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Humanitarian and Social Protection Linkages with Examples from South Asia

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Humanitarian and Social Protection Linkages

With Examples from South Asia

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Abstract

Traditionally social protection (SP) and humanitarian programs were quite distinct in their objectives, scope, and operations, but over time those distinctions have diminished and with that the gains from better integration. Humanitarian programs are committed to more involvement of national actors, more use of cash, and greater popular participation—all matters that are important for SP actors. On the other side, SP has gradually shifted into shock-responsive or adaptive SP that explicitly targets not only the poor but also those affected by shocks. Beyond presenting the divide and overlap of concepts, principles, and commitments from the SP and humanitarian realms, this paper attempts at unbundling a framework for humanitarian and SP integration across the delivery chain (based on the paper by Seyfert et al. 2019). Global experiences across the integration spectrum, as well as the practical application of the framework in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, are exemplified. The analysis shows how programs apply a ‘mix and match’ approach building on factors such as political will, technical capacity, and alignment of objectives across implementing agencies, donors, and the government. The paper identifies constraints and opportunities for better integration and proposes a set of actions to enhance benefits for affected populations.

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Keywords: social protection, humanitarians, humanitarian assistance, safety nets, government, UN agencies, integration, coordination, commitment, delivery chain, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan

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Abbreviations

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
AAA WG	AAP Working Group
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
BISP	Benazir Income Support Program
CaLP	Cash Learning Partnership
CBT	Community-Based Targeting
CFC	Citizen Facilitation Center
CMC	Central Monitoring Committee
DP	Displaced Population
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRP	Displaced Rohingya Population
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EEC	Ehsaas Emergency Cash
ENETAWF	Early Warning, Early Finance, and Early Action Project
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FATA TDP ERP	FATA Temporarily Displaced Persons Emergency Recovery Project
FDMA	FATA Disaster Management Agency
FDRAP	Federal Disaster Response Action Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIHA-C	Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group for COVID-19
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GoP	Government of Pakistan
GRS	Grievance Redress System
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HCTT	Humanitarian Coordination Task Team
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICCT	Inter-Cluster Coordination Team
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDA	International Development Association
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated Phase Classification
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISCG	Inter-Sector Coordination Group
LSG	Livelihood Support Grant
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare

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MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
NAWG	Needs Assessment Working Group
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
NTF	National Task Force
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OSS	One-Stop Shop
PSP	Payment Service Provider
RCCE	Risk Communication and Community Engagement
REACH	COVID-19 Relief Effort for Afghan Communities and Households
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SP	Social Protection
SPACE	Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19: Expert Advice
SPIAC-B	Social Protection Interagency Coordination Board
TDP	Temporarily Displaced Person
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Over time the distinction between humanitarian and social protection (SP) programs has diminished and with it the gains from better integration. Humanitarian programs (spanning from responses to political and climate shocks to full-scale refugee crisis) are committed to more involvement of national actors, more use of cash, and greater popular participation—all matters that are important for SP actors. On the other side, SP has gradually shifted into shock-responsive or adaptive SP that explicitly targets not only the poor but also those affected by a shock. In some countries, like Bangladesh, SP programs (outside of pensions) have always been seen as responsive to a shock. Some confusion and misunderstandings remain around the humanitarian principles, especially neutrality and independence, and how they can be met in practice if the government is discriminating or party to the conflict that is causing distress.

There is broad agreement that better integration, defined, depending on context, from convergence to coordination and collaboration between humanitarian and SP programs and systems, is beneficial but needs to be made with clear views to feasibility, capacity, and respecting the humanitarian principles. This paper presents a framework (based on the ‘unbundling’ paper by Seyfert et al. 2019) for how to think through how each level of integration (parallel, alignment, piggybacking, and nation-led) across the delivery chain, from financing and policies to implementation, matters such as identification of beneficiaries, levels of payment, and grievance mechanisms. The paper proposes further unbundling several implementation issues that have proven important in the practical application of the framework. Table 3 presents this in a schematic form, incorporating lessons from newer literature. The table is meant as a guide or inspiration to think through each link in the delivery chain and see what is feasible or desirable in each context.

The paper suggests five areas to consider as it is determined where on the spectrum the different links in the delivery chain should or can fall:

- **Government engagement and learning.** Greater integration is better for government ownership and learning. Even where government capacity is low, programs should be designed to gradually involve government staff in the program implementation to help build their capacity. Some programs explicitly build this into their objectives over time, even if they start completely parallel.
- **Sustainability.** Parallel programs tend to be less sustainable over time. This is not a problem for a short-term humanitarian intervention. However, many crises last for a long time (for example, displacement and refugees) or are repeating with shorter frequency (climate change droughts), and thus sustainability becomes an issue. For piggybacking or nation-led programs, government capacity may be overloaded, or the fiscal burden may be too large to ensure sustainability.
- **Timeliness and predictability.** Traditionally many parallel humanitarian programs act more quickly, especially for ‘known’ crises such as earthquakes, droughts, and so on, where agencies can quickly mobilize and deliver critical standard packages of support. Working more with governments can delay action, although the COVID-19 response has

shown governments moving faster than other actors. Predictability is important to enable rational risk management and is best achieved with longer-term SP programs with clear triggers for crisis response. Localization of funding can also help speed up the response.

- **The cost of programs** tends to be higher for less integrated programs given the need to fund multiple overheads and support systems. However, building a nation-led program from scratch is also expensive and often entails long delays.
- **Building the social contract** is a key objective of government programs, helping build legitimacy and trust between citizens and the government. More government involvement throughout the delivery chain helps build the social contract. However, it is not beneficial to simply hand over a program for a government to run, if it is not ready to take it on. A government's mismanagement of a previously well-run program will lead to less trust. In cases where the government is not recognized internationally, is a party to the conflict, or is seen as too discriminatory, it is not clear that programs should aim to build trust in the government.

Based on these considerations, program design often does not fit neatly within one level of integration but rather adopts a 'mix and match' approach depending on the country's circumstances and the objectives of the agencies involved. The paper schematically shows how a few programs map across Table 3, demonstrating the difference even across agencies within one country. A more detailed discussion of three South Asia cases shows the same mixed approach. Interestingly, programs like those in Bangladesh that appear to be mostly piggybacking, and are often presented as such in the literature, end up being spread across the degrees of integration depending on the step in the delivery chain.

The literature review and key informant interviews identified several factors that facilitate better integration.

- **Broad agreement on the issues** that can facilitate or hinder integration is the first step toward improved dialogue and thus collaboration.
- **Political will** of the government and agencies is critical:
 - Political will of the government to work with agencies, to engage in reform of their SP system to make them more shock responsive
 - Political will of agencies to adjust their operating procedures to include the government and collaborate with others
 - The political will of donors to support longer-term reforms and sustain their efforts over time.

Lack of 'political will' can be much too blunt a criticism. Decision-makers are faced with several difficult issues to address within numerous constraints not just a lack of 'will'.

- **Leadership is critical.** Even if the political will exists or especially when political commitment is lukewarm, leadership is critical:
 - Leadership within agencies to keep the ultimate beneficiaries in mind, even if it means less overhead funding or less well-known implementation modalities

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- Leadership within governments to accept a stronger role (at least early on) in implementation—leadership to drive the necessary reforms.

Often assessments point to ‘personal factors’ as critical for success—this makes it hard to duplicate the experience. It is better to drill down to find the key leadership aspects that drove the success—those that can more easily be replicated.

- **Crises as opportunities.** Many development agencies have created special policies to facilitate quicker response in emergencies and opened up for direct implementation by humanitarians with government approval. Most recently, the global response to COVID-19 demonstrates several good, well-integrated responses. Similarly, the frequent weather-related events in Bangladesh and the refugee crises in the south of Bangladesh have driven well-coordinated and aligned programs.

On the other hand, there are several constraints to better integration, including the following:

- **High-level commitments are not translated into practical guidance.** There are some key commitments that help create space for local leadership to better integrate, such as the Grand Bargain commitments for humanitarians and the increased focus on risk management for SP agencies. Unfortunately, these high-level commitments are not translated into practical guidance for agency staff. Internal guidance, rules, and incentive structures are not geared to work better across the humanitarian-development nexus, putting more emphasis on local leadership to get the job done even though incentives might not be aligned.
- **Refugees create unique challenges.** Given that needs are different between refugees and the local population, at times the benefits are set higher for refugees, which, in turn, creates mistrust with the local population who receive less support. Many governments do not want to include noncitizens in their SP programs, also creating barriers to more integration. Several countries have managed to do so well though, including Jordan.
- **There is still a lack of understanding.** Despite much good work on ‘translating’ principles and technical jargon between humanitarians and SP actors, much remains to be done. SP practitioners, for instance, would like to better understand how humanitarian principles are applied in the field. This is an important area for knowledge work within and across agencies.
- **Mandate of agencies and weak intra-UN² coordination** can create obstacles. For example, the World Bank group is explicitly mandated to provide development finance, not relief. Despite this, the World Bank has moved further into the recovery phase of a crisis and, within SP, has moved aggressively to support shock-responsive SP. Other agencies are purely humanitarian and it can be difficult to work across the nexus. Intra-UN coordination is also essential.
- **‘Participation revolution’ of the Grand Bargain is lacking.** Of all the elements of the Grand Bargain, this is widely seen as the one with the weakest implementation. Some go

² UN = United Nations.

so far as to say that nothing has changed. At the same time, the participation of affected people has become a mainstay in many development agencies, which can create real tension.

- **Weak and/or ‘party to conflict’ government.** When a government is a party to the conflict, it becomes difficult to align or integrate and still uphold the humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality. Similarly, if governments do not control significant parts of the territory, it becomes extremely difficult to deliver using government systems and still be impartial and neutral. It is easy to blame weak government capacity to justify not working with the government and implementing in a parallel manner. This reasoning is erroneous as it limits the sustainability of the programs and undermines any emerging political acceptance of the government.
- **Timing—an issue that may not be real.** The contrast between the fast response of humanitarian and the slow pace of government SP programs is a valid concern, but it is not an excuse to stick with purely parallel programs with no government involvement, nor is it universally true. The literature is littered with examples of how ‘slow’ government programs have responded effectively to humanitarian crises.
- **Scaling up and down must be done carefully.** Lowering SP benefits or limiting the eligible beneficiaries, once a crisis is over, is difficult politically. To help address this, many governments give programs that expand horizontally or vertically in a crisis a special name and make explicit from the beginning that this is a temporary program. Communication and participation are key.

Finally, the report identifies several cross-cutting implementation issues that can create difficulty for better integration:

- **Beneficiary identification and targeting** is a lively and ongoing debate within the SP community and across the humanitarian-development nexus. Recent work on targeting shows the need for pragmatism and practicality on both sides, so there is hope this problem will lessen in the future.
- **Levels of benefits.** Humanitarian benefits have traditionally been in the form of a package of goods necessary for survival or its cash equivalent if conditions made it possible to obtain the goods locally. SP benefits also refer to a basic needs basket—but a more restricted basket and budget constraints often mean that actual benefits are lower.
- **Information systems.** Almost all key informants mentioned the problem of parallel and proprietary information systems as an obstacle to better integration. Real progress needs to be made here across agencies considering data privacy and access issues.
- **Monitoring and dispute resolution.** The weak implementation of the ‘participation revolution’ means that dispute resolution systems in many humanitarian programs remain weak. On the development side, this has been a focus for a longer time, so more programs have these built in. Similarly, there is uneven beneficiary participation in monitoring across humanitarian and SP programs.

1 Introduction

This paper presents concepts, experiences, and opportunities for improvement for collaboration between social protection (SP) and humanitarian agencies and SP operations in humanitarian space. The report has six sections.

- Section 2 summarizes the conceptual underpinnings for SP and humanitarian assistance including definitions.
- Section 3 presents international commitments for better integration of SP and humanitarian assistance as well as progress toward meeting those goals.
- Section 4 presents a stylized form of different levels of integration and their application across the delivery chain based on a literature review, with a special focus on South Asian examples.
- Section 5 addresses the key enablers and inhibitors for integration and SP operations in humanitarian space.
- Section 6 discusses some potential recommendations that would further enhance the effectiveness of interventions by greater degrees of integration.

2 Humanitarian Assistance and Social Protection: Concepts

Traditionally SP and humanitarian assistance were quite distinct in their objectives, scope, and operations but over time, those distinctions have blurred. According to the United Nations (UN), humanitarian assistance is

“...aid that seeks, to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality, as stated in General Assembly Resolution 46/182. In addition, the UN seeks to provide humanitarian assistance with full respect for the sovereignty of States.” (ReliefWeb 2008, 31–32)

Other definitions include reference to the need to prevent and strengthen preparedness for crises, such as this one from 2003 by a group of humanitarian donors:³

“The objectives of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to **prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations.**” (Authors’ emphasis)

Some argue that prevention and preparedness are already included in the ‘save lives’ part of the first definition. In any case, explicitly including preparedness (‘resilience building’ in SP language) and prevention (‘risk reduction’ in SP language) helps clarify two opportunities for collaboration.

³ Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship, June 17, 2003.
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/EN-23-Principles-and-Good-Practice-of-Humanitarian-Donorship.pdf>

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This paper considers the full span of humanitarian programs, from response to political and climate shocks; armed conflicts; internal displacement; or as in the case of the Rohingya, a full-scale refugee crisis. Each context implies a different principle of engagement and, with it, different implications and opportunities for systems integration.

Traditionally SP was defined as poverty relief and/or social insurance against risks such as poor health, lack of income in old age, and unemployment. As discussed in Jorgensen and Siegel (2019), different agencies use different definitions of SP, generally reflecting their basic mandate. An interagency working group on SP, the Social Protection Interagency Coordination Board (SPIAC-B), co-chaired by the World Bank and the International Labour Organization (ILO), defines SP as

“the set of policies and programmes aimed at preventing or protecting all people against poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion throughout their lifecycles, with a particular emphasis towards vulnerable groups.” (quoted by European Commission 2019, 10)

Interestingly, the World Bank’s current definition is

“Social protection systems help the poor and vulnerable cope with crises and shocks, find jobs, invest in the health and education of their children, and protect the aging population.”⁴

It reflects a limited view of SP instruments that do not include the wide scope of SP programs supported by the World Bank. The definition reflects neither the whole risk chain (risk prevention, mitigation, and coping) nor the many different SP activities to help not just “cope with crisis and shocks” but also build resilience to shocks or insure against shocks. Over time, the World Bank has expanded its work from ‘static’ SP that helps assist the poor and vulnerable as well as social insurance for formal sector workers toward adaptive SP, that is, SP systems that adapt and respond to different shocks. Adaptive SP systems work across the risk chain to prevent, mitigate, and build resilience to shocks.

Jorgensen and Siegel (2019) argue for a modernized and expanded view of SP rather than the one currently used by the World Bank in its formal definition. Such a modernized view of SP would better reflect today’s more chaotic and unpredictable world as well as the expanded array of SP instruments while maintaining the fundamental link between SP and social management of risk that has been the bedrock of the establishment and dramatic expansion of SP over the last 20 years.

Many agencies use a rights-based approach to SP where the role of SP is to enable rights holders to access a basic minimum package of rights to livelihoods, health, and so on. Such approaches reflect the core principles of a human rights approach:⁵

- “Participation—everyone is entitled to active participation in decision-making processes which affect the enjoyment of their rights.

⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialprotection/>

⁵ <https://ennhri.org/about-nhris/human-rights-based-approach/>

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- **Accountability**—duty-bearers are held accountable for failing to fulfil their obligations towards rights-holders. There should be effective remedies in place when human rights breaches occur.
- **Non-discrimination and equality**—all individuals are entitled to their rights without discrimination of any kind. All types of discrimination should be prohibited, prevented and eliminated.
- **Empowerment**—everyone is entitled to claim and exercise their rights. Individuals and communities need to understand their rights and participate in the development of policies which affect their lives.
- **Legality**—approaches should be in line with the legal rights set out in domestic and international laws.”

Many of these principles overlap with the humanitarian principles discussed above and should thus facilitate collaboration with humanitarian agencies. In cases where the government either is a party to a conflict or attempts to interfere with how agencies operate, the human rights principle of legality could conflict with the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality.

Table 1 summarizes the distinctive features of humanitarian, rights-based SP and poverty or risk-based SP. The table draws the distinguishing features more starkly than are often found for didactic purposes. Some agencies follow a rights-respecting but poverty-focused approach and in practice many programs share aspects of each approach.

Table 1: Humanitarian versus rights- and poverty-based social protection

	Humanitarian	Rights-based SP	(Vulnerability to) Poverty-based SP
Discourse	Needs based	Rights based	Resilience building, risk management, poverty reduction
Setting	Normal livelihoods have been dramatically and suddenly disrupted.	Longer-term inequality or exclusion	Transitory and longer-term poverty and vulnerability
Role of government	Government role is limited by humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence, especially if the government is party to underlying conflict.	The government role in setting a legal framework is essential to the legality principle.	Most programs work with governments; sometimes implementation is contracted out to other actors with Government approvals.
Duration of interventions and impact	Short term	Medium to long term	Medium to long-term, with some short term for shock responsive SP
Objectives	Alleviate human suffering, maintain human dignity, and provide basic needs.	Provide an SP floor; enable rights holders to receive rights.	Enhance resilience (reduce vulnerability) to poverty and life cycle risks.
Principles	Humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence	Leave no one behind.	Equality of opportunity

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	Humanitarian	Rights-based SP	(Vulnerability to) Poverty-based SP
Financing	Bi/multilateral donors, private foundations	Bi/multilateral donors, national/subnational government financing through taxes/other state revenues, often supported by donors	Bi/multilateral donors, national/subnational government financing through taxes/other state revenues, often supported by donors
Financing horizon	Typically, short-term, annual funding cycles, but Grand Bargain	Often indefinite. Funding is often built into national development planning.	Often indefinite. Funding is often built into national development planning.
Implementing agencies	Typically, nongovernmental (including international nongovernmental organizations [INGOs]) or multilateral (UN agencies); working around governments with some coordination for implementation	Delivered primarily through governments and state institutions with civil society monitoring and/or advocacy	Delivered primarily through governments and state institutions but also community organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
Target beneficiaries	Specific populations affected by shocks	Rights holders, universal	Poor and vulnerable, categorical (age, disability, and so on)
Coverage	Areas affected by specific shocks	Universal in principle but gradual realization in practice as revenues and systems allow	Poor, vulnerable, or life cycle, categorically targeted in principle nationwide; gradual expansion as revenues and systems allow
Engagement with crises	Crisis response, immediate relief/rehabilitation	Expand programs if crises undermine the realization of rights.	Resilience building, risk reduction, risk mitigation (including planned coping), and risk coping Shock-responsive SP focus on crises
Targeting methodology	Driven by individual program requirements and boundaries but generally focused on the shock affected, including the newly displaced. Targeting tends to be categorical or geographical and typically not focused only on the poor.	In principle universal (no targeting). In practice universal within categories such as all elderly people, children, people with disabilities, or all children in a district	For social assistance, income or asset poverty and vulnerability, often with a proxy means testing Geographic poverty targeting Categorical targeting, for example, noncontributory pensions Social insurance for individual risks focused on formal sector workers.

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	Humanitarian	Rights-based SP	(Vulnerability to) Poverty-based SP
Targeting performance ⁶	<p>Targeting performance is not typically easy to measure/assess systematically given the scale and duration.</p> <p>It may be inappropriate to measure targeting to poor/non-poor, given the objective of humanitarian assistance.</p>	<p>Purists would argue that this is not applicable, as benefits are universal. In practice, universal benefits mean both poor and non-poor receive assistance.</p>	<p>For social assistance, targeting performance is well-monitored and tends to be good with respect for inclusion errors.</p> <p>Social insurance is mainly for the non-poor due to its link with formal labor markets.</p> <p>Categorically targeted have inclusion errors in relation to poverty.</p> <p>Traditionally reforms focused on minimizing inclusion errors but for adaptive SP gradually a greater focus on lowering exclusion errors.</p> <p>Reduction of inclusion/exclusion errors is less of an issue in low-income countries.</p>

Source: Ghorpade and Ammar 2021; Jorgensen and Siegel 2019.

When objectives of SP include dealing with shocks and/or vulnerability to poverty, it opens the way for better coordination or collaboration across the humanitarian/SP divide. Similarly, as many donors fund both humanitarian and SP activities, this should also help with bridging the gap. However, Table 1 also indicates some of the key obstacles to better coordination such as

- Selection of beneficiaries—only those affected by crises (humanitarian) versus only the poor and vulnerable affected by a crisis (vulnerability) or universality (human rights);
- The implementing modality, where humanitarians value independence, whereas SP approaches tend to emphasize government oversight and/or implementation; and
- Speed is of essence to humanitarians, which may not be the strength of SP, especially in weak or nascent systems.

⁶ The literature distinguishes between two types of errors: (a) inclusion error: those who should not be included are included, for example, those not affected by crisis or not poor, and (b) exclusion error: those who should be included are not included, for example, poor or affected people not reached.

3 Commitments to Improve Coordination

3.1 Why improve coordination?

As cash is increasingly the preferred delivery mechanism for humanitarian assistance and the differences become less in terms of guiding principles, objectives, operational instruments, and timeliness, integration of humanitarian assistance and SP delivers better results. Case studies document significant efficiency with impact and sustainability gains when applying SP systems and approaches to crises. The increased severity and higher frequency of crises mean that humanitarian systems alone cannot cope.

Well-developed SP systems develop crisis resilience for individuals and households and can reach disaster-affected households in a timelier, less costly, and more efficient manner than traditional humanitarian response.

It is important to keep the national government in a leadership position to engage with assistance as it strengthens the national systems and the social contract between the government and the population. Where national institutions fail because of conflict or disaster and when the national structures are insufficient, the establishment of a parallel system may be necessary considering humanitarian imperative upheld and international law applied (Gentilini et al. 2018). Local engagement is important to improve the understanding of the local context and needs. Local engagement also supports the local economy delivering better long-term outcomes.

3.2 Humanitarian Summit: Grand Bargain

At the Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in 2016, a large group of donors and implementing agencies got together and pledged to update their approach to humanitarian assistance, often summarized in these points:

1. Greater transparency
2. More support and funding tools for local and national responders—localization, including a commitment to channel one-quarter of assistance to local and national responders
3. Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming
4. Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews
5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessments
6. A participation revolution—include the people receiving aid in making the decisions that affect their lives
7. Increase collaborative humanitarian multiyear planning and funding and reduce the earmarking of donor contributions
8. Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements
9. Localization, allowing local and national agencies to respond, would fit well with SP social assistance programs that work with national and local governments and

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associations. Moving to cash for humanitarian activity, which is the main modality for SP, has already helped in closing the divide. Combining forces, for instance, on beneficiary identification and registries would help reduce duplication and lower the management costs for both SP and humanitarian agencies as would harmonize reporting. Moving humanitarian funding to be more multiyear and predictable will align it better with SP funding. Finally, the commitment to a ‘participation revolution’ fits squarely with the push for citizen engagement, feedback, and monitoring that many SP programs, especially those supported by the World Bank, have been building in recent years.

A five-year review of the Grand Bargain by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) (Metcalf-Houghtten et al. 2021) finds mixed progress across the different workstreams. The review finds good progress on the use of cash, highlighting that all signatories use cash and the important work done by Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) and the many cash learning groups across the developing world that has helped facilitate local alignment with SP systems.⁷ The total amount of cash and voucher assistance has doubled since 2016, from US\$2.8 billion to US\$5.6 billion in 2019 (or 17.9 percent of total humanitarian assistance), and it is an increasingly important tool in the humanitarian toolbox. However, the review also notes

“...there is still no global agreement on predictable and accountable coordination of multi-purpose cash... This is despite mounting evidence of the impact this is having on operational efficiencies and effectiveness, including shortfalls in resources and delays, gaps, and duplications in responses. As a result, collectively aid organizations have been unable to realize the full potential of cash assistance in humanitarian contexts.” (Metcalf-Houghtten et al. 2021, 7)

According to the evaluation, the work on localization has also progressed well⁸ with more funding allocated to local actors and innovations such as the Bangladesh Start Fund or the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, set up to finance local initiatives in a flexible and fast manner. In Bangladesh, a national evaluation finds that the availability of funding for local initiatives has not meant much progress toward the empowerment of local partner agencies.

The areas with the weakest implementation are participation and harmonizing reporting. On participation, the review notes

“...aid continues to be provided based on what agencies and donors want to give, rather than what people say they want and need.” (Metcalf-Houghtten et al. 2021, 8)

Practitioners raised both areas as inhibitors (Section 5.9), but they are also opportunities for learning—in this case, humanitarians learning from SP practitioners. To improve understanding of the resistance in the humanitarian community to participation, Box 1 summarizes the objections to participation by a skeptic and argues for learning from the broader development experience including from SP.

⁷ In Afghanistan, the former government was reluctant to move to cash as is the government in Bangladesh, in spite of the wishes of the recipients, and many SP systems around the world still rely on in-kind support or subsidies.

⁸ Although the 25 percent goal was not met.

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Box 1: A humanitarian participation skeptic

A good example of a participation skeptic is the former head of policy at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). ICRC blog notes the opportunity for learning (Slim 2020), where they critically assess the philosophical underpinnings of the participation revolution and argue that humanitarians should learn from the experience of development actors on the benefits and limitations of popular participation. In their view, there are five key lessons from the participation experience in development.

- *“Community is not as happy as it sounds.”*
 - Slim correctly reflects the hard-learned lessons that a community is not a cohesive group with common interests. However, he does not mention that participation techniques have evolved to specifically address this and ensure the widest possible inclusion.
- *“People can have a limited vision.”*
 - Although people know their own situation well, they may not recognize the effect of a given intervention on others. Slim rightly suggests that “local participatory planning should always be plugged into district, regional and national planning” which is a common practice in the development community.
- *“People-powered development is emergent, not planned.”*
 - Here Slim complains that outcomes are unpredictable and do not follow a neat plan. This used to be a common complaint in the development community but is actually a strength of participation, for instance, when targeting methods are shown by participatory processes to exclude the ultra-poor.
- *“People-based development is struggle.”*
 - Slim is correct that participation shifts the focus of the aid agency to accompaniment instead of control, which has been a struggle in the SP and broader development community but has consistently led to better outcomes.
- *“People power takes a lot of time, effort and money.”*
 - It is correct that participation takes time, which many poor and marginalized people already have too little of. This is an argument for smart and effective participation, not against participation.
- *“Allocation dilemmas persist.”*
 - Slim is correct that there will always be tension between individual benefits and community-wide public goods, but studies have shown that teaching conflict resolution in a ‘learning by doing’ mode under community-driven development improves a community’s ability to manage conflict, in contrast with the fear expressed by Slim that such dilemmas lead to more conflict.

Source: Slim 2020. Italicized bullets are quotes.

Table 2 provides a ‘translation’ of the various humanitarian objectives to SP objectives (UNHCR 2019). As the table shows, humanitarian and SP actors may use different terms but their objectives map easily to each other. Nevertheless, using different languages and the need to develop more understanding among actors is a key constraint to better collaboration (Section 5.7).

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Table 2: Translating objectives



Source: UNHCR 2019.

3.3 Social protection commitments at Humanitarian Summit

A group of agencies involved in SP, SPIAC-B, co-led by the World Bank and ILO and similarly committed to work in coordination with humanitarian agencies, called for joint efforts and greater involvement of governments (Box 2).

Box 2: Social Protection Commitments to Humanitarian Summit

“We, representatives of governments, international organizations and bilateral institutions gathered within the Social Protection Inter-Agency Coordination Board, or SPIAC-B, join the strategic call from the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and humanitarian actors around the world, to develop common and innovative solutions to the challenges facing crises affected people and countries in the context of the first World Humanitarian Summit...

In order to ensure that no one is left behind in the 2030 agenda and to accelerate the benefits of linking social protection and humanitarian actions, the following actions are needed:

- Tangible commitment from governments and partners to move chronic humanitarian caseloads of affected populations into social protection programs and systems, incrementally over the 2030 lifetime.
- Greater, more predictable, innovative and risk-informed financial resources to invest across the different contexts, before, during and after crises – for preparedness, to increase coverage of core social protection programs and systems, for building shock-responsive systems, for risk financing, and for greater investment in nascent safety nets systems in the most fragile contexts.
- A coordinated operational and research agenda, including:
 - a common vision and jointly owned roadmap to assess and identify (i) effective mechanisms in humanitarian contexts that can be integrated into national social protection systems, as well as (ii) structures and mechanisms of social protection programs that could strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of assistance to people affected by humanitarian crises.
 - interventions in the most critical countries and sub-national contexts at risk from humanitarian crises and disasters, coordinated jointly by governments and both development and humanitarian communities.”

Source: SPIAC-B 2016.

4 Integrating Social Protection and Humanitarian

4.1 Degrees of program integration

Most literature distinguishes between four degrees of integration. In this paper, we define integration as the convergence, coordination or mere collaboration between humanitarian and SP programs and systems across the delivery chain. Degrees of integration would vary by context. Figure 1 identifies the contractual and reporting processes and flows for program development and implementation.

Parallel implementation is the least integrated representing stand-alone humanitarian assistance. Donors or the implementing agency (NGO or UN agency) defines, plans, and implements the humanitarian program (represented by green lines in Figure 1).

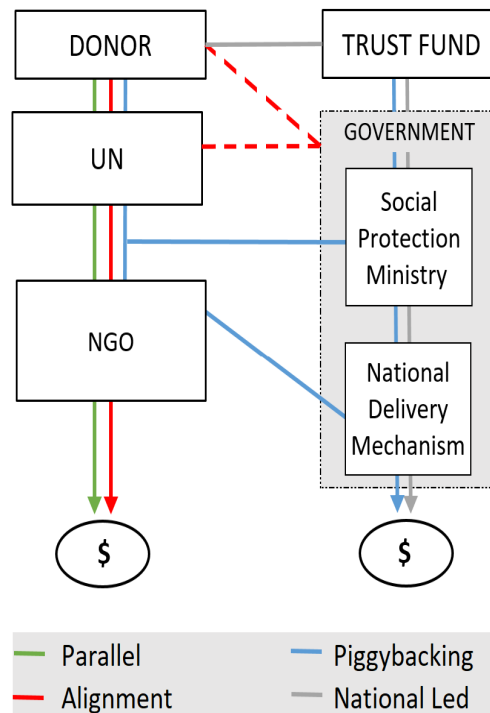
Alignment is similar to that of parallel but with some contribution from the government in terms of program design, represented by the red line in Figure 1. The government’s influence is limited and represented with a dotted line.

Shadow alignment happens when the program’s system is set up to align with existing or future social assistance programs with the intent of integration and having the government take over the program in the long term.

Piggybacking represents programs that build on alignment while utilizing national systems to meet program objectives (represented by blue lines in Figure 1).

Nation-led programs are part of the national systems with the participants being part of the national caseload (represented by gray lines in Fig 1). Program expansion could take the form of budget support, the development of a new national program, or the expansion of an existing one.

Figure 1: Contractual and reporting flows in program development and implementation



Source: Based on Seyfert et al. 2019.

4.1.1 Vertical and horizontal expansion of nation-led programs

When nation-led programs expand to address a humanitarian crisis, they generally expand either vertically or horizontally.

Vertical expansion delivers assistance to existing beneficiaries in the SP system (European Commission 2019). It increases either the value or the duration of an existing benefit. The

payment could be an extraordinary transfer or an increase in the regular social assistance payments.

Horizontal expansion adds new beneficiaries into an existing SP system by expanding the criteria for eligibility. Predetermined targeting and screening parameters already built into existing systems can greatly assist horizontal expansion.⁹

4.2 Degrees of integration with government across the delivery chain

Table 3 summarizes the consideration of different levels of ‘unbundling’ integration across the delivery chain, mainly based on Seyfert et al. (2019). The original article focuses on SP and humanitarians in refugee situations but is just as relevant in other settings. The table speaks for itself and discusses special considerations mentioned in the literature. It can function as a guide for how to think through the opportunities for integration or coordination.

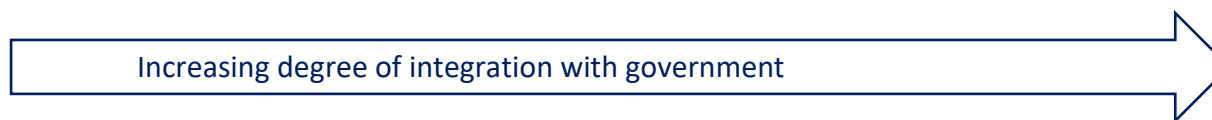
For example, there might be cases where SP and humanitarian systems are largely parallel, with their own financing, abiding by their own legal frameworks, with minimal coordination among stakeholders. However, it would make sense for targeting methods and transfer value to be aligned even if implemented by different agencies or for payment mechanisms to be managed by one common financial service provider, building on existing mechanisms, thus proving that systems can present various degrees of integration with aspects of alignment and piggybacking within one or more links in the delivery chain.

The key message is to think creatively about integration opportunities across the entire delivery chain and ‘mix and match’ the level of integration according to the political will, technical capacity, and alignment of objectives across implementing agencies, donors, and the government.

⁹ Some authors include a third dimension, ‘technical tweaks’ or ‘technical adjustments’, but rarely define what those are. They all seem to be included in the different adjustments in Table 3.

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Table 3: Considerations for integration with the government across the delivery chain



Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent and separate organizations are often set up and run by NGOs or UN agencies with minimal governmental connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stand-alone response run by a humanitarian relief partner. Governmental counterparts offer input during design stages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donors and humanitarian implementing agencies rely to some extent on existing national social assistance structures for the delivery of assistance. They might not depend on these structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government is responsible for the national system. Assistance relies entirely on the national delivery system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Figure 1
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donors want to avoid funds going directly to governments or government agencies. Funding flows directly to implementing agencies. No governmental budget implication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donors want to avoid funds going through government agencies. Government counterparts may participate in cash working groups. No governmental budget implication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government delivers in-kind contributions in form of staff, infrastructure, and potentially government financial systems. Donors remain the chief financiers. No governmental budget implication if donors cover needed governmental capacity development and expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National budget financed, possibly with donor support through the budget 	
Legal and policy framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agencies and donors abide by national legislation but operation and planning are independent and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National legislation and SP policies are sufficiently strong and aligned with the program to fulfill the program objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When parts of national legislation can be adapted and applied (for example, ID for refugees or registration in social register). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National legislation and policies cover the programmatic needs and/or the political will exist to change or expand legislation, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some nations do not recognize SP as a human right and few national policies and strategies reflect a link between humanitarian assistance

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
	unbound by national SP policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full alignment can deliver an accountability problem, as full alignment requires the implementing agency to take responsibility for a program designed by the government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires healthy and strong collaboration between UN agencies and donors to manage strong relationships with the relevant government. 	policies, and procedures as required.	<p>and SP (Longhurst et al. 2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donors may experience a dilemma in the reconciliation of commitments to neutrality, independence, human rights, and the necessary respect for the primary responsibility of the government.
Targeting, setting eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor and/or implementing agencies' independent criteria differ from those of the national social assistance system. • Humanitarians seeking quick solutions in contexts of urgency and with capacity constraints often focus on reducing inclusion error, but exclusion error could be the greater problem (Longhurst et al. 2020). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing agencies coordinate with donors' wishes to align with the government's approach or similar conceptual approaches potentially with different eligibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line ministries and implementers agree on the criteria. • Established national criteria may need adjustment to cover additional groups or situations. • Usually, stronger Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping and protection mechanisms than governments to abide by humanitarian principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line ministries set the criteria through the national social system. Eligibility criteria may need amendments to cover new groups or situations. • Governmental administrative processes for SP may not be designed for emergency assistance (European Commission 2019), for example, for conditional cash transfers, conditions may be waived (Bastagli and Lowe, 2021). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National politics may hinder access to the targeted recipients for the program. • National, integrated vulnerability analysis is difficult and tends to move from needs-based to entitlement or toward universal basic income (Longhurst et al. 2020). • The integration delivers a risk of diversion from a weak SP program's key objectives. • Risk of reproducing underlying government system weaknesses in the added program.
Setting transfer type, level, frequency, duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs or UN agencies possibly coordinated with the humanitarian country teams (HCTs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs negotiate and align with government policies and ensure coherence with national levels of support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parameters negotiated between line ministries and implementers depending on the degree of piggybacking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer amounts are determined by national policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration or lack of integration can lead to confusion among recipients, for example, who receives what amount, when, and why?

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variation in program transfers may lead to beneficiaries' confusion and lack of clarity about the availability of various assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially delivering below the Minimum Expenditure Basket. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially delivering below the Minimum Expenditure Basket. Once recipients register, there are usually strong SP mechanisms. 		
Governance and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A steering committee including UN agencies, NGOs, maybe donors, community, and occasionally governments in an advisory capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering committee involving UN agencies, NGOs, and governmental line ministries. The governmental role is strongest in the design phase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering committee including UN agencies, implementing agency, and governmental line ministries. Coordination-led by the donor and governmental agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Line ministries are responsible for the potential involvement of the senior cabinet. Government agencies coordinate. Donors may only have inputs through a steering committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful integration requires leadership and vision from governments and international partners. Linking stakeholder participation and decision-making has to be regular, inclusive, and institutionalized right down to the local level, accepted by district authorities, communities, and implementers (Longhurst et al. 2020).
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often limited by implementing agency working with social workers or community-based volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely led by implementing agencies with the potential for governmental cross-program outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either government or implementing agency led potentially with support to national providers designing outreach campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness campaigns are unlikely. Outreach led by line ministries and their regional offices. 	
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency. Enrolment into the system can be haphazard and arbitrary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency aligned with existing government processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government employee. Financing is possible by a donor or through technical assistance. Opportunities for implementing agencies to support governmental systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subnational SP offices are possibly financed by a donor or through technical assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of the local community's integration into a governmental national system can have a major impact on the level of integration possible.

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governmental agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government through the social registry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governmental exclusion or inclusion errors may add to misalignment and not reaching the program's targeted population.
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various third-party financial providers are often chosen through competitive bidding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various third-party financial providers may be the same as utilized by the government. If the donor requires competitive bidding, this might be the most integrated choice possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preferable a similar payment provider as the government. The increased caseload may require additional support. Usually, competitive bidding is not possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government financial provider or contracted third-party provider. Existing systems might need support or upgrade due to increased caseload. 	
Case management (home visits, validation, and so on)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency. This is staff intensive and limits the scope especially if the NGO is solely responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementing agencies would utilize systems somewhat similar to that of the government's case management protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The national system is adequate for program management. The implementing agency may have limited access to case files. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize the national system with social workers performing case management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With increased integration, the added caseload may require system and staff expansion.
Complaints and appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set by implementing agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency Similar procedure as the government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptation of the national mechanism or parts thereof, implementing agency support to deal with the increased caseload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National mechanism managed by the government—often contracted out to an independent body 	
Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Done by the implementing agency dependent on connections to protection service providers. Once the beneficiary is in the system, there are likely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The responsible party is the implementing agency. National protection systems might be inadequate, and the NGO may choose to use separate processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National social care services, the health service, or alternative national institutions are adequate to handle social assistance and social care services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As piggybacking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refugees' needs are likely different from nationals due to their social networks, ability to work, asset ownership, language, and so on. A stand-alone system may better adapt assistance to needs.

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
	strong protection mechanisms for the most vulnerable.				
Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency contracting out or carrying out monitoring and impact assessments as per donor requirements A risk of duplicate effort when multiple simultaneous programs exist and Grand Bargain principles are not followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agency contracting out or carrying out monitoring and impact assessments as per donor requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments rarely carry out impact assessments of their SP. With donor funding, it might be required and a third party could perform the evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments rarely carry out impact assessments of their SP policies unless required by donors. Potentially national audit or statistical offices could monitor and evaluate. Public media may deliver some ad hoc monitoring. 	
Information management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementing agency typically owns the information system. Implementing agencies may choose to have separate databases to avoid governmental intercept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing agencies typically own the information. Building the case management system can have a long-term objective to integrate with government systems, handover, and capacity building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government SP data systems and capacity used with only limited access, if any, to the humanitarian partner. Requires robust governmental systems with full coverage of program area (European Commission 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government owns the data, systems, and capacity. Humanitarian agencies only have access to data with government approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanitarian assistance usually uses independently designed systems responding to donors and program objectives versus national social registries that aim to coordinate programs, define eligible households, and coordinate case management across programs. Computer records introduce new forms of control and the potential for corruption, mismanagement, and discrimination (Longhurst et al. 2020).

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing national systems can transfer underlying weaknesses of the system to the program (errors in beneficiary lists or household data, delays, staff capacity, and so on) (European Commission 2019).
Reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The target area may be limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually narrower in scope and geographical reach depending on funding and mission of the implementing agency. Coordinated case management across implementing agencies will lead to better coverage nationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on the mission, usually national reach. State programs could support access in insecure areas or create barriers if the government is associated with the conflict (European Commission 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide geographical reach—national 	
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically cash assistance or a basket of different goods depending on the crisis and may need mixing or switching to respond adequately to the situation 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many newer systems rely on cash or vouchers. Many countries retain food distribution or special ration shops as part of their safety net system, especially in South Asia. 	

Source: Predominantly based on Seyfert et al. (2019).

4.3 Key considerations/issues for each degree of integration

The determination within a given program of where on the spectrum each delivery chain element falls depends on some key issues. Table 4 summarizes four key issues across the different levels: government engagement, sustainability, timeliness, and costs. In any given circumstance, there will be a need to trade off and find optimal solutions depending on the importance of each issue (Gentilini et al. 2018).

As demonstrated in the table, it is essential to try to engage the government as much as possible, even in less integrated situations to allow for learning and building longer-term regular SP systems.

There is a tendency for more mature, nation-led systems to be more sustainable, if the additional caseload can be accommodated effectively. The flipside of this is that preexisting inequities and discriminations will also be sustained and can taint the crisis response.

A key objective of any government program is to enhance the social contract between the population and government. For instance, in Pakistan, the nation-led SP program for the tribal areas was the first government program to ever reach the population. An important caveat is a situation where there is a great humanitarian need but where the government is not recognized internationally. In such circumstances, building the social contract should not be a consideration.

Table 4: Key considerations for each level of alignment

	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led
Government engagement and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little incentive for the government to engage. • Integration and adaptation of the program lessons in legislation and government programs are less likely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government involvement in an advisory setting has the potential to lead to reforms in SP regulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates government engagement and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of humanitarian activities can lead to more adaptive SP systems.
Long-term sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually not long-term sustainable. • Implementing agencies' tailoring of a program can be less sustainable as it tends to have more hands-on case management and protection mechanisms than many government systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many implementing agencies can lead to multiple overheads and an expensive system. • The process of alignment and coordination especially developing a platform across multiple NGOs is challenging, time-consuming, and expensive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a risk associated with an existing system being overwhelmed. • There is a risk that the system's overall weaknesses may be transferred to an emergency system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As piggybacking. • Adopting a targeting framework that supports national capacity building, tends to have longer-term positive impacts on the SP sector as a whole.

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	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led
Timeliness predictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for quick mobilization considering humanitarian operations standard delivery packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhere between parallel and piggybacking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation is likely to take a long time depending on the requirement for legal and policy change. • Coordination with the government may delay the process due to their decision-making and legal processes and implementation and capacity constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires long-term planning of SP and if done right can deliver a degree of insurance against shocks. • It may be swift or slow, depending on government capacity and the need for legislative changes.
Costs of program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive due to multiple overheads of different implementing agencies' parallel systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively high due to the potential of duplication of overhead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in overheads and opportunities for utilizing existing systems with time and cost savings. • Depending on the degree of piggybacking, the government might be paid for program implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can make use of some existing systems and institutions for time and cost savings. • Systems risk being overwhelmed with effects on costs and long-term SP system. • If programs have to build from scratch, there are substantial upfront costs.
Building the social contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely parallel systems do not build a social contract between the government and population. It will be important to find roles for governments in the delivery chain at least over time. • In cases where the current government has little or no international recognition, building trust in the government should not be a concern, so parallel systems are highly appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment improves the trust between the state and citizens if the alignment of humanitarian programs with government programs is explicit, for example, in outreach campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As for alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best at building trust in governments, if the implementation of the nation-led program includes population voice and participation, independent grievance redress, and independent M&E

Source: Predominantly based on Seyfert et al. (2019).

4.4 Mapping program examples across Table 3

Table 5 maps a few programs from outside South Asia into Table 3 to illustrate the ‘mix and match’ approach. Programs have been forced into cells, even though several of them show aspects of, for example, parallel and alignment within one link in the delivery chain. The next subsection will map three examples from South Asia in more detail.

Table 5: Mapping programs into Table 3

	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA¹⁰ (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF¹¹ • Niger - WFP¹² • Jordan - refugees 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somalia
Legal and policy framework		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - UNICEF • Niger - WFP • Somalia 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Jordan - refugees
Targeting, setting eligibility criteria		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordan - refugees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somalia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF • Niger - WFP
Setting transfer type, level, frequency, duration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somalia 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF • Niger - WFP • Jordan - refugees
Governance and coordination		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Jordan - refugees • Somalia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF 	
Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Jordan - refugees • Somalia 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF 	
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Somalia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordan - refugees 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
Enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Somalia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordan - refugees 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF

¹⁰ UNRWA = United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

¹¹ UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund.

¹² WFP = World Food Programme.

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	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led
Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Jordan - refugees • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
Case management (home visits, validation, and so on)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Jordan - refugees • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
Complaints and appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger – WFP • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
M&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
Information management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
Reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - WFP • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories) • Niger - UNICEF
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger - UNICEF • Niger - WFP • Somalia 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRWA (Palestinian territories)

A quick scan of Table 5 reveals the varied responses. The reasons for the variety are not immediately clear. The case of Niger is especially interesting, because of the difference in implementation between different agencies, even within the same program. A complete analysis of each case is beyond the scope of this paper. Some of the issues driving the differing approaches are addressed in the forward-looking section at the end of the paper (Section 5).

In the case of the Palestinian territories, the financing through UNRWA for refugees is parallel with the government but completely nation-led in targeting, eligibility, and complaint mechanisms. Similarly, in Niger, the UNICEF-supported financing for COVID-19 response is parallel but fully piggybacked in implementation using the same targeting, eligibility criteria, and information system as the government. In contrast, the WFP developed its support in Niger in a fully aligned manner during the planning stages including on benefit levels. The implementation however is parallel using WFP systems including tracking, payment, and monitoring.

Somalia is an interesting example of a nascent program that is largely parallel due to the nonexistence of government programs, but serious efforts have been made to ensure more integration along with different links in the delivery chain (Al-Ahmadi and Zampaglione 2021).

Examples of separate but aligned programs include United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Pakistan’s and UNICEF Jordan’s emergency cash transfers for refugees. These

agencies set the benefits at the same level as the government's programs for its citizens. This meant that the real value of benefits for refugees was less due to their higher cost of living. In Jordan, this was subsequently adjusted (Bastagli and Lowe 2021).

The response to the COVID-19 crisis is similar to other humanitarian interventions in that it responds to an external shock and provides short-term relief. Interestingly, even where programs were fully nation-led, qualifying conditions, especially conditionalities in conditional cash transfers, were temporarily waived, for instance, in Peru's Juntos program and the conditional cash transfer in Bangladesh. Transfer levels have often been aligned. In Nigeria, the COVID-19-related, temporary urban transfer value was aligned with the previously rural-focused routine program.

In terms of nation-led refugee programs, in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, the national social registry already listed many refugee households. This meant that they could immediately be included in relevant government programs. In the Republic of Congo, the lack of information on refugees (and many citizens) in its nascent social registry required a full round of identification and enrolment with the corresponding delay for refugees' access. A similar 'from the scratch' identification and enrolment process was necessary for Afghanistan. UNHCR had similar issues in Pakistan and had to carry out a separate identification process (Bastagli and Lowe 2021).

4.5 South Asia examples for Table 3

To illustrate the 'mix and match' approach for integrating humanitarian and SP interventions, this section gives South Asia examples across the delivery chain. The countries depicted here include examples along the integration spectrum: Afghanistan (parallel), Bangladesh (alignment/piggybacking), and Pakistan (nation-led). As per Table 5, countries have been 'forced' into cells, even though they show distinct aspects of integration along the delivery chain.

4.5.1 Afghanistan

Afghanistan lacks a predictable and fiscally sustainable SP system or established mechanisms to allocate and distribute both regular and emergency assistance. The current system does not possess the capacity nor the technical infrastructure to cushion the most vulnerable segments of society from poverty or the adverse effects of the recurring shocks. The few SP-related initiatives and programs are time-bound, fragmented in nature, reliant on off-budget programming, and not economically sustainable. The government spent less than 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on contributory and noncontributory safety nets, which did not target beneficiaries on a poverty basis.¹³ While the overall coverage of contributory and noncontributory SP reached around 12.5 percent of the population (World Bank, 2021a), only 5.8 percent¹⁴ of the bottom two quintiles of the population were covered by some type of social safety net. Humanitarian and development partners, who struggle to provide continuous assistance due to unpredictable funding and access constraints, funded 3.1 percent of the bottom two quintiles of the 5.8 percent total.¹⁵

¹³ Staff calculations based on FY1399 budget.

¹⁴ Staff calculations based on the NSIA IE-LFS 2019-20.

¹⁵ Staff calculations based on the NSIA IE-LFS 2019-20.

Even before the Taliban takeover on August 15, 2021, the country had come to rely on international humanitarian agencies (UN and NGOs) to address its needs. The succession of climate and other types of crises, particularly the aftermath of the 2018 drought and the preparation of the COVID-19 response, have revealed the absence of functioning mechanisms to provide financial assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable in times of crisis and highlighted the need for a coherent and coordinated approach to SP interventions, strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus. The forging of stronger partnerships, a greater commitment to early recovery and resilience-building initiatives, and aligned planning between humanitarian and development actors were pivotal in helping vulnerable people transition from short-term, fragmented, and small-scale interventions to longer-term sustainable development assistance. Efforts to bridge the gap and transition toward a multisectoral development response have been part of the SP-humanitarian agenda in recent years—two cases exemplified as follows:

- Afghanistan took concrete steps in 2019 to **plan for the establishment of a shock-responsive safety net system** to increase the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable communities living in water-scarce rural areas and enhance their near-term resilience to drought. A stakeholder engagement, facilitated by the World Bank, in direct collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WFP, led to a series of consultations and meetings between the government, humanitarian and development communities, and civil society and the formation of a series of voluntary working groups spanning all stakeholders. An endorsed prototype resulted in the preparation of the **Early Warning, Early Finance, and Early Action Project (ENETAWF)**.¹⁶ The overall objective of this project was to provide the foundation for a cost-effective, ex ante, operational response to help rebuild and maintain the livelihoods of rural communities living in drought-prone rain-fed areas, converging on long-term development programming response to recurring shocks.
- The preparation of the abovementioned operation was **disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak** in early 2020. The country needed to address the large co-variate loss of income shock caused by the pandemic through a nationwide emergency effort that could contribute toward establishing an SP system in the future. With no national social safety net that could deliver benefits to households, a flexible and pragmatic approach combining in-kind and cash relief was required, leveraging existing community-driven development platforms and programs and complementing the scarce humanitarian relief. The World Bank provided support to operationalize the government’s COVID-19 response strategy—the **COVID-19 Relief Effort for Afghan Communities and Households Project (REACH)**.¹⁷ It was designed to provide a one-time food/cash transfer to an estimated 93 percent of the population in close coordination with other development partners and humanitarian agencies while building a stronger nexus between the humanitarian and development support.

¹⁶ Resilience in Dari.

¹⁷ The President’s office named this project ‘Dastarkhan-e-Milli’, referring to the ‘national dinner cloth’ used for communal dining in Afghanistan which would be reflective of the government’s effort to build solidarity and respond to food insecurity.

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Disclaimer: At the time of publication, the Taliban takeover of August 15, 2021, led to a pause and/or cancelation of the World Bank portfolio in Afghanistan. The ENETAWF financing offer was officially withdrawn in October 2021.

Table 6 presents an indicative analysis of the prior August 15-level of alignment of humanitarian assistance with government-led safety net systems and some ‘forward-looking’ notes of the reality after the Taliban takeover.

Table 6: Levels of integration in Afghanistan

Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes	Looking ahead
Financing	*	*	*		The REACH project was financed by donors and International Development Association (IDA) funding. ENETAWF was supposed to follow the same financing design.	IDA and other donors’ resources to finance humanitarian agencies and/or NGOs (avoiding funding a non-recognized government)
Legal and policy framework	*				ANPDF ¹⁸ served as the overarching institutional framework for a wide range of development-oriented programs, poverty reduction initiatives, and policies, including SP.	Disrupted by recent political events. Development partners to operate under the legal and policy framework of the implementing organizations and/or donor agencies
Targeting, setting eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions	*	*			The World Bank used a combination of community-based targeting (CBT), self-targeting, geographical targeting, and categorical targeting. Humanitarians relied mostly on CBT.	Align eligibility criteria and leverage existing beneficiary lists.
Setting transfer type, level, frequency, duration	*				No coordination	Harmonization of transfer

¹⁸ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework 2016–2021.

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes	Looking ahead
Governance and coordination	*	*			The forging of stronger partnerships, a greater commitment to early recovery and resilience-building initiatives, and aligned planning between humanitarian and development actors were pivotal to the design of ENETAWF and REACH.	Coordination across humanitarian programs and World Bank-funded programs implemented by third parties. Leveraging Cash and Voucher Working Group and other working groups
Outreach	*	*	*		The COVID relief effort was branded as a government initiative, with implementation responsibility from various agencies in their designated locations.	
Registration	*				Parallel systems	Leverage WFP SCOPE for potential targeting overlap. The World Bank to develop a social registry.
Enrolment	*				Parallel systems. World Bank 'From the scratch' identification and enrolment process for COVID response	Leverage WFP SCOPE for potential targeting overlap. The World Bank to develop a social registry.
Payment	*					The payment system disrupted. Leverage existing providers and expand bidding.
Case management (home visits, validation, and so on)	*				Parallel systems	The World Bank to develop a social registry.
Complaints and appeals	*				Parallel systems	
Protection	*				Parallel systems	
M&E	*				Some coordination for common needs analysis under COVID-19 response	Third-party monitoring
Information Management	*					Data sharing and data harmonization agreements

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes	Looking ahead
Reach	*				Some coordination to access hard-to-reach areas not controlled by the government	
Delivery	*	*			Some coordination of COVID relief packages across the different districts, particularly in hard-to-reach areas where humanitarians had most access (and where government staff movement was likely to be restricted)	Leverage existing implementation structures and build on new ones

Source: Authors' indicative analysis using the framework in Table 3 adapted from Seyfert et al. 2019.

Afghanistan falls mostly under a parallel level of integration, where the delivery of humanitarian assistance is stand-alone from national systems. A few efforts have been made along the delivery chain, mostly in terms of financing, governance, and coordination, targeting, and outreach during the COVID-19 relief response. Current political events have disrupted signs of progress made toward nexus but have opened an opportunity for better coordination between development partners and humanitarians in the absence of an internationally recognized government. Countries that have successfully exited fragility and violent conflict worked concurrently on short-term emergency assistance and medium- to long-term recovery efforts. The World Bank will thus play an instrumental role in responding to the humanitarian crisis in the short-term while adhering to its development mandate by maintaining development gains, national systems, and community platforms in the long term.

4.5.2 Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and natural disaster-prone countries in the World. Most of its SP programs grew out of responses to shocks such as droughts or floods, making the SP system closely linked with disaster management. Initially, programs focused on poverty relief, but over the decades, the programs grew in scope, number, and objectives. Nonetheless, the SP system remains focused on rural areas, and allocations do not follow poverty patterns (World Bank 2021b). The Bangladesh National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), adopted in 2015, sets out to reform the system “by ensuring more efficient and effective use of resources, strengthened delivery systems and progress towards a more inclusive form of Social Security” (Hasan 2017, 29). The strategy aims to consolidate the management of different programs into fewer ministries and focus on six priority areas.¹⁹

¹⁹ The strategy outlines six areas of focus (World Bank 2018): (1) establish a single registry, (2) establish a results-based M&E system, (3) establish a mechanism for complaints and grievance, (4) strengthen processes for selecting recipients of social security schemes, (5) strengthen government-to-person payment systems that promote financial inclusivity, and (6) support the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW) to implement life-cycle programs and coordinate with social security programs.

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Bangladesh allocated about 2.6 percent of GDP on all SP programs in FY2019/20 (World Bank 2021b); however, much of this spending goes to social insurance (41 percent) and social assistance (39 percent), with the latter presenting significantly lower expenditures than initial budgets. Total expenditures directed to transfers to households affected by shocks constitute only 3 percent of total expenditure across several programs. A significant share of the total budget (39 percent) goes to addressing the impacts of disasters, which is relatively high compared to other less developed countries, reflecting the history and geography of Bangladesh.

There are a plethora of local and international actors in the humanitarian space in Bangladesh. Most, if not all, subscribe to the coordination mechanisms led by local and national governments and there are strong attempts at coordination. Given that much of Bangladesh's SP system developed to respond to crises, it should be easier here to coordinate than in countries where the SP system grew out of more traditional social insurance-type programs. In practice, programs such as the **Gratuitous Relief** or the **Vulnerable Feeding Program**, although explicitly termed 'humanitarian assistance programs' and meant to respond to crises, have de facto become permanent, 'regular' SP programs supported by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB).

The displaced population (DP) situation in Bangladesh is also worth noting. DPs account for about one-third of the total population in Cox's Bazaar, an area that was already facing severe development challenges. The total Displaced Rohingya²⁰ Population (DRP) is more than 900,000, of which 85 percent live in camps, 13 percent in camps with host communities, and 2 percent in dispersed sites in host communities. The government responded well to the influx despite the many other serious past and present humanitarian crises, using its country systems to deliver some health, education, and water services. However, given the severity of the situation and the large number of DPs, humanitarian agencies are delivering most of the provided services. Under the overall leadership of the Government of Bangladesh, the humanitarian community engaged in needs assessments, consultations and strategic planning, which has resulted in a prioritized **Joint Response Plan**, which in 2021 sought some USD 943 million from 100+ partners to respond to the critical needs of Rohingya refugees and mitigate impacts on the host communities. It is also important to note that in the case of DRP, donors must abide by the policies of the GoB which are strictly humanitarian (year-on-year) without a development (medium-longer term) focus. In 2020, with the additional burden of dealing with COVID-19, the government (with funding from the World Bank's IDA 18 Regional Sub-Window) expanded access to its flagship public works program to assist the host community²¹ and mirrored the intervention design with a project executed by the WFP for the DRP and under the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR). The WFP implements under an output-based contract (as in Somalia and the Central African Republic), using completely aligned procedures.

²⁰ Minority fleeing conflict in neighboring Myanmar.

²¹ As part of the host community side of the work, the GoB, with the support of the World Bank, developed and approved a new modality of the flagship public works program Employment Generation Program for the Poorest (EGPP). The new modality, called EGPP+, reformed the program guidelines to allow horizontal and vertical expansion during shocks, allowed the program to function outside the two lean seasons, introduced an unconditional modality for specific cases, established trigger parameters, and allowed for early warning actions. The targeting modality adopted by the EGPP+ has clear criteria for selecting DRPs and host community beneficiaries that participate in the public works, as well as for setting their benefit levels.

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Table 7 presents an indicative analysis of the Bangladeshi-level of alignment of humanitarian assistance with government-led safety net systems, all projects combined.

Table 7: Levels of integration in Bangladesh

Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Financing	*	*	*		<p>The EMRCR and SNSP,²² both used as part of the response to the Rohingya crises, leverage government staff and infrastructure for their implementation.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier, the government allocates a significant amount of the revenue budget annually to social assistance programs which include public works, unconditional cash transfers, and flood relief schemes.</p> <p>Bangladesh START fund²³ is the local source of financing for humanitarians.</p>
Legal and policy framework	*	*			<p>NGOs and donors abide by national legislation but are not bound by national SP policies.</p> <p>Regarding the humanitarian response in Cox's Bazar, the government established a National Task Force (NTF) headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the MoDMR. The NTF is responsible for all policy decisions and all humanitarian agencies must align with national policy to operate in the DRP camps.</p>
Targeting, setting eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions	*				<p>There is no standardized approach to beneficiary selection in Bangladesh. Programs use a set of categorical and socioeconomic variables to determine eligibility.</p> <p>Regarding the procedure, major social assistance programs implement a community-based approach in which union and upazila committees, in tandem, select and filter out applicants.</p> <p>Humanitarian partners that use a range of beneficiary selection methods normally do not adhere to or piggyback on these practices.</p>

²² Both financed through the IDA18 Regional Sub-window for Refugees and Host Communities. The Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Response (EMRCR) project aims to strengthen the capacity of the GoB to respond to the Rohingya crisis by improving access to basic services and building disaster and social resilience in the Cox's Bazar district. It is executed by three central Government Ministries. The Safety Nets System for the Poorest (SNSP) project provides income support to both host and Rohingya communities through public work schemes. This is implemented by the MoDMR.

²³ Rapid Emergency Response Fund.

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Setting transfer type, level, frequency, duration	*	*			<p>For government programs, transfer type and level are normally approved in the Central Monitoring Committee (CMC) on Social Security Programs, while frequency and duration by ministries' steering committees.</p> <p>In the Rohingya response, transfer amounts' frequency and duration are discussed and reviewed in the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), of which the government is a part. The government, through the NTF, restricts or allows different types of benefits. Particularly in the case of income support, the NTF has restricted the use of cash, and hence the WFP is implementing the e-voucher scheme.</p> <p>About other benefits or services, the government implements some level of control through the coordination mechanisms or, in the case of NGOs, through the NGO Affairs Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office.</p>
Governance and coordination	*	*			<p>Bangladesh has a complex set of coordination mechanisms led by the MoDMR which are activated in the event of a shock (for example, Inter-Ministerial Disaster Management Coordination Committee and the Cyclone Preparedness Program). The mandate of these coordination mechanisms is not only to manage horizontal and vertical coordination for humanitarian response but also to coordinate with the NGOs and international humanitarian sector.</p> <p>In the case of the Rohingya response, the UN and the GoB established a coordination body called Inter-Sector Coordination Group which implements the UN cluster approach and integrates 59 UN organizations, 53 INGOs, 28 national NGOs, and 2 government ministries. This mechanism ensures that all activities in the camps are coordinated and aligned with the government's prevailing policy on DRPs.</p>
Outreach	*	*	*		<p>Government programs have an established mechanism that mobilizes upazila and union personnel to carry out information sessions at the village level, along with other local media campaigns.</p> <p>UN agencies and NGOs frequently piggyback on these mechanisms to inform their intended population of programs and activities.</p>

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
					In the DRP response, most of the outreach has been carried out by the humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners.
Registration	*				Registration for national programs is fragmented and normally conducted by local officials at the union and upazila levels. NGOs employ their registration mechanisms which are normally not aligned with the government's procedures.
Enrolment	*	*			National programs conduct onboarding and notification of beneficiaries once these are selected by the local committees. In Cox's Bazar, agencies working in both host and Rohingya communities (such as WFP) use similar processes for enrolment.
Payment	*	*			Bangladesh uses a wide array of payment service providers (PSPs) for cash transfers (state-owned banks, commercial banks, and mobile financial services (MFS)). Most recently Bangladesh has moved strongly toward the use of MFS. UN agencies and NGOs also tap into the same service providers as the government through separate arrangements.
Case management (home visits, validation, and so on)	*				Case management is normally done in a fragmented manner program to program, each with its own set of social workers.
Complaints and appeals	*				The GoB established a common grievance redress system (GRS) called '333'. This system has not been used by all SP programs, some of which still use fragmented GRS. NGOs regularly implement their own GRS.
Protection	*	*			In Cox's Bazar, UNHCR is responsible for assessing the protection framework. Referrals are conducted by UNHCR and ILO through their implementing partners on the field. These may be referred to other NGO services as well as a small fraction of national provided services.
M&E	*	*			In post-disaster time, there is an established practice of joint needs assessment. The relevant ministries of the GoB usually track implementation progress for their corresponding programs. The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) monitors the GoB's humanitarian assistance programs.

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
					In Cox's Bazar, monitoring at the cluster level (ISCG) is shared with the government.
Information Management	*				A national household database is under development but only meant for government programs. It is not intended for use by humanitarian partners. Data-sharing modalities to be prepared. The UN Humanitarian Cluster System has recently activated the Information Management Working Group that will be co-led by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office to strengthen the quality of information for evidence-based and effective humanitarian, disaster risk reduction, and development action.
Reach	*	*			Bangladesh has over 120 SP programs. In terms of geographical coverage, the major social assistance programs cover all 64 districts in the country and focus mostly on rural areas. In terms of coverage across the life cycle, Bangladesh has programs for early childhood development (ECD), working-age population, and the elderly.
Delivery	*	*	*	*	The GoB through its SP system provides a wide array of support to households, including cash, in-kind transfers, behaviour change communication (BCC), and access to different type of services such as social care for persons with disabilities. Delivery is regularly operated through regional and local offices that include deconcentrated units at the subdistrict level (upazilas) and local units chaired by elected representatives at the union level. Most of the programs delivering cash do so using third-party payment services, including commercial banks and mobile financial service providers.

Bangladesh is a case of a significant presence of both humanitarian and SP systems, with elaborate coordination mechanisms in place based on the existing systems for humanitarian assistance. Still, the GoB has a very clear policy of separating humanitarian assistance from development interventions. Opportunities of integration (understood in the Bangladeshi context as coordination and collaboration, but not convergence) exist and are evident by the Rohingya response. However, integration is not always preminent. For example, INGOs that want to operate in the country require a project approval called FD-1 provided by the Prime Minister's Office through the NGO Affairs Bureau. For some NGOs, this process is complex and time-consuming, leading them to piggyback on partner organization's FD-1. The system is strained and incomplete given the many smaller voluntary organizations that provide essential but ad hoc support. Irrespectively, the dashboards provided by the humanitarian coordination group are

outstanding, identifying clearly who does what, where, and by how much.²⁴ Unfortunately, evaluations have found a lack of coordination between the separate UN, INGO, and national NGO systems.

4.5.3 Pakistan

Pakistan is prone to numerous natural disasters and with some regions facing security and militancy challenges, amplifying the vulnerability of the population. Frequent shocks such as floods, droughts, and earthquakes have had dire effects on human capital formation and development gains made by the country over time. The country has shown signs of recovery in recent years, evidenced by lower rates of poverty and better economic growth. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has introduced a new set of challenges. According to recent estimates, the pandemic has increased poverty by 2.3 percent, which translates into an additional 5.8 million being pushed into poverty.²⁵

To provide a cushion to poor and vulnerable households adversely affected, or at risk of being affected, by covariate shock, the Government of Pakistan (GoP) has made major investments in the SP system. In 2007, the government developed a National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) with the vision “to develop an integrated and comprehensive social protection system, covering all of the country’s population, but especially the poorest and the most vulnerable.”²⁶ The strategy reviewed various SP initiatives, concluding that Pakistan’s safety net developed largely as a series of ad hoc responses to various challenges, with considerable duplication and fragmentation across programs. The strategy identified gaps and shortcomings and set out a more comprehensive approach to SP. The NSPS served as the foundation for launching the **Benazir Income Support Program (BISP)**, Pakistan’s flagship safety net program. The GoP has also launched multisectoral human capital programs with a major focus on the SP system to cater to multidimensional poverty. However, with periodic shocks to the economy, whether natural or man-made, consistent progress has remained a serious challenge for the country.

While the GoP has a rich history of delivering social assistance in the form of cash transfers for emergency relief and recovery since the last two decades, most initiatives have not been conceptualized as part of the wider SP architecture but have been delivered as stand-alone emergency interventions. Examples include the COVID-19 response under the **Ehsaas Emergency Cash (EEC) program**.

In conflict areas, such as the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan where service delivery has been weaker, the government introduced the FATA Temporarily Displaced Persons Emergency Recovery Project (FATA TDP ERP)²⁷ with the aim to reintegrate and support households displaced by conflict. The project consists of cash transfers, child health

²⁴ For examples, see

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/210531_4w_final_english.pdf and

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/final_situation_report_-_rohingya_refugee_crisis_march_2021.pdf

²⁵ Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan, 2021. “Economic Vulnerability Assessment”

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ World Bank engagement in the FATA has consistently involved and been initiated by requests from the GoP even though conflict in the province has been ongoing over the course of the operation, making the region inaccessible to WBG staff.

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services, and building of an SP infrastructure in a landscape where there was none. The program is also an important tool to restore trust in the state, address deep-rooted drivers of militancy, and prevent recurrences of conflict. In this setting, implementation responsibilities have been distributed based on capacity and maneuverability on the ground after immense coordination efforts by different governmental and nongovernmental agencies. A challenge that remains is the transition from a post-conflict program to sustainable service delivery in erstwhile FATA.

Humanitarian agencies and NGOs have also played a significant role in shock-responsive SP initiatives. For large-scale disasters beyond the capacity of national authorities, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) issues international appeals and the UN is called upon for humanitarian assistance. The NDMA also hosts periodic coordination meetings for all humanitarian actors including members from donor agencies and members from relevant federal and provincial ministries. However, most initiatives led by humanitarian actors have been delivered on an ad hoc basis, rather than as part of an overarching adaptive disaster response. Despite a large number of initiatives, there are no guidelines to support their implementation, and the multiplicity of mandates and lack of coordination with BISP and the NDMA continue to be major challenges to emergency response.

Table 8 presents an indicative analysis of the Pakistani-level of alignment between humanitarian assistance with a government-led safety net system in the tribal areas. Even though this exemplifies a fully nation-led level of integration, it may show distinct aspects of integration along the delivery chain.

Table 8: Levels of integration in Pakistan - The FATA case

Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Financing	*	*	*	*	While the flagship BISP social assistance is almost entirely GoP financed, the project is funded by IDA and supported by other development partners' assistance (FATA/KP/Balochistan MDTF) with bilateral support from Turkey and China. Funds were routed through the national budget through supplementary grants.
Legal and policy framework	*	*	*	*	The Ministry of Economic Affairs housed the project whereas the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) was the implementing agency. The project utilized the National Civil Registry for biometric verification, necessary for enrolment in the program.
Targeting, setting eligibility criteria and qualifying conditions	*	*	*	*	The Civil Registry and National Socio-Economic Registry are usually used. However, for this project, due to the type of shock, geographical targeting was used rather than poverty targeting. Hence, the civil registry was used for target setting, eligibility criteria, and qualifying conditions.

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Setting transfer type, level, frequency, duration	*	*	*		One-stop-shop (OSS)/Citizen Facilitation Center (CFC) model: One-time Early Recovery Grant, a Livelihood Support Grant (LSG) to recover basic subsistence needs, and a conditional transfer component intended to improve child health and public health awareness. The cash transfer amounts were decided by the government in consultation with donors based on opportunity costs and transport costs. The transfer frequency of the CCT is based on quarterly fulfillment of conditionalities related to immunization and nutrition of children between 0 and 2 years of age. The LSG to temporarily displaced persons (TDPs) was aimed at providing consumption smoothing over four months while families restart livelihood activities upon return to the merged areas (FATA).
Governance and coordination	*	*	*	*	<p>The Ministry of Economic Affairs leads coordination across the government, donors, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Government SP and disaster risk management (DRM) have functioning institutionalized links and coordination (sharing data and information and coordinate on the response based on respective roles).</p> <p>There is considerable fragmentation and lack of coordination of government programs with the efforts made by humanitarian organizations and NGOs giving way to duplication, but in the FATA case complementarity of efforts is sought.</p>
Outreach	*	*	*		The government used local administration (local government) to assist outreach and dialogue with tribal chiefs. The implementation agency engaged an NGO with experience working in the tribal areas to deliver a tactical and conflict-sensitive mobilization campaign, including social mobilization mechanisms to ensure the inclusion of women.
Registration	*	*	*	*	The civil registry and ID system hosted by the NADRA were key to registration. Biometric verification through OSS/CFC, matching against civil registry for all grants, and with a static master list of TDPs prepared by the FATA Disaster Management Agency (FDMA) for the LSG.
Enrolment	*	*	*	*	Enrolment of beneficiaries with verification from the civil registry for cash working groups and with the FATA Disaster Management Authority for TDPs seeking LSG

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Factor	Parallel	Alignment	Piggybacking	Nation-led	Notes
Payment	*				Cash disbursement through OSS/CFCs. OSS/CFCs were also equipped with platforms of PSPs to deliver real-time electronic payments to beneficiaries using branchless banking infrastructure. Each OSS/CFC had an ATM for quick cash withdrawal as required by beneficiaries.
Case management (home visits, validation, and so on)	*	*	*		The NADRA developed a strong management information system (MIS) which enabled efficient case management and timely identification of issues and bottlenecks in implementation.
Complaints and appeals	*				Registration of grievances through OSS/CFC
Protection	*	*	*	*	National social care and health services are utilized under the project.
M&E	*	*			Humanitarians contributed to background and vulnerability assessments for populations affected by emergencies, including the needs of DPs, as well as women and children (for example, FATA vulnerability assessment of 2017). Layered monitoring and project oversight system in place. The project supported operational review, spot checks, beneficiary feedback surveys, and an outcome-level evaluation. The implementation agency hired third-party firms for this purpose. In addition, the implementation agency used third-party auditors, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs was audited by the Auditor General for cash grants.
Information Management	*	*	*	*	Strong MIS The civil registry may be used by authorized agents for verification purposes with predefined standard operating procedures (SOPs). The socioeconomic registry remains protected, but access may be granted by BISP once data safety requirements are met—requests are approved on a case-by-case basis. For this project, only the civil registry was used.
Reach	*	*	*	*	The NADRA has demonstrated the ability to mobilize in any region of the country as required.
Delivery	*	*	*	*	National systems (NADRA, BISP, or provincial SP authorities) are used in most cases.

While Pakistan is a case of full use of the national system, the country needs effective policies that enable the inoperability of the DRM system and SP system. SP programs and DRM projects funded by the government exist but work in their silos, resulting in cumbersome and ad hoc

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coordination processes in the aftermath of shocks. Similarly, there is considerable fragmentation and lack of coordination of government programs with the efforts made by humanitarian organizations and NGOs giving way to duplication. Effective inoperability will not only ensure better use of resources but also allow technical expertise to be utilized more efficiently.

In the context of a new administrative structure and a potential trust deficit, the FATA TDP ERP has been important for building citizens' awareness of state entities more generally. According to the beneficiary survey conducted in 2018, most respondents came to know of the FATA TDP ERP informally, through word of mouth. Despite this, most survey respondents correctly attributed the management of the program to the GoP. Identification of accountable service providers and access to official grievance redressal mechanisms in the FATA are a significant shift from administration systems prevalent before FATA's merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A defining feature of the project, which has leveraged interagency cooperation to deliver services in a context with only limited public service provision, has been the presence of the CFCs. CFCs are managed by NADRA and are effectively one-stop shops for all services, including cash transfers, child health services, financial services, and vital registration, among others. By providing these services, the CFCs also contribute to (re)building the formal relationship between citizens and the state, which will eventually make it easier for other public services from a range of government actors.

5 Considerations for Better Integration

As discussed in Table 3, opportunities and challenges exist for integration across the delivery chain. Based on the literature review, review of project documentation, and key informant interviews, this section summarizes some of the key opportunities and challenges for better SP engagement in humanitarian situations and with humanitarian actors. Most of the inhibitors identified represent opportunities for improvement and not immovable obstacles.

5.1 Broad agreement on issues

Box 3: Shock-responsive SP in the Caribbean

Key findings on shock-responsive SP in the Caribbean are as follows:

- “Protecting people from shocks and risks is an inherent function of social protection...”
- Shock-responsive social protection is a relatively new term but not a new concept in the Caribbean...
- Experiences in the Caribbean show that mature social protection systems and programs are not a prerequisite for responding to shocks and disasters.
- The most important enabling factors for shock-responsive social protection are political will and financing...
- A strong relationship between disaster risk management and social protection is essential for strengthening shock-responsive social protection.”

Source: WFP 2020, “Key Messages.”

A first step to improving levels of integration is to be clear about what the issues are. For a recent example, Box 3 presents findings of a review of adaptive SP in the Caribbean. The findings reflect,

to a large degree, alignment with the broader literature. The first point that all SP is inherently set up to deal with risk and shocks should be remembered in the rush to embrace the latest fad in the international debate. Dealing with risks is not a new item to add to the menu; it is core to SP's objectives, even for social insurance. As to the second bullet point, the Bangladesh case also shows how SP developed as a response to drought and flood shocks, making the SP system closely linked with disaster management. That mature SP systems help but are not essential is borne out by the Afghanistan case as well as experience from Somalia and the Central African Republic where emergency assistance can be delivered by humanitarians in the short run and complemented by longer-term development funding support. What is essential (as discussed in Table 4) is that even the initial parallel implementation is done in a way that helps build government capacity and commitment to longer-term adaptive SP systems.

Most analysts and practitioners would probably put political will as the first bullet point—it comes out consistently as the main factor driving more integration. The final bullet of linking DRM and SP is born out in the subsequent discussion. The integration/coordination across humanitarian, DRM, and SP is critical within governments and agencies. The elaborate system of coordination spelled out in Bangladesh's national strategy is a good example of an attempt to do this. Similarly, the original intent of the Afghanistan integrated program showed a commitment to help build a nascent SP system learning from humanitarian, parallel systems. At an operational level, the many cash working groups, set up as a follow-up to the Grand Bargain commitments, have provided excellent coordination in many countries, most recently for the COVID-19 response (for an example see Annex 1).

5.2 Political will

It is too easy to dismiss the possibility for reform or better integration by referring to a lack of political will. In reality, each actor is faced with a series of complex choices within a set of constraints that often get translated into 'political will'. Still, political room to maneuver or political will is critical across several dimensions:

- Political will of donors and humanitarian actors to channel money through governments or at least attempt alignment given their humanitarian principles
- Political will of governments to set up or reform their SP system
- Political will of governments to work with NGOs or the UN
- Political will of all agencies involved to include refugees in programs and so on.

Bangladesh is a clear example of government willingness to consolidate SP programs and integrate climatic risks into its designs as well as the inclusion of DPs. The GoP has also endorsed the integration between SP and DRM under the Federal Disaster Response Action Plan (FDRAP) of 2010. Afghanistan has proven during the COVID-19 response that it could work with the HCT, the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, and UN agencies to minimize duplication of efforts or miscommunication concerning the support provided to communities across the country.

Donors' political will can also get caught in their own built-in institutional barriers. In protracted crises, such as Somalia or Afghanistan, where SP and humanitarian links need to be especially

strong, donors' institutional and budgetary constraints tend to restrict financing horizons or benefit sizable, short-term responses. More mature SP systems like Pakistan, however, attract increased funding support by international donors.

5.3 Leadership matters

To enable any form of coordination and collaboration, it is essential to mention the critical role of leadership. Good leadership committed to delivering the best for beneficiaries can overcome any obstacle or inhibitor. With poor leadership or leadership focused on what is best for their own institution, any enablers can be disrupted. All the key informants mentioned this and it is a key finding of various reviews (for example, Gentilini et al. 2018).

Key questions to answer include the following:

- Is there the necessary leadership within the government to enable the development or reform of its SP system, even though implementation might be done in a more parallel way initially?
- Can government play a leading role in coordinating the different agencies operating in the country? If not, is there another trusted agency that can do this?
- Are there any given agencies willing to put the beneficiaries first and not their institutional interests, for example, agree that another agency or government is best at delivering services in a given context and thus forego the overhead funding that would otherwise come to the agency?

Too often analyses of integration efforts point to the individual persons involved as the key drivers of success. Afghanistan's extraordinary and ad hoc collaboration between the government, World Bank, and UN agencies through the COVID-19 response may have been dependent on individuals—this makes it impossible to replicate. Instead, the focus should be on what leadership those individuals showed, for example, local leaders of agencies who step forward and show leadership in engaging with governments and other agencies—that is, it is not one individual or another but rather individual leadership.

5.4 High-level strategic commitments to integration

As a best practice, leadership should be backed by corporate follow-up in agencies to the commitments outlined in the Grand Bargain for humanitarian actors and the reemphasis on risk management in SP. The follow-up to the Grand Bargain, especially the cash learning groups, and the localization efforts have helped provide a practical, operational space for collaboration and coordination. On the SP side, the strong interest in adaptive or shock-responsive SP has helped convince skeptical humanitarians that SP may be a good partner.

Unfortunately, the high-level commitments are not always followed up by practical guidance to staff and local offices.²⁸ The change for some agencies, for example, to support national systems

²⁸ World Bank (2016b) is a good example of a practical guide that translates the Grand Bargain commitments on cash into ways forward, which is the good news. The bad news is that the recommendations still remain the same, indicating only limited progress.

instead of delivering aid directly, is such a big shift that it will require time and sustained effort to follow through. Donors can also complicate matters, if they remain focused on getting support delivered quickly and continue to downplay longer-term sustained support for national system development. For example, in its evaluation of its Bangladesh country program for 2016–2019 (WFP 2021), WFP’s evaluation office notes that the program was well aligned with the government’s strategy and the focus on building national systems as appropriate. The evaluation goes on to note

“in practice, however, a focus on capacity-building per se rather than enhancing national systems affected WFP’s ability to influence the safety net programs.” (WFP 2021, iv).

Practice in the field has not always followed the corporate shift toward national system development. For example, when the local UNICEF office in Yemen first considered helping implement IDA financing for cash transfers, it hesitated, noting its lack of experience in this area. However, corporate support from UNICEF headquarters including the appointment of an experienced team leader has helped make the program a success. In contrast, in Afghanistan the local office of WFP has reached out repeatedly, supporting the effort to establish a national SP system, where the obstacle has been in the government. However, in the post-August 15 political context in Afghanistan, the World Bank is considering leveraging the standard agreements with certain UN agencies to engage in basic needs delivery. Within the World Bank, staff also express appreciation for the corporate commitments for better coordination while noting the need for better support for how to do so in practice.

5.5 Crises as opportunities

The COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences have meant large increases in needs for poor and marginalized people around the world. It has also brought about significant increases in funding for SP efforts to address those needs. Traditionally, development agencies such as the World Bank can deliver speedier support in emergencies than under regular circumstances and have developed internal systems to do so.²⁹ Often, emergencies mean a focus on quick results and streamlined procedures. This was also the case with the COVID-19 response. Several World Bank staff noted that the use of emergency procedures was critical to delivering appropriate and faster responses than during ‘normal’ times—a good example is the Central African Republic COVID-19 response (World Bank 2020).

In some parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, Jordan, or Yemen, an urgent humanitarian crisis has evolved into a protracted crisis where destitution and humanitarian needs are indistinguishable from longer-term vulnerabilities and inequalities. Longhurst et al. (2020) find that in such situations there is less progress in finding the right combination of instruments to link humanitarian aid and SP. In contrast, this study has found that an extended crisis ‘blurs’ the line between SP and humanitarian space, making clear that the objectives of SP and humanitarian are similar (Table 3) and open opportunities for learning and cooperation. On the humanitarian side, the urgency for quick response transitions to concerns for sustained ability to help the target

²⁹ ‘Speedier’ does not always mean fast. For instance, Spearing (2019) estimates the average historical time from crisis to commitment under IDA’s Crisis Response Window to be 216 days and the time from crisis to first disbursement 398 days.

population. For development actors and governments, it becomes clear that the problem is not transitory or ‘foreign’ but domestic, that requires longer-term solutions built on the humanitarian experience. In these protracted crises, funding also becomes much more of a constraint, as the initial news of the disaster and the resulting uptick in donations fades away over time. Afghanistan has been a remarkable deviation from this trend with sustained levels of humanitarian funding over time, now being redirected to address the looming humanitarian crisis.

5.6 Special considerations for refugees and noncitizens

Any inflow of refugees complicates the alignment of approaches. In many places, refugees may exacerbate existing societal tensions and further weaken social contracts. Provinces that border conflict situations face spillovers of conflict damage and are often already vulnerable regions—such as the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in Pakistan. If refugees are seen to receive help and the host community is not, this may further inflame tensions. For the host government, it can be a political risk to include refugees as part of the national caseload. Donors typically try to persuade governments to be more inclusive in their longer-term SP programs, even though donors often have short-term commitments and at times unpredictable funds. However, dilemmas can exist in the reconciliation of commitments to neutrality, independence, and the necessary respect for the sovereignty of governments. Many countries do provide SP for displaced people partly due to the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the Global Compact on Refugees. Although SP for refugees is commonly associated with conditionality such as restriction of movement, internally displaced peoples and refugees in SP systems require increased technical assistance to secure that staff, institutions, and processes are accessible and have the communication skills—language, cultural, distance barriers, and so on. When governments are involved, the transfer value provided to refugees is often below the Minimum Expenditure Basket, as the level will be set with considerations linked to host community perceptions (Seyfert et al. 2019, Longhurst et al. 2020). This is not inherently bad, especially if there is a view to aligning benefit levels with the local population, if refugees have access to the local labor market, or if there is a need to increase coverage within a given budget constraint.

Despite these challenges, several countries have successfully integrated refugees. In **Bangladesh**, several nation-led social safety net programs have been expanded to include both displaced Rohingya and host communities. The government is using its country systems to deliver health, education, and water services, closely collaborating with humanitarian agencies for effective delivery. Some evaluations present a positive picture, praising the speed of response (UNICEF 2018) and finding both refugees and host communities feeling safe and respected and trusting in a humanitarian staff (Ground Truth Solutions 2020). However, lack of ‘localization’—international agencies tend to replace rather than reinforce local capacity (Van Brabant and Patel 2018)—and lack of coordination between the separate UN, INGO, and national NGO systems persist.

Jordan is the second-largest host of refugees per capita worldwide. Within the 10.8 million³⁰ population, 34 percent³¹ are migrants. A large portion of the refugees live in cities and towns outside of camps. Since July 2016, the Jordanian government has granted more than 100,000 work permits to Syrian refugees, allowing them to work legally and earn an income for their families (WFP 2020). Refugee assistance programs were effective in reducing poverty but unsustainable in the nurturing of self-reliance. UNHCR's cash assistance program and the WFP food voucher program did reduce poverty but they relied on voluntary contributions from donors, so any funding decline would result in benefits for only the most vulnerable refugees. With no or limited access to labor markets and economic opportunities, SP lacked the ability for beneficiaries to transition to work and self-reliance (Ait Ali Slimane et al. 2020). The Jordan Compact intended to close this void as the international community committed US\$300 million to advance employment opportunities for refugees as well as refugees. As a result, an increasing number of Syrians have received work permits to be able to access formal jobs and decent labor (World Bank 2016a). Initial rollout focused on granting Syrian employment with a lack of understanding for local needs of refugee and host populations. Over time, tweaking and expansions advanced the program's success; these included access to better education, financial services, and expansion of the economic zones offering benefits for companies with 15 percent of their employees being refugees (Huang and Gough 2019). In 2019, Jordan had issued 200,000 work permits for Syrian refugees in specific sectors (European Commission 2019). A testament to its success was the London initiative of February 2019 expanding the Jordan Compact to advance international support for inclusive growth in Jordan as a host country and international strategic partner.

As Venezuela experienced hyperinflation, a 30 percent contraction of the economy, and political and social disorder, an estimated 1.8 million refugees fled into Colombia in 2020 (Bodea 2021). To facilitate their ability to seek employment, residency, and access to health and social services, Colombia granted legal status protecting nearly 1 million Venezuelan refugees for 10 years in February 2021 (BBC 2021; Zeller 2021). Before this initiative, the Colombian government had developed a border mobility program to enable migrants' move between the two countries and a special work permit known as the *Permiso Especial de Permanencia*, which has allowed hundreds of thousands to legally stay and work in Colombia for two years (Janetsky 2019). Historically the border has been open with crossings for job and market opportunities and services, and this transient community made it easier to accept the influx; however, as the immigration has intensified, so has the conflict between the local citizens and the newcomers.

5.7 We still do not understand each other

Consistently, formal evaluations, as well as key informant interviews, bring up the need for humanitarian and development actors to improve understanding of each other's concepts and processes. For instance, many World Bank staff noted the need to understand the humanitarian principles fully, especially how to address them in practice in a nation-led program. Humanitarian actors have noted that the language used by development actors seems foreign and that the

³⁰ <http://jorinfo.dos.gov.jo/Databank/pxweb/en/>

³¹ <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/JOR/jordan/immigration-statistics>

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development actors' processes are exceedingly slow. In Afghanistan, understanding each other's processes created a lot of miscommunication, delays, and even duplications while coordinating an integrated and sequential COVID-19 response. In a summary discussion note for the Grand Bargain Cash Working Group's webinars in 2020, Kukrety notes, for instance, that practitioners and managers in humanitarian agencies wanted to learn more about some fundamental SP concepts. They found some serious gaps, even in fundamental areas, for example, that humanitarians would like to have a

“Common glossary and/or frameworks for a joint understanding of concepts to identify entry points. In particular on:

- What is SP (including a life cycle approach, social transfers versus cash transfers, etc.)?
- The role of the government in SP and humanitarian response
- What does shock-responsive mean/when is a system shock-responsive?
- What does linking humanitarian cash to SP mean in different contexts?
- Understand how SP links with development policies (i.e. macroeconomic and labor markets)” (Kukrety 2020, 2)

Partly in response to this, **socialprotection.org** has developed a user-friendly glossary as part of its 'social protection in crisis contexts' community.

To respond to the next crises, the opportunity exists to develop a joint framework with a clear distinction of roles and responsibilities to guide triggers for future collaboration, adopting commonly agreed principles of engagement, establishing common 'red lines', and harmonizing responses. By doing so, humanitarian and development actors will be better equipped to enact sustainable interventions that showcase resilience building.

5.8 Mandate of agencies and intra-UN challenges

In some countries, the leadership of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (Afghanistan and Haiti) has been essential as a coordinator of agencies that are more directly involved in implementation. According to key informant interviews and the authors' experience, the coordination between the World Bank and UNICEF has often been smooth sailing. This may be because of UNICEF's role as both a development agency (with a strong SP agenda) and a humanitarian agency. Part of UNICEF's mandate is to build systems, so it tends to support full nation-led or piggybacking in many countries. The UN resident coordinator's effectiveness varies greatly from country to country depending on their organizational affiliation and their personal leadership skills. In the Palestinian territories, for instance, the coordinator is independent and report directly to UN headquarters, making it easier to have a one-UN approach.

For many agencies, humanitarian relief is their *raison d'être* and adherence to the humanitarian principles is the only valid guidance. This can make it difficult to compromise and work with governments that explicitly exclude certain groups or do not recognize the rights of, for instance, refugees. UNHCR and the World Bank have managed to collaborate closely in either fully aligned

or piggybacking schemes in several countries (Niger, Cameroon, Ethiopia, and Jordan) that have aligned benefit levels and eligibility criteria, even though that can lead to diminished benefits for refugees (Section 5.6).

Some agencies have both humanitarian (or crisis response) and development mandates, such as the European Commission, World Bank, or UNICEF. Anecdotally, sometimes conflicts emerge similar to those that occur between humanitarian and development agencies. A good practice example to overcome such potential conflicts is the European Commission program in the Palestinian territories, where coordination of requests for funding is done in a coordinated fashion up-front.

5.9 ‘Participation revolution’ from Grand Bargain is lagging

World Bank staff also raised concerns about a lack of focus on the beneficiaries in some humanitarian agencies. Instead of asking ‘what and how?’ the best way to help is, some agencies prefer simply to do what they have always done and know how to do

On the humanitarian side, the Grand Bargain's commitment to a ‘participation revolution’ is often recognized as not having been met. In a blog, Lough and O’Callaghan (2019) from the ODI are brutal in their critique, stating that

“...after five years, there is no evidence of humanitarian action becoming more demand-driven.”

In Bangladesh, the Needs Assessment Working Group (NAWG) report noted

“...there was no evidence found that cyclone and flood-affected people were involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of response. Rather both the responses were top-down and controlled with upward accountability only.”
(NAWG 2021)

These findings are consistent with the overall assessment of the lack of progress on this Grand Bargain aspect. However, it is worrisome that the effort is also falling short in Bangladesh with its strong community-based and local NGO structure.

Other practical experiences from the field (for example, Ethiopia and Mozambique) show that humanitarians can learn from the civic engagement successes in SP. Many of the skeptical views expressed today in the humanitarian world are similar to the objections raised two decades ago in the World Bank (Box 1) about participation in World Bank-financed projects.

Some countries have established locally led accountability structures, often supported by donors or indirectly by governments. A good example is the Mozambique NGO platform that provides a unified, independent view of both SP and humanitarian assistance. Organizing in a platform greatly facilitates international agencies and governments working with NGOs on the essential participation element. Similarly, decades’ worth of government investment in a nationwide social accountability program in Ethiopia (Campbell et al. 2020) with World Bank support ensures that social accountability can follow program expansion into new areas of assistance.

5.10 Weak and/or party to conflict government

When a government is a party to the conflict, it becomes difficult to align or integrate and still uphold the humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality. Similarly, if governments do not control significant parts of the territory as in Yemen and Afghanistan, it becomes extremely difficult to deliver using government systems and still be impartial and neutral.

In Yemen (Al-Ahmadi and de Silva 2018), the long-established public agency the Social Fund for Development has managed to maintain its operations across the country irrespective of who controls the local area or the central government. The independent governance of the Social Fund for Development and its donor-funding of staff has meant that it has been able to keep operating throughout the conflict and still does. World Bank funding cannot be channeled through the government at the moment as the internationally recognized government limited control of key service delivery institutions in parts of the country is outside its control, including the fragmentation of the Central Bank which has affected its functions. Instead, the World Bank finances the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the recipient of IDA funding while implementation continues through the Social Fund for Development as before but with oversight and fiduciary responsibility carried out by UNDP. The Social Fund for Development has a strong reputation for being nonpolitical and fair in its funding decisions, meaning that communities pressure local rulers to allow it to operate with minimal interference.³² In contrast to the Social Fund for Development, the regular cash transfer program of the government under the Social Welfare Fund is a much more traditional government agency. During the conflict, it has been politicized and the risks of political manipulation and leakages of program benefits were assessed to be high. Fortunately, the social register still existed from before the conflict, and combined with the additional process of verification, a new registry did not have to be built to inform cash transfers. In this case, UNICEF stepped in and carries out the actual transfers with World Bank funding but still using the agreed social registry. UNICEF can operate across the country as an outside agency and by project design. UNICEF engaged the technical team of the Social Welfare Fund as feasible but without a role for the agency in direct implementation.

In countries where the government is a party to the conflict (such as Yemen, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Mozambique, and the Central African Republic), it is difficult to both work with the government and keep the principle of neutrality. Existing valued agencies such as the Yemen Social Fund for Development can help, but they are rare in the developing world. National agreements on selection criteria and funding levels can help align programs for possible future integration as is happening in Niger. In Afghanistan, the HCT under OCHA's has been instrumental in ensuring alignment. The Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (OCHA 2018) also provides an opportunity for donors to pool their contributions to support the timely allocation and disbursement of resources to the most critical humanitarian needs defined in the Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) (OCHA 2020a).

It is easy to blame weak government capacity to justify not working with the government and implementing in a parallel manner. This reasoning is erroneous as it limits the sustainability of

³² Some observers claim that the Citizen's Charter program in Afghanistan is also able to operate in rebel-controlled areas for similar reasons.

the programs and undermines any emerging political acceptance of the government. The revised humanitarian response strategy and the intent to operationalize the nexus in Afghanistan helped build the government's system for SP, building on the humanitarian response by the UN and NGOs. The Pakistan program in the tribal areas is a great example of how the reach-out by an expansion of an existing SP system into a previously untouched area improves living standards and builds the governmental trust and credibility that peace and prosperity desperately need.

5.11 Timing: An issue that can be fixed³³

The contrast between the fast response of humanitarian and the slow pace of government SP programs is a valid concern, but it is not an excuse to stick with purely parallel programs with no government involvement nor is it universally true. The literature is littered with examples of how 'slow' government programs have responded effectively to humanitarian crises, including BISP following the Pakistan earthquake, the Mexico conditional cash transfer program following the earthquake, and the Kecamatan Development Program in Indonesia following the tsunami. Experience has also shown that when development needs are not met on time, people who require resilience and recovery are at higher risk of slipping into increasingly severe humanitarian needs. For example, the delayed rollout of Afghanistan's social safety net assistance by development actors in 2020 is a clear factor of the escalating humanitarian needs in 2021. As SP programs become more shock responsive and adaptive, they should increasingly be able to respond. A good example is Bangladesh's response to a recent cyclone, where the nation-led program was the first to respond. Similarly, Beazley et al. (2021) show that for COVID-19 response, development partners took on average 123 days, while governments responded in less than half the time (49 days).

Even when government programs are weak or nonexistent, it is critical to use the humanitarian response as a learning experience by involving governments in implementation, gradually expanding their role as their capacity and credibility build. Somalia's nascent safety net system is a good example, where the WFP implements under a service contract with the government (financed by the World Bank) that includes handing over responsibility and systems to the government as a deliverable (Yusuf and McDowell 2020; World Bank 2019, July). Interestingly enough, so far only the World Bank has decided to channel money through the government, while other donors prefer to give directly to parallel programs because of mistrust of the Somali government. Similar direct transfers to parallel programs led by humanitarians are being explored in the post-Taliban takeover context in Afghanistan.

5.12 Scaling up and down needs to be done carefully

Scaling back SP systems originally scaled up to address a crisis can be problematic. For vertical expansion, it is difficult to remove the newly included, and for horizontal expansion, it is difficult to reduce payments after the crisis. This is especially the case in settings with low coverage, where the newly included are probably still poor, just slightly less poor than the regular recipients are. Similarly, it can be hard to justify scaling payments back to 'normal' when even the scaled-up payments are insufficient to move a household out of poverty. If there is a political will to

³³ See also Table 4.

keep the higher number of beneficiaries and/or the higher benefit amounts, coming out of a crisis might be the right time to do so. Maybe the crisis has shown the advantage of using a higher “vulnerability adjusted poverty line” that takes into account the probability of future crises.³⁴ In any case, excellent communication and grievance systems are essential to managing any transition. For example, the Ground Truth Solutions assessment in Bangladesh finds lower levels of satisfaction among host community members than DRPs, raising questions about a potential conflict. To avoid confusion, many countries opt for giving the expansion a different name than the regular SP programs to help with the politics of changing beneficiaries or benefits.

5.13 Implementation issues

In addition to the broader issues of policy and principles discussed in the previous sections, several practical, implementation considerations need addressing to improve collaboration. Table 3 summarizes many of them across each level of integration.

5.13.1 Beneficiary identification and targeting

Targeting and beneficiary selection is a long-standing debate within the SP community. A particularly contested issue revolves around the comparative advantages and limitations of poverty targeting in general, and of proxy means testing in particular. The latter is a method frequently used by governments and partners – as main criteria or in tandem with other methods – to predict poverty levels by measuring easily observable household assets. With limited funds, the country will first select the poorest geographic areas and then apply proxy means testing to identify the poorest in the poor areas. Others in the SP community continue to argue for universality, especially those following a human rights perspective. In practice, many SP programs use categorical targeting, such as age, disability, or public service.³⁵ In addition, many countries maintain broad subsidies on bread, grain, or energy that benefit the whole population. Energy subsidies are almost all highly regressive.

In contrast, humanitarian agencies are concerned with victims of a shock: those made homeless by a flood, starving because of a drought, or forcibly displaced by conflict. The distinction between ‘victims’ and ‘poor or marginalized’ peoples is watered down as a crisis persists: when displaced people remain displaced for decades, drought-affected peoples are left without sustainable livelihoods and so on. This should make discussions about targeting simpler, but it does not seem to be so.

Some SP practitioners are beginning to question the need for detailed targeting of beneficiaries, especially in a crisis. If a generally poor community is affected by drought, traditionally both SP and humanitarian agencies would look for those who lost livelihoods because of the drought. If instead everyone in the community where rainfall had fallen below a certain threshold received assistance (parametric insurance in insurance-speak), this would not only alleviate the suffering but also reward those community members who had done better ex ante risk management.³⁶ Somalia locust response uses community-based identification of those whose livelihoods are

³⁴ For a full discussion of this, see Jorgensen and Siegel (2019).

³⁵ Such as Bangladesh’s program for veterans of the independence war or the Palestinian program for “freedom fighters.”

³⁶ Jorgensen and Siegel 2019. Schnitzer and Stoeffler 2021.

affected but with a predefined simple measure of livelihood assets size (those of small land and/or small number of livestock and so on). The proposed Afghanistan drought response program followed a combination of targeting methods: CBT, self-targeting, geographical targeting, and categorical targeting.

Interestingly, for the COVID-19 response, several developed countries, like the United States, decided to go with almost universal benefits in sending out checks to most of the population (only excluding the wealthiest), even though the data are available to do careful targeting or piggybacking on existing SP programs.

Although inclusive social registries have been important to deliver quick assistance for the COVID-19 pandemic (Section 4.4) and the relief program in Yemen (Section 5.5), an overreliance on infrequently updated registries can lead to poor targeting and a poor reflection of the actual situation. Some propose a simple application process for updating the system instead of waiting for a full census. Others argue that geographic targeting combined with parametric insurance triggers would probably be less costly and just as effective. This points to a broader issue as SP has traditionally been more concerned with inclusion errors, (that is, including people who should not be included) and less with exclusion errors (that is, excluding people who should be included). For humanitarians, exclusion errors are unacceptable—all victims deserve help, so a tradeoff is made by giving more people lower benefits. A gradual shift toward more concern with exclusion errors and thus more categorical targeting and less reliance on proxy means testing would be useful learning for the SP community.³⁷

5.13.2 Levels of benefits

Humanitarian benefits have traditionally been in the form of a package of goods necessary for survival or its cash equivalent if conditions made it possible to obtain the goods locally. This works well for people in camps but is a problem where the victims are scattered within host communities. What is more, the lack of other forms of income/livelihoods for refugees can also create an equity issue. For example, in Ethiopia, the value of in-kind benefit given to refugees in camps is slightly higher than the benefit levels in the government safety net, so the inclusion of refugees in the safety net would give them more than double that of the host community—a situation that would raise substantial equity concerns within host communities. The cost of the benefits basket in the local markets is about half of the cost of the imported goods, so there is a strong incentive to move toward cash. In Yemen, the level of humanitarian support is seven to eight times the regular SP benefits.³⁸ This is due to the relative generosity of humanitarian transfers and the erosion of the real value of SP transfers.

The politics of withdrawing food and basic necessities from displaced people in the middle of a conflict is problematic. In Niger and Cameroon, benefit levels have been harmonized, even though the programs run in parallel owing to strong government leadership and donor support including from the World Bank.

³⁷ This would be consistent with basing SP on an updated social risk management framework as noted in Jorgensen and Siegel (2019) and with emerging practice, especially in poorer countries.

³⁸ Ghorpade and Ammar 2021.

Setting transfer levels and duration is the scope of several papers. An excellent recent example is McLean et al. (2021) from the Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19: Expert Advice (SPACE) program. The authors of the paper present a comprehensive discussion of how the inherently different objectives, duration, and constraints of humanitarian and SP programs influence the setting of benefit levels. The paper covers how humanitarians can or should harmonize with traditional SP when beneficiaries overlap and how SP programs can adjust when moving into humanitarian space, and end with a set of practical recommendations for alignment of transfer values. After the welcome warning that “it is neither feasible nor desirable to be prescriptive about setting transfer values in response to shocks” (McLean et al. 2021, 14), the authors continue with a set of “key considerations” (McLean et al. 2021, 15):

- **Severity, the impact of a shock and humanitarian principles.** The authors argue that, especially for early response to severe crises, the transfers should be set to meet a basic package of needs as is common in humanitarian responses, whether the benefit is provided in parallel, through piggybacking or nation-led systems.
- **Coverage versus adequacy.** This is a difficult trade-off, all too familiar to practitioners in both SP and humanitarian programs in their “regular” work, and gets even more difficult in considering joint approaches. Do you give fully adequate compensation to a few people or inadequate to many given your resource constraint? The authors, correctly, do not present a formula but suggest a process of jointly addressing the issue and having contingency plans in place for addressing complications.
- **Availability of different response instruments and potential for strategic coordination.** A vertical expansion of a nation-led program to allow benefit levels to increase temporarily toward the basic needs basket is an ideal option to address a sudden onset crisis like a drought. However, the authors rightly note that this “requires a high level of coordination and reciprocal trust..., and the presence of organizations and systems to deliver, including interoperable databases or a single registry.” As discussed in Section 5.13.3, the latter point is in itself a serious constraint.
- **Evolution of emergencies over time and sustainability.** Basically, the authors argue for joint consideration of exit strategies from humanitarian assistance including how to lower support to ‘normal’ SP levels after the crisis subsides—a difficult measure even in the most developed SP systems.
- **Maintaining adequate transfers in ‘routine’ social protection (for example, aligned to medium- to long-term inflation).** It is a basic but too often forgotten point. Cash assistance in regular SP programs should keep pace with inflation. This then helps when a program includes additional support as the gap between the basic needs package and regular payments is less.
- **Pre-agreements across sectors on transfer values.** If possible, it would be ideal to agree on transfer values before a crisis hits. Peru is experimenting with this according to Mclean et al. (2021). Another option is to use previous crises to set standard transfer levels adjusted for inflation, as after the 2014 Gaza War.

5.13.3 Nature of benefit

Most SP programs use one of two main types of benefits:

- **Cash transfers:** depending on the availability of national financial services, these may take the form of cash-in-hand, commercial bank-based transfer or mobile financial service-based transfer—each with a different degree of transparency and accountability.
- **In-kind transfers, often the default of humanitarians³⁹:** depending on the type of crisis, the timespan, and capacity of the humanitarian agencies, in-kind transfers may be provided in the form of a predetermined set of items physically delivered to each household or voucher mechanisms that allow each household to exchange for (locally produced or imported) goods and services in retail outlets.

An obvious distinction between these two modalities is related to the ‘options’ or ‘freedom of use’ that each provides to the affected household. This issue becomes more relevant, particularly in long-term responses. In the Bangladesh example, humanitarian interventions have faced tensions with the use of cash and in-kind transfers. In 2017–2018, when the mass movement of DRP households was taking place, baskets of basic food items were being distributed by the WFP and other humanitarian agencies to those arriving in the Cox’s Bazar camps. As the context moved from emergency life-saving actions to settlement and basic service provision, the WFP, in coordination with UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), moved quickly to an electronic voucher approach. From the original predefined set of food and hygiene items, the DRP households were now receiving a fixed value in the form of electronic vouchers called ‘scope card’. This allowed the household to exchange the value in the scope card for a larger set of options available in the WFP’s partnering stores, in the amount and distribution adequate to the household’s consumption. In 2019, the World Bank-financed public works schemes provided additional income support to DRP households (in the form of value top-up in the scope card), in compliance with the prevailing government policy which prohibited the provision of cash to the Rohingya population. The pressure to move to cash has been mounting, which resulted in temporary ad hoc authorizations in the use of cash by NGOs, INGOs, and some UN agencies. The World Bank-financed project has maintained the use of the electronic voucher system, as agreed with the government—this has had an impact on the disposition of DRP households to participate in the public works subprojects.

5.13.4 Information systems

Almost all key informants mentioned the problem of parallel and proprietary information systems as an obstacle to better integration. This also came up in the joint WFP-World Bank assessment of collaboration between the agencies in 12 countries (Gentilini et al. 2018). Many countries have established memoranda of understanding (MoUs) between the government and external agencies to combine forces, but the effective implementation of those agreements is mixed at best, at least for the early attempts that are the only ones that have been assessed.

³⁹ Recent estimates put the share of cash benefits at only 20%, a dramatic increase from before, but in-kind transfers are still the default.

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Coordination efforts between governments, UN agencies, the World Bank as well as other agencies collecting data are underway.

As an example, the highly effective WFP's system, 'SCOPE', has been used for the implementation of humanitarian programs in an array of countries. In the absence of a governmental system, SCOPE could form the basis for a nascent SP information system. In practice, however, the lack of common understandings around proprietary source codes, data access, and legal data protection have limited the use of SCOPE as the basis for a government system. In Niger, for example, UNICEF, the WFP, and the government (with World Bank support) developed a national program with agreed criteria, benefit levels, and so on. During implementation, the WFP chose to use SCOPE for operational reasons (Table 5). With no common understanding in place, data sharing with the government and the other partners remains minimal. In Somalia, the WFP is committed to handing over the information system to the government as part of the output-based agreement among the parties. In Afghanistan, the initial conversations with the WFP were positive, but an agreement could not be reached with the government.

Full interoperability of information systems is generally a positive development but needs to be tempered or postponed in contexts where the government's oversight is weak, data protection is weak, and/or government is a party to the conflict or otherwise may wish to misuse the data.

5.13.5 Monitoring and dispute resolution

As noted in Section 3.2, the implementation of the participation revolution in the Grand Bargain is severely lacking. For the SP community, especially in the World Bank, the systematic application of citizen feedback, third-party monitoring, and grievance and complaint mechanisms are standard requirements of support for SP systems. This has led to difficulties, both with governments that do not trust humanitarian efforts without monitoring and feedback and among humanitarians who feel such monitoring intrudes on their independence and neutrality. In country contexts with UN implementation of World Bank-funded projects (for example, Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and so on), the implementing UN agency usually procures a third-party monitor that is specific to the project it is implementing. In Afghanistan, and in the specific context of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, a consolidated portfolio-level third-party monitoring system is used. This unique arrangement could present difficulties in engaging with UN-implemented projects which usually have their own parallel monitoring systems.

5.14 Internal World Bank issues

Key informant interviews and document reviews also identified internal issues to the World Bank, whose resolution could help the World Bank be a more effective partner in the humanitarian space. Issues included the need for speed, which can be difficult for all development agencies, and different language issues within the institutions across sectors, for instance, health, conflict and fragility, and SP. Some policies that work well for larger infrastructure development projects in relatively stable country settings may need to be adjusted. Finally, there was a strong demand for more knowledge sharing and learning around the agenda, which could possibly be done jointly with socialprotection.org or partners like UNICEF or WFP.

6 Way Forward: Conclusions and Recommendations

Increasingly, agencies and governments across the humanitarian and SP agendas are finding ways to better integrate programs based on the commitments in the Grand Bargain and SP's move toward more shock-responsive and adaptive systems. On the side of governments, more and more countries reform or establish safety net systems—enabling higher levels of integration. The report finds much progress as well as some key constraints to higher levels of integration. This section discusses some potential actions that would further enhance the effectiveness of interventions by greater degrees of integration as the world faces increasingly severe and frequent shocks.

6.1 Maintain and extend high-level commitments

Much progress has been made by senior leadership in implementing and financing agencies committing to better integration based on the Grand Bargain commitments. These commitments must be sustained and expanded to give lower-level leaders the room to innovate and collaborate.

- Grand Bargain commitments must be adjusted and renewed based on the positive experience of the commitment to greater use of cash.
- Donor agencies must reaffirm their willingness to find flexible, sustained sources of funding for crisis response, such as the Local Fund in Bangladesh and sustain support for SP reforms.
- Development agencies must commit to continuing to expand their ability and willingness to engage constructively with humanitarian agencies and governments to further build adaptive SP systems.
- Governments must expand their commitment to building adaptive, fair SP systems.

6.2 Integrate commitments into agency policies and practices

The commitments have too often remained at high levels in organizations and not filtered down to operational managers and staff. Many agencies still retain their original policies and procedures that often are not appropriate for better integration across the delivery chain.

- Funding and implementing agencies must review and revise their internal policies to ensure that the commitments to better integration are practically implementable.
- Evaluation criteria should be adjusted to reflect the commitments.
- Knowledge generation on practical ways forward in better integration and better SP in humanitarian settings should be a priority and shared widely, for example, on socialprotection.org.
- Staff training is needed within and across agencies to better understand each other, learn from each other's innovations, and create incentives for collaboration

6.3 Building on practical successes in implementation

Many programs have found innovative ways to deal with the implementation issues identified in Section 5.13. Such good practices need to be widely shared.

- On targeting and beneficiary selection, good country examples can be found in Bangladesh, Jordan, and Niger. The key is flexibility and appropriateness for the given situation. The strong focus on errors of inclusion inherent in many SP operations probably should be relaxed for wide-ranging shocks in poor areas.
- On information systems, the agreements reached between the government and WFP in Somalia to hand over information systems as a deliverable under the service contract should be monitored and assessed. It may also be useful to work more closely among agencies such as WFP, UNICEF, and the World Bank to develop best-practice examples of data protection and sharing.
- On participation and M&E, there is much to learn from several key SP programs, and it would be important to collate these experiences and share them.

Annex 1: Implementation of Grand Bargain Commitments in Afghanistan

Principles	Application in Afghanistan
Greater transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress has been made to develop a list of active aid activities for Afghanistan shared through the International Aid Transparency Initiative—the list includes both humanitarian and development activities. • More work needs to be done to increase the number of signatories to publish transparent funding and activity data.
More support and funding tools for local and national responders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCHA-managed Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund and the Central Emergency Response Fund-pooled funding supported national and local responders (representing 15 percent toward the 2019 HRP requirements). • Significant investments have been made to enhance engagements with national NGOs, supporting their critical role in hard-to-reach geographic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New Joint Operating Principles are designed to form the framework for engagement in bilateral and joint negotiations with authorities and armed groups at the local, national, and international levels. The principles will build the capacity and confidence of field-based colleagues to engage directly in negotiations. • The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development twinning program, which pairs national NGO and international partners through peer mentoring schemes, supports the improvement of national organizations’ technical and core management skills and enhancement of their overall ability to operate within humanitarian principles. • The Humanitarian Access Group plans to build on the newly created National NGO Access Forum and provide improved capacity to the field through Regional Access Groups.
Increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination to gear up the cash programming includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revised terms of reference (TORs) for the Cash and Voucher Working Group and temporarily recruited CashCap adviser, reporting to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT).⁴⁰ • Recent main priorities include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Operational coordination of cash-based Interventions among partners—including implementation standards and processes, common reporting platforms, harmonized assessments, and monitoring tools ○ Evidence-based advocacy and creation of a community of practice on Cash and Voucher Programming, including through joint advocacy around national or private sector regulations impairing effective cash-based assistance, and sharing of post-distribution monitoring data and data on various cash projects being implemented across sectors and partners ○ Mainstreaming of protection and accountability to affected population concerns in Cash and Voucher Programming ○ Capacity building of partners in Cash and Voucher Programming

⁴⁰ The ICCT is a cooperative effort among clusters and the HCT to ensure coherence in achieving common objectives, avoiding duplication and ensuring areas of need are prioritized. Intercluster coordination takes place at the national level on a monthly basis to coordinate the implementation of response through each step of the humanitarian program cycle. Guided by the HCT, intercluster coordination provides a platform for clusters to work together to advance the delivery of assistance to affected people effectively and efficiently. The ICCT oversees the Cash and Voucher Working Group and Emergency Preparedness Sub-Working Group.

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Principles	Application in Afghanistan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishment of a common platform for engagement with government (advocacy) and private sector (contracting) and support harmonized strategic communications around Cash and Voucher Programming ○ Sharing of information, lessons learned, and best practice on Cash and Voucher Programming in Afghanistan (and beyond). ● Launch of the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative by the Afghanistan Cash and Voucher Working Group and partners, in collaboration with REACH, to provide regular updates on prices of key items and market functionality to inform Cash and Voucher Assistance. ● Pilot country for the Global Common Cash System to build cash expertise and use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Global Common Cash System scope of work includes promotion of joint needs assessments, development of common vulnerability criteria, the establishment of common post-distribution monitoring tools, and enhancement of common payment mechanisms (by harmonizing information management approaches and systems interoperability). ○ Rollout of the Global Tripartite Data Sharing Agreement (UNICEF, WFP, and UNHCR) ○ Global Common Cash System is working closely with the Cash and Voucher Working Group to amplify advocacy with relevant stakeholders within financial and regulatory bodies to expand financial inclusion and simplify processes to utilize mobile money for humanitarian programs.
<p>Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovative approaches to delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mobile teams to deliver health and nutrition services ○ Biometric and digital identity under WFP SCOPE. ● Implementation of a new Mutual Accountability Framework between Kabul and the field with clarified reporting lines and increased support for management of cross-cutting issues in the response. ● Development of HCT Data Sharing Protocol to outline the HCT’s commitment to strong data protection policies and practices and to provide guidance on core principles that signatories commit to working toward. The Data Sharing Protocol reflects existing humanitarian policies and established best practices for data use and outlines agreed on expectations and minimum standards for sharing of data between aid actors and the government.
<p>Improve joint and impartial needs assessments</p>	<p>Use and strengthening of comprehensive and multisectoral needs assessments for timely decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The annual multisector ‘Whole of Afghanistan’ assessment collects views on the response preferences and service access challenges faced by affected people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complimentary assessment to profile multi- and intersectoral needs in prioritized hard-to-reach districts. ● Seasonal Food Security Assessment and Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analysis for food security and vulnerability calculations. ● Joint Inter-sectoral Analysis Framework looks holistically at the needs facing people in Afghanistan and measures the severity of these needs using a series of intersectoral indicators. ● Joint Market Monitoring Initiative provides monthly updates on prices of key items and market functionality to assess if needs can be met through Cash and Voucher Assistance. ● Emergency Response Mechanism Nationwide Post-Distribution Monitoring identifies national trends in how Emergency Response Mechanism

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Principles	Application in Afghanistan
	<p data-bbox="589 237 1403 327">multipurpose cash assistance has been utilized, beneficiary perspectives on sufficiency and gaps, and overall Emergency Response Mechanism partner performance.</p> <ul data-bbox="553 338 1427 785" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="553 338 1427 464">• IOM’s Displacement Tracking Matrix tracks mobility and determines population sizes of groups on the move, their reasons for displacement, places of origin, displacement locations, and times of displacement, including basic demographics, as well as vulnerabilities and priority needs. <li data-bbox="553 470 1427 596">• Protection of Civilians report by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is produced quarterly and monitors civilian casualties and other violations of international humanitarian and human rights law caused by the armed conflict in Afghanistan. <li data-bbox="553 602 1427 728">• Household Emergency Assessment Tool assesses the multisectoral needs and vulnerabilities of shock-affected households to identify household eligibility for humanitarian assistance, suitability for referral, or the need for more in-depth assessments to be carried out. <li data-bbox="553 735 1427 785">• Humanitarians also engaged with development actors to create a common needs analysis that identified the People in Need of social assistance.
<p data-bbox="196 793 509 919">A participation revolution: Include people receiving aid in making the decisions affecting their lives</p>	<p data-bbox="542 793 1395 854">Multiyear HRP remains committed to ensuring that people are at the center of humanitarian action and that agencies are accountable:</p> <ul data-bbox="542 861 1427 1856" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="542 861 1427 1245">• Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) coordination and response in Afghanistan was reinvigorated in 2020 with the recruitment of a dedicated AAP specialist in April, hosted by OCHA. With the support of the AAP specialist, the AAP Working Group (AAP WG) adopted a new TOR, a strategic framework, and a work plan to address accountability shortcomings identified in the 2019 Peer-2-Peer report. Activities include expanding collective feedback channels to complement the Awaaz call center; supporting AAP activities across clusters; building the AAP capacity of humanitarian staff in all regions; creating minimum standards, tools, and indicators for mainstreaming AAP and community engagement in all programming phases; and supporting collective analysis of information gathered from affected people. <li data-bbox="542 1251 1427 1566">• Given the intensified need for robust community engagement efforts to raise awareness of COVID-19, in March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) launched the risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) Working Group (RCCE WG). The RCCE WG coordinated interagency efforts and supported the government’s RCCE efforts. Among other outputs, the RCCE WG developed a process for tracking rumors and correcting COVID-19 misinformation and developed an RCCE training module to build RCCE capacity throughout Afghanistan. The RCCE WG has been integrated as a sub-group within the broader AAP WG. <li data-bbox="542 1572 1427 1663">• HCT compact sets out the key commitments of HCT members toward the Humanitarian Coordinator and one another to reinforce collective accountability to people in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. <li data-bbox="542 1669 1427 1759">• Continued support for the Awaaz interagency feedback mechanism (call center) to monitor the views, complaints, and preferences of affected people (more work to raise awareness of the service). <li data-bbox="542 1766 1427 1856">• Area-Based Response pilots to support a more intense field-level focus on AAP issues, aimed at improving the quality of assistance by breaking down sectoral siloes and applying a more people-centered approach to service

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Principles	Application in Afghanistan
	<p>delivery at the field level, help improve responsiveness to protection needs and accountability to affected communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular multisector needs assessments such as the ‘Whole of Afghanistan’ assessment and individual agency feedback mechanisms. • Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Taskforce will also continue its work on systemwide improvements to awareness and referral processes in the humanitarian response. • In April 2020, the HCT established the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group for COVID-19 (GIHA-C) to support implementation of gender-sensitive COVID-19 prevention and protection response activities. The GIHA-C was held up for an initial six-month period when members provided key messages and evidence-based recommendations to the HCT and the ICCT, technical support to clusters and thematic groups, particularly the RCCE WG and IPC Secretariat, and stronger gender analysis to inform the revisions to the HRP in mid-2020 and 2021. The HCT has since extended the mandate of the group, now the GIHA WG, into 2021 with a wider focus to support partners across the response. The working group is co-chaired by UN Women,⁴¹ International Rescue Committee (IRC), and Medica Mondiale and continues to provide operational guidance on planning and practice, strengthening accountability to gender equality in humanitarian action.
<p>Increase collaborative humanitarian multiyear planning and funding and reduce the earmarking of donor contributions</p>	<p>Enhancing engagement between humanitarian and development actors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to respond to the multifaceted impacts of the pandemic has driven accelerated planning between humanitarian and development actors in 2020, resulting in a new framework for a common needs analysis and an agreement on the number of people in need of social assistance. This collaboration provided the targeting criteria for the government-World Bank relief operation. • Built internal capacity on humanitarian-development nexus through the recruitment of a recovery/transition adviser. • Initial mapping of development actors and draft of blueprint for a joint approach (steppingstone for a Humanitarian-Development Strategy to bridge leadership and coordination structures for humanitarian operations, peacebuilding, and development programs at the strategic level). • ICCT technical workshop in 2020 to engage with development counterparts. • ICCT to continue developing thematic preparedness plans for a range of emergencies. • Engage development actors in planning for new integrated Area-Based Response pilots. • The World Bank and UNDP are observers at the HCT to encourage common situational awareness and sharing of best practices.
<p>Harmonize and simplify reporting requirements</p>	<p>Monitoring improvements are part of the country team’s effort to fulfilling its Grand Bargain commitments on harmonizing and simplifying reporting. Some actions are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data sharing protocol developed by OCHA (issues raised included obligations under existing laws and policies, classification of personal data, data use and ownership protocols, third-party data sharing, complaints, and referral obligations). • ICCT held a series of capacity-building workshops in 2020 on themes including monitoring and reporting obligations and data submission

⁴¹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

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Principles	Application in Afghanistan
	<p>procedures in terms of both response monitoring and the reporting of funding to Financial Tracking Service (due to late response in 2018 drought).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners have made significant strides in collecting, using, and analyzing gender and age specific data, ensuring that the gender with age marker is incorporated into the methodology and design of nationwide surveys such as the 'Whole of Afghanistan' assessment. • OCHA and REACH Initiative have committed to enhancing the representation of women in the household-level quantitative surveys for the 'Whole of Afghanistan' assessment in 2020. • HRP periodic monitoring reports published four times per year: Dashboards will be produced at the end of Q1 and Q3 and a full narrative report will be published at the midyear point. For the first time in 2020, the HRP midyear monitoring report was accompanied by an annex that monitors the new needs indicators from the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) (OCHA 2020b). • Monitoring of cash programming modalities streamlined in 2020, following some issues in 2019, which made it difficult to get a clear picture of cash use in the country. • The ICCT will also continue to monitor the need for thematic emergency preparedness plans at the national level, as was done for the drought and the atypical 2019 floods.

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally social protection (SP) and humanitarian programs were quite distinct in their objectives, scope, and operations, but over time those distinctions have diminished and with that the gains from better integration. Humanitarian programs are committed to more involvement of national actors, more use of cash, and greater popular participation - all matters that are important for SP actors. On the other side, SP has gradually shifted into shock-responsive or adaptive SP that explicitly targets not only the poor but also those affected by shocks. Beyond presenting the divide and overlap of concepts, principles, and commitments from the SP and humanitarian realms, this paper attempts at unbundling a framework for humanitarian and SP integration across the delivery chain (based on the paper by Seyfert et al. 2019). Global experiences across the integration spectrum, as well as the practical application of the framework in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, are exemplified. The analysis shows how programs apply a 'mix and match' approach building on factors such as political will, technical capacity, and alignment of objectives across implementing agencies, donors, and the government. The paper identifies constraints and opportunities for better integration and proposes a set of actions to enhance benefits for affected populations.

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