictable support to select CAR refugees over a two-year period, contributing to meeting their basic needs and enabling them to start income-generating activities and reduce their dependence on external aid (UNHCR, 2018b: 2). As well as regular monthly payments, once a year families also receive a larger cash grant to invest in livelihoods activities of their choice (e.g. buying seeds, tools, small livestock). In addition, financial training and support are provided to start income-generating activities, and referrals to protection services are made for those identified as having specific vulnerabilities.

In 2018, the Transitional Safety Net was implemented in just two geographic areas: Kette commune (East region) reaching 500 households, and Touboro commune (North region), reaching a further 1,365 households (UNHCR, 2018b: 6). The project was being scaled up, with the aim of reaching 6,000 CAR refugee households in 2019 (UNHCR, 2018b: 6).

Alignment with national social protection

The Transitional Safety Net has been designed to align with Cameroon's national social safety net system. The World Bank is providing funding to strengthen the latter, through the Social Safety Net Project.[3] Refugees are eligible for inclusion in the national system, and the Transitional Safety Net approach is complementary: providing the same transfer value, duration and using a similar targeting approach (UNHCR, 2018b: 6). This harmonised approach ensures that families supported by UNHCR receive the same amount of assistance as the refugees and Cameroonians supported through the national social safety net. Further, geographic coverage of refugees by the Transitional Safety Net will be aligned where possible to that of the World Bank programmes. 'This is perceived as fair by local authorities, refugees and Cameroonians alike,

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[3] World Bank Cameroon Social Safety Nets Project.
http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/433291525399293923/pdf/CAMEROON-SOCIAL-SAFETY-PAD-04052018.pdf

thereby reducing tension between refugees and the local host population, many of whom also live in extreme poverty' (UNHCR, 2018b: 6).

> The Transitional Safety Net thereby increases coverage of the Government system in parallel to a phased approach to refugee inclusion…..(It) informs joint government-international actor efforts to integrate shock-responsive mechanisms into the national social safety net, enabling the scaling-up (and down) of assistance in response to natural disasters, acute seasonal vulnerability and/or price hikes, as well as forced displacement (UNHCR, 2018b: 6)

It is important to note that the Transitional Safety Net project is designed as a transitional measure within the humanitarian-development nexus to accompany the shift from a humanitarian approach to a shock-responsive nationally-owned safety net approach. The exit strategy of the Transitional Safety Net has three main components, one of which is supporting refugees' own pathways to self-reliance. The other two are (UNHCR, 2018b: 6):

- <u>Inclusion in national systems</u>: refugee inclusion in national social protection systems, including the Government-led Social Safety Net, focusing on refugee-hosting areas. The same eligibility criteria are applied to both nationals and refugees.
- <u>Donor Strategies</u>: by working in collaboration with the national system and also building its capacity, the Transitional Safety Net helps pave the way for donors to shift, in a phased approach, from funding external actors (such as UNHCR) to deliver humanitarian aid to providing direct support to the Cameroonian government to assist refugees and refugee hosting areas.

6. Lessons from other literature

European Commission et al (2017). *International Conference on Social Protection in Contexts of Fragility and Forced Displacement: Outcome Document*

The International Conference on Social Protection in Contexts of Fragility and Forced Displacement recommended that international and local actors involved in development and/or humanitarian agenda work to develop and scale-up social protection systems through (EC et al, 2017: 4):

- Engaging early on with national and/or local governments to strengthen the design of social protection systems by introducing features ahead of disaster and crises, which allow the social protection system to:
    - Anticipate natural disasters and the escalation of conflict and displacement;
    - Include chronically poor and groups vulnerable to the identified risks;
    - Increase the level and breadth of support without compromising speed and efficiency of the temporary scale up when needed;
    - Maintain support for medium and long-term needs of people affected by protracted conflict;
- Where appropriate and possible, utilise the existing social protection system for provision of humanitarian assistance and contribute to resilience building;
- Work closely with local authorities to support and if necessary adapt governance structures to strengthen coordination and build synergies between departments responsible for social

protection, humanitarian assistance, forced displacement, agriculture and allied sectors, labour, disaster risk management, security, health, education and finance;

- Empower local-level governance structures through resource allocation and capacity enhancement of the social workforce while working to ensure equality of treatment;

- Work closely with communities, local authorities and partners to monitor the provision and quality of social protection and its actual benefits for the beneficiaries.

UNHCR (2018a). *Aligning Humanitarian Cash Assistance with National Social Safety Nets in Refugee Settings*

UNHCR's report *Aligning Humanitarian Cash Assistance with National Social Safety Nets in Refugee Settings* (UNHCR, 2018a) shares lessons on how humanitarian cash assistance for refugees could progressively align to national social safety nets. The report is based on information collected from Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Greece and Mexico (UNHCR, 2018a: 2).

The UNHCR report stresses that the decision to align with national systems should not come as an afterthought or be considered only once financing starts to dwindle, despite there being no imminent possibilities for return (UNHCR, 2018a: 7). Instead, it should be part of an overall response strategy, starting from preparedness. Depending on the context, objectives may vary from a full handover to the government to a partial inclusion of some refugees into the national systems (UNHCR, 2018a: 7). The timeframe for achieving these objectives will also vary significantly – in some contexts, partial alignment without any inclusion may be a reality for years to come.

The report identifies some key preconditions for alignment of humanitarian cash transfers with national social assistance mechanisms. The first step is to map the access of non-nationals to basic rights, including but not limited to documentation, access to land and employment, freedom of movement, access to education, and financial and other services (UNHCR, 2018a: 10). In situations where refugee rights are restricted, alignment must be preceded and/or accompanied by advocacy. This entails engagement with a wide range of actors, including development actors, donors and other stakeholders.

The report distinguishes between alignment in different contexts: with weak social safety nets; when social safety nets are available but need expansion; and where social safety nets are functional and available to nationals.

Key considerations for alignment in contexts with weak social safety nets are (UNHCR, 2018a: 11):

- Even where the national social safety nets are weak, alignment of cash assistance – and ideally refugee inclusion – should be considered at the onset of the interventions. Humanitarian actors should justify if not working with the national social protection systems.

- Targeted, limited and time-bound cash assistance should be considered, ideally through transitional cash that mirrors the national social safety nets, coupled and adapted with other services provided by development or humanitarian actors. Investment in livelihoods is key in order to avoid protracted refugee crises.

- Robust data is required in the alignment process, in particular when aligning with the social registry or the targeting approach, for example.

- Aligning targeting approaches can be challenging as the system in place may be costly and require significant capacity, data and resources, which humanitarian actors may not have.
- Lessons learned from humanitarian cash assistance, such as transfer mechanisms or innovative technology, can be transferred to the national system in situations where it is being developed or strengthened.
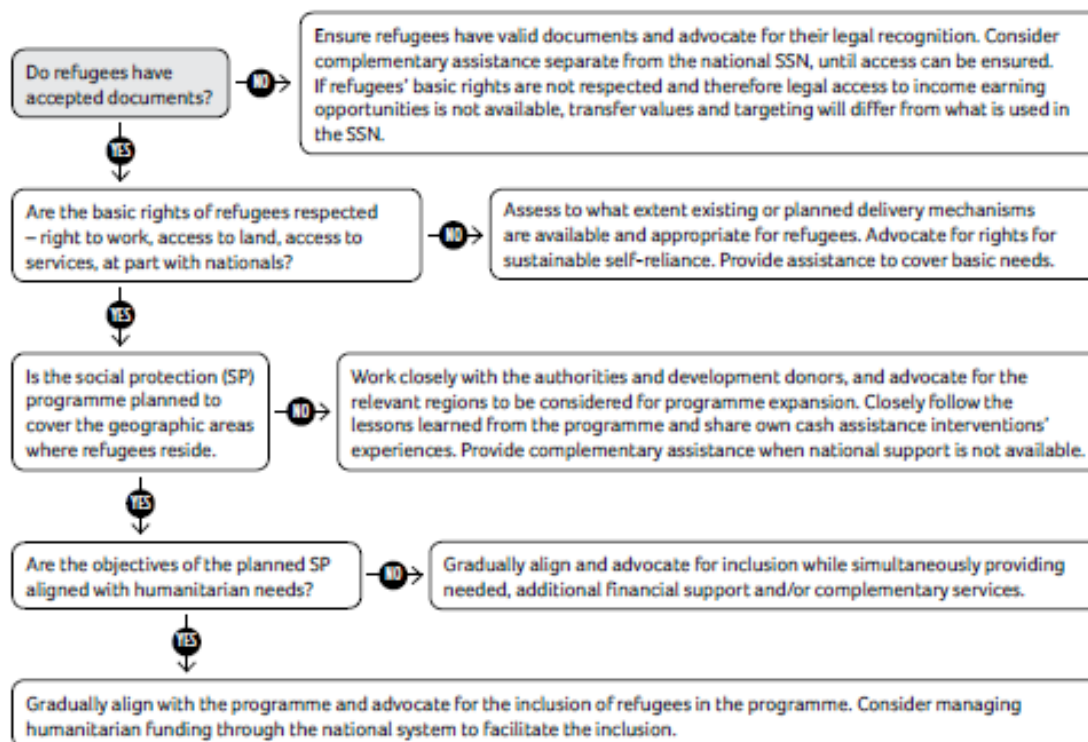
In terms of steps, and sequencing of measures, the report suggests the following (UNHCR, 2018a: 12-13):

- After the immediate emergency, before the situation becomes protracted, humanitarian organisations can and should prepare for more sustainable solutions, which include the incorporation of displaced populations in the national systems, ideally coupled with increased rights, such as access to land, and the right to work and invest in livelihoods.
- The transition from humanitarian assistance to transitional social safety nets must be coupled with the adaptation of service provision and, ideally, development investments. It should be gradual, resources permitting. Those considered eligible for humanitarian cash transfers, whether blanket or targeted, should receive information about the upcoming transition and in the period in-between, when the transfer value should be slowly adjusted downwards until it is in line with the national value.
- In the event that refugees are not included in the national social safety net and the inclusion is not foreseen in the medium term, this gradual alignment and thereafter support – that is in line with the national programme – will equally achieve the above-mentioned benefits. It will also facilitate a smooth exit, before a reduction in funding requires drastic and immediate changes to the assistance provided.

Key considerations in contexts where social safety nets are available but need expansion are (UNHCR, 2018a: 14) (see also Figure 1):

- Alignment of cash assistance should always be considered in these situations as it may enhance opportunities for future inclusion and the start of a transition from aid to development and self-reliance.
- Alignment must be gradually introduced and implemented hand-in-hand with clear communication strategies targeting the communities to avoid abrupt changes to their household economy. Cash assistance to host communities should be considered.
- Even where inclusion of refugees in the national social safety net is possible, the coverage of vulnerable refugees is often limited, and continued cash assistance as a transition by humanitarian actors should be considered.
- Advocacy efforts towards donors and development actors should be foreseen to secure additional funds allowing for increased numbers of refugees accessing the national system.

Figure 1: Decision tree for alignment of humanitarian cash assistance with national social safety nets when social safety nets are available but need expansion
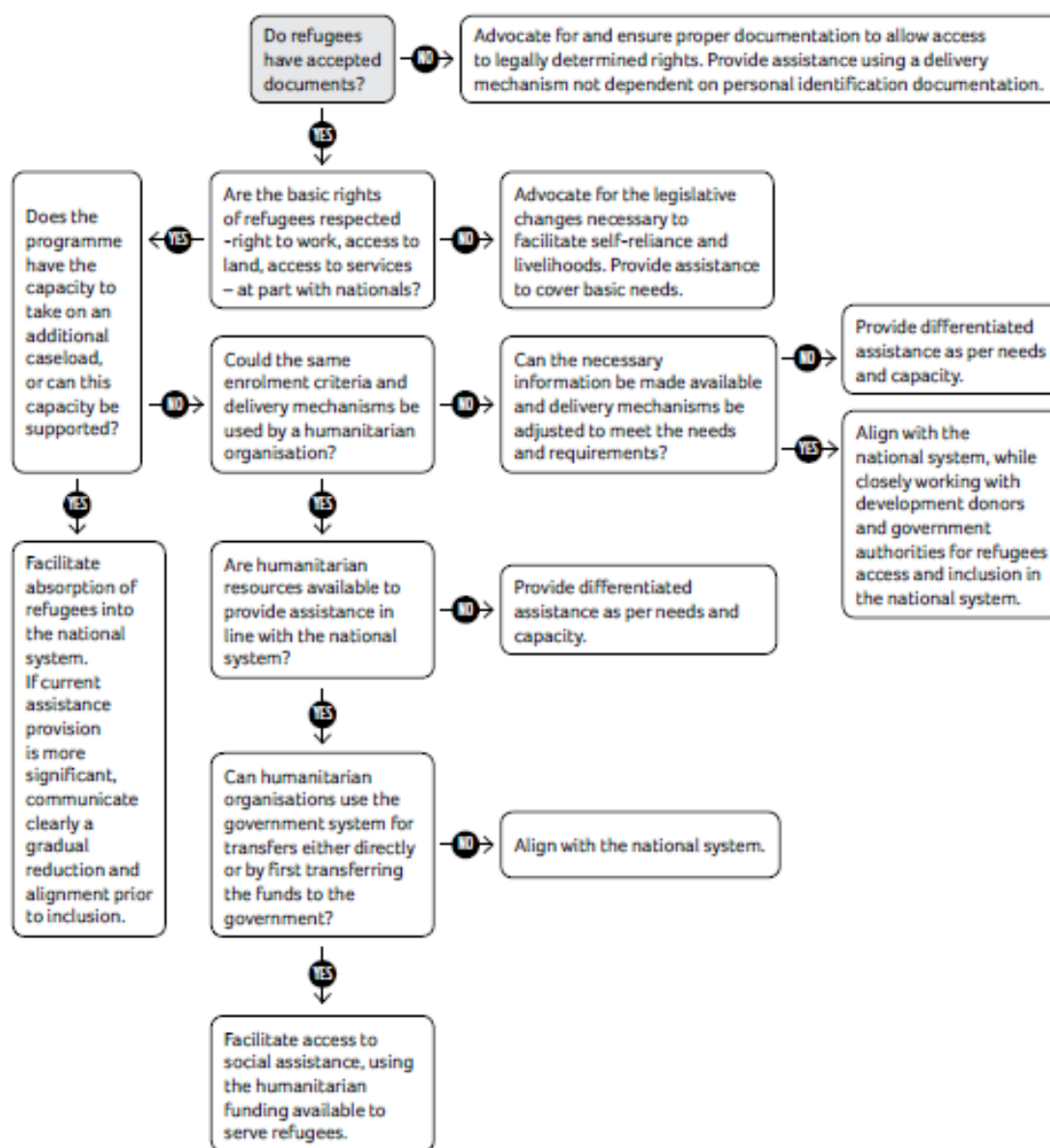

Source: UNHCR, 2018a: 20, https://www.unhcr.org/5cc011417.pdf

Key considerations for contexts where social safety nets are functional and available to nationals are (UNHCR, 2018a: 15-16) (see also Figure 2):

- Always consider alignment (if inclusion is not possible), in situations where the social safety nets are available, to an extent, to non-nationals.

- Be prepared to assist refugees in the inclusion process. Social assistance is often applied for in these situations; a process in which non-nationals may require support from humanitarian or development actors, or the authorities themselves.

- Advocate for non-nationals' access to recognised identity credentials. A main challenge for refugees to be included in national social protection systems relates to the lack of recognition of their ID cards; a common obstacle also to financial inclusion.

- Recognise that inclusion is a time-consuming activity, requiring a significant amount of advocacy. Social policies, in particular in relation to non-nationals, are often held hostage by political agendas and their implementation is subject to change when a new government is elected.

- In situations where non-nationals do not yet access the national social safety net, humanitarian actors should not completely design parallel structures due to the difficulties to adapt when the inclusion opportunity presents itself. In these situations, try to align – even if it is only one of the cash assistance elements.

Figure 2: Decision tree for alignment and potential integration of refugees in national social protection systems when social safety nets are functional and available to nationals

Do refugees have accepted documents? — NO → Advocate for and ensure proper documentation to allow access to legally determined rights. Provide assistance using a delivery mechanism not dependent on personal identification documentation.

YES ↓

Are the basic rights of refugees respected – right to work, access to land, access to services – at part with nationals? — NO → Advocate for the legislative changes necessary to facilitate self-reliance and livelihoods. Provide assistance to cover basic needs.

YES ←

Does the programme have the capacity to take on an additional caseload, or can this capacity be supported? — NO → Could the same enrolment criteria and delivery mechanisms be used by a humanitarian organisation? — NO → Can the necessary information be made available and delivery mechanisms be adjusted to meet the needs and requirements? — NO → Provide differentiated assistance as per needs and capacity.

— YES → Align with the national system, while closely working with development donors and government authorities for refugees access and inclusion in the national system.

YES ↓ (Does the programme...)

Facilitate absorption of refugees into the national system. If current assistance provision is more significant, communicate clearly a gradual reduction and alignment prior to inclusion.

YES ↓ (Could the same enrolment...)

Are humanitarian resources available to provide assistance in line with the national system? — NO → Provide differentiated assistance as per needs and capacity.

YES ↓

Can humanitarian organisations use the government system for transfers either directly or by first transferring the funds to the government? — NO → Align with the national system.

YES ↓

Facilitate access to social assistance, using the humanitarian funding available to serve refugees.

Source: UNHCR, 2018a: 21, https://www.unhcr.org/5cc011417.pdf

Gentilini et al (2018). *Human(itarian) Capital? Lessons on Better Connecting Humanitarian Assistance and Social Protection*

This study discusses the findings from 12 country case studies exploring the linkages between humanitarian assistance and national social protection systems, and identifies lessons on how humanitarian assistance and social protection systems might better coexist. Key lessons include (Gentilini et al, 2018: 38-42):

▪ Leadership and engagement of national authorities must be the norm, not the exception. The entry point for assistance in the country should always be the national government: if it is not feasible or appropriate to use national structures (because they are limited or inadequate), this should be demonstrated. Even where humanitarian assistance runs in

parallel, there may be still scope to introduce practical elements of alignment with pre-existing or future national social protection systems,

- <u>Crises may present a trade-off between degree of ownership and a range of dimensions, such as timeliness or accountability</u>. Case studies show that—especially in low-capacity contexts— when crises hit, the design of the response entails several core choices. The first of these may be a trade-off between national engagement and ownership and speed of response. The channelling of international funds for emergency response through a government's financial channel can strengthen ownership; however, this may be slower to disburse than alternative routes ….A second trade-off for international actors may revolve around project accountability vs. programme ownership. For international actors, working through government structures may entail different reporting procedures. Parallel structures create fragmentation of overall crisis response, but may enhance accountability of specific projects.

- <u>The absorptive capacity of national systems needs to be considered</u>. National social protection schemes in low and middle-income countries may be stretched financially, institutionally, and administratively. This may be the case even before considering new caseloads that result from covariate shocks or from the transfer of beneficiaries as previously supported by humanitarian assistance…. The absorption of these additional beneficiaries …by social protection systems should be calibrated to the sector's capacity. To do so, measuring the degree of "readiness" of national systems to expand is key.

- <u>There is an important agenda for more effectively building delivery systems in partnership</u>. Many elements of a delivery system may be developed in common, or harmonised, between the interventions of international agencies and national governments, or between those handling responses in crisis and non-crisis contexts. The case studies highlight the value in striving towards closer integration or sharing of ideas …across a range of elements: these include high quality data collection and analysis, approaches to targeting, the development of integrated management information systems such as social registries, communications tools, operational manuals and payment mechanisms. In complex emergencies where regular government service provision is not active, direct programmatic links may not always be possible. Nonetheless, international agencies may be able to conduct interventions whilst being open to the eventual future adoption of successful practices, or to maintain support to previously functioning government institutions in order not to lose them. Where government services are functioning, there can be a mutual exchange of ideas and sharing of approaches and delivery systems, ranging from assessment forms to targeting methods, databases and payment mechanisms.

- <u>There is a need for better documentation of lessons, performance and knowledge sharing in humanitarian assistance</u>. The humanitarian programmes of today might be the social protection programme of tomorrow. Indeed, national social protection systems often originate from humanitarian assistance. ….In many ways, the extent to which social protection can build on humanitarian assistance hinges in part on the quality of evidence available, as well as the documentation of practices and lessons. While there are clear limitations in the kind of evaluations viable in crisis situations, there is an encouraging growing trend in investing in evidence generation and knowledge management even in some of the most challenging settings.

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