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Practitioner Note 1: Inclusive targeting, identification and registration

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international policy centre for inclusive growth

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Practitioner Note 1: Inclusive targeting, identification and registration
By Maya Hammad

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PRACTITIONER NOTE 1: INCLUSIVE TARGETING, IDENTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CNDP	National Control Commission for the Protection of Personal Data
CRVS	Civil registration and vital statistics
DRM	Disaster risk management
ID	Identification document
ILO	International Labour Organization
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
SPACE	Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19: Expert Advice Helpline
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East
WFP	World Food Programme

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 4

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS 5

INTRODUCTION 9

Overview 9

How to use this Practitioner Note 11

SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE PRACTICES 12

SECTION 2: FURTHER DETAILS ON RECOMMENDATIONS 17

ANNEXES 27

Annex 1: Resources on targeting, identification and registration 27

Annex 2: Comparing different types of targeting methodologies in crisis situations 29

Annex 3: Example of a re-targeting/re-prioritisation process for COVID-19 30

Annex 4: Strategies for responding to data-sharing requests from governments 31

REFERENCES 32

LIST OF BOXES

Box 1 Definition of key concepts 10

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Colombia and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Morocco accept expired IDs for refugees 17

Table 1.2 Making the case for waiving the cost of renewing/issuing IDs 17

Table 1.3 Chile and United Arab Emirates extend IDs and residency permits for foreigners and migrant workers 18

Table 1.4 Qatar, Algeria and Argentina's automatic renewal of benefits for persons with disabilities and simplification of the process for issuing disability status cards 18

Table 1.5 Pakistan adjusts proxy means test scoring to include informal workers and those living near the poverty line 18

Table 1.7 Lebanon and the World Bank's addition of categorical criteria, Egypt's targeting of newborns, and pregnant and lactating women in emergency and recurrent programmes, and Jordan's inclusion of persons with disabilities in emergency and recurrent programmes 19

Table 1.8 United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA) Syria provides cash transfers to unaccompanied children 19

Table 1.9 Peru provides emergency cash assistance to female household members 20

Table 1.12 Making the case for careful consideration of disability criteria 20

Table 1.13 Making the case for careful consideration of age eligibility for elderly-targeted benefits 20

Table 1.14 Mercy Corps Iraq coordinates eligibility criteria with the government to ensure limited duplication 21

Table 1.15 Making the case for investing in DRM systems 21

Table 2.2 Syria's and Djibouti's efforts to expand social registries to vulnerable groups 21

Table 2.3 Senegal invests in system interoperability 22

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.4 Dominican Republic includes disability questions in social registry survey 22

Table 2.5 Making the case for improving the coverage and digitisation of IDs and CRVS 22

Table 3.2 Identifying informal workers through alternative governmental databases in Morocco 23

Table 3.3 Identifying informal workers through non-governmental databases in Egypt and Thailand 23

Table 3.4 Identifying children at risk of dropping out in Lebanon 23

Table 3.6 Coordinating databases in Egypt and the State of Palestine 24

Table 4.1 Complementing digital registration methods in Dominica 24

Table 4.2 Morocco's toll-free SMS registration method for informal workers' emergency benefit 24

Table 4.3 Namibia allows more than one application on the same mobile phone number 25

Table 4.8 Data protection approaches in Namibia, Brazil and Morocco 25

Table 4.10 One-stop shop for social protection applications in Jordan 25

Table 5.1 Inclusion of a variety of local actors in Kenya 26

Table 5.2 Strengthening the capacities of local actors 26

INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has been facing and will probably continue to face the reverberating aftershocks of multiple humanitarian crises, unstable social protection financing, rising prices of basic commodities, high unemployment rates, increased civil unrest, and threats of climate change and water scarcity. The global COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation and added to the negative socio-economic conditions in the region. Already vulnerable groups such as **children, women, persons with disabilities, informal workers, refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons and irregular migrants** are being disproportionately affected.

Children in the region are twice as likely as adults to live in monetary poverty and are thus extremely vulnerable to crisis (UNICEF n.d.). Crises also negatively affect delivery of and access to basic social services that are fundamental to child well-being and development, including education, health and nutrition. In addition, girls face the added risk of child marriage during times of crisis and economic hardship (UNFPA and UNICEF 2021; UNICEF 2021a). **Women** also bear the brunt of shocks, given the realities of gender inequality in the region, as they are more likely to be unemployed.[1] If they are employed, they are more likely to earn less than men, lose their livelihoods, be exposed to domestic violence and experience an increase in unpaid care work (Holmes et al. 2020). Women in the Arab States region already spend, on average, 4.7 times more time on unpaid work than men—the largest difference among all regions globally (ESCWA and UN Women 2020). Shock-responsive social protection measures that are not gender-sensitive can also result in women's exclusion (UN Women 2020).

Furthermore, **people with disabilities**, including those with functional and medical disabilities, are particularly vulnerable to health and economic risks, as they may have underlying health conditions that put them at greater risk of health complications from the pandemic, but also because they are overrepresented among people living in poverty (UNICEF 2020). This is also applicable to **older persons**, who experience more poverty in older age as work opportunities become more sporadic and pension coverage remains minimal, especially in MENA, where only 27 per cent of older persons receive a pension, compared to 68 per cent globally (Juergens and Galvani 2020). The large number of **refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons and irregular migrants** (people on the move) due to armed conflicts and wars in MENA are also especially vulnerable to crisis due to limited access to labour markets and national social assistance programmes and a lack of access to decent health care services. Irregular migrants often work in the informal market and are not protected by formal social protection systems. Finally, **informal workers**,[2] who are typically excluded from traditional poverty-targeted social protection programmes and government databases, become especially vulnerable in times of crisis, as they require both new identification mechanisms and adjustments to existing social protection programmes to be protected (Alfers 2020).

The strength of social protection systems in MENA and their ability to respond to shocks vary tremendously from one country to the next, with some countries suffering from limited financing, inadequate coverage and a lack of coordination and digitised infrastructure (IBC-SP 2020). Nevertheless, the main challenges of low coverage and limited existence of single registries cut across most countries in the region. Generally, there was a **low level of social protection coverage prior to the pandemic** and considerable gaps in the social policy infrastructure of MENA countries to properly address the **needs of the most vulnerable groups**, particularly refugees, internally displaced persons, irregular migrants and female foreign workers (IBC-SP 2020). Furthermore, as only a few countries in the region developed single registries in the past decade (Machado et al. 2018), their use in identifying beneficiaries during the COVID response was lower in the MENA region than in all other regions in the global South (Hammad et al. 2021).

1. Female unemployment was estimated at 17.6 per cent in 2019, compared to 7.5 per cent for men in the region (World Bank 2021a; 2021b).

2. While information is scant, it is estimated that 68.6 per cent of all employment in the Arab States is informal, and this figure is 67.3 per cent in Northern Africa (ILO 2018).

Considering this context, strengthening social protection systems generally and making them more **shock-responsive**, and more **inclusive** of vulnerable and marginalised groups specifically, is vital to respond effectively to the volatile environment of the MENA region. A **shock-responsive social protection system** is one that can respond flexibly in the event of covariate shocks, such as natural hazards, economic crises and conflict, affecting large numbers of people or communities simultaneously (UNICEF 2019, 3; OPM 2015). In this Practitioner Note, however, the focus is particularly on ***inclusive* shock-responsive social protection**, which, in addition to responding flexibly to support large numbers of people, also **recognises that different groups of vulnerable people are impacted differently by shocks, and thus takes into account their heterogenous needs in the design and implementation of the response**.

Consequently, this Practitioners' Note is part of a **four-part series** providing MENA governments and practitioners in the fields of social protection and disaster risk management (DRM) with general guidelines for future shock response informed by lessons learned from the COVID pandemic. The first three notes of the series include recommendations on inclusive design and implementation related to the following topics: **(i) targeting, identification and registration mechanisms; (ii) transfer values and payment modalities; and (iii) communication, case management and grievance redress mechanisms.** Given the salience of the issue of forcibly displaced populations in MENA, **note IV** addresses the inclusion of migrants in identification, payments, communication and grievance redress mechanisms specifically.

The following note covers **targeting, identification and registration** (see Box 1 below for definitions) and presents recommendations focused on the best practices of MENA countries and other relevant experiences from low- and middle-income countries. The note is informed by a literature review of existing studies and guidelines such as those published by the Social Protection Approaches to COVID-19: Expert Advice Helpline (SPACE). It also draws on the UNICEF Programme Guidance: on Strengthening Shock Responsive Social Protection Systems (2019) and takes into account the complementarity between DRM institutions and the role of social protection systems. Most examples provided in this note relate to social assistance measures (non-contributory social protection) implemented by governments or humanitarian partners in response to crises, including the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Box 1 Definition of key concepts

Targeting
The process of selecting who is eligible to receive social benefits generally includes two different approaches, which can be combined: **categorical targeting** based on a group's characteristics or **income/poverty targeting** based on an assessment of the poverty/income of individuals, which can be conducted through means-testing, proxy means-testing and/or community-based selection (SPaN 2019; UNICEF 2021c). In this note, the term 'targeting' is used to refer to deciding who is eligible for a given social protection programme—i.e. setting the **eligibility criteria**. Recommendations in this note also relate to the verification of eligibility criteria—i.e. having the required documents such as identification (ID)/disability card/work permit.

Identification
The main mechanisms used to identify potential beneficiaries that meet the eligibility criteria could include social registries, existing programmes' waiting list or lists of graduated beneficiaries, a civil registry or social security database, employee records, a tax database etc. (discussed further below) (IPC-IG 2021b)

Registration
Registration is the application or enrolment instruments to benefit from a social protection programme which could include self-registration via web portals, email or mobile platforms or through enrolment by programme staff.

Local actors
In these notes, the term 'local actors' refers to national and subnational entities and can include civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, worker associations, private -sector actors, subnational governments and communities themselves (Cabot Venton and Sammon 2020).

How to use this Practitioner Note

This Practitioner Note is prepared as an easy-to-use toolkit for practitioners working in governments or supporting agencies, which allows them to pick and choose the areas they want to focus on. It is divided into two main sections:

- Section 1: **'Recommendations for inclusive practices'** presents the following pieces of information in a table:
    - Five identified **best practices** from existing toolkits and the reviewed literature
    - **Challenges** practitioners are likely to face in their implementation
    - **Recommendations** to address those challenges and increase inclusiveness in implementing those best practices, which are divided into two sections:
        - Those concerning enhancing the inclusivity of the **immediate** shock response
        - Those concerning building inclusiveness and adaptability through **long-term** system strengthening
    - Corresponding country examples of the recommendations whenever found, which are hyperlinked to **blue** tables with further details in Section 2
    - Brief justifications to further explain some recommendations, when necessary, which are hyperlinked to **green** tables with further details in Section 2.

Finally, the following **icons** are used to highlight how recommendations are relevant to particular vulnerable groups:

Women	Children (0–18 years)	Informal workers	Migrants/ refugees/ internally displaced persons	Elderly people	Persons with disabilities	All

- Section 2: **'Additional details'** provides further **details** (indicated in blue tables) on how some of the listed countries implemented the identified best practice, and elaborates on **justifications** (indicated in green tables) for some inclusive recommendations that countries did not implement but should have.

Readers are advised to go through Section 1: **'Recommendations for inclusive practices'** and then pick and choose the country examples/justifications about which they want more information by clicking on the hyperlinks that will take them to the corresponding tables in Section 2: **'Additional details'**.

For a quick return to Section 1, click on the list icon at the top of the page.

It is important to highlight that following any of the recommendations listed as enhancing the immediate shock response or concerning building inclusiveness through long-term system strengthening must be **based on a thorough understanding of the local context**, to ascertain which recommendation is indeed best suited to the situation and crisis at hand.

SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

To quickly target, identify, register and include vulnerable groups for social protection programmes, it is key to:

- **adjust eligibility criteria, reorganise prioritised categories based on context and/or simplifying verification mechanisms;**
- **use social registries and existing beneficiary databases for beneficiary identification;**
- **use alternative databases for beneficiary identification;**
- **set up digital registration systems or use existing ones (including online platforms and mobile applications); and**
- **engage local actors in beneficiary identification and registration.**

Further details on each best practice, including important prerequisites, are provided in the table below.

WHAT	Best Practice 1: Adjust eligibility criteria, reorganise prioritised categories[3] based on context and/or simplify verification mechanisms		
WHY	• Allows for the inclusion of those who are unable to benefit from social assistance measures in normal times (e.g. because of income thresholds) but who might need the assistance during crisis situations which heighten their vulnerability (e.g. informal workers) • Allows for the inclusion of groups traditionally excluded from social protection, such as migrants, refugees and irregular migrants, who are especially vulnerable to the impacts of crisis situations and are often invisible in government data management systems due to barriers to access (restrictive cash administration rules, financial and geographical barriers etc.)		
CHALLENGES	• Limited capacity to carry out rapid post-disaster needs assessments or risk monitoring to inform response planning • Limited fiscal space to carry out rapid post-disaster needs assessments or risk monitoring • Lack of data-sharing between government DRM and international humanitarian actors regarding risk monitoring and post-disaster needs assessments		
Recommendations *Immediate*	1.1 Waive the requirement for valid IDs and accept expired ones, which is especially important for the inclusion of refugees and migrants, women and other marginalised groups.		UNHCR Morocco Colombia
	1.2 Waive the cost of renewing/issuing IDs, and simplify the renewal/ issuance process.	All	Justification
	1.3 Extend or waive expiration dates of IDs, which is especially relevant for migrant workers.		United Arab Emirates Chile
	1.4 Simplify the process for issuing persons with disability status cards, and provide benefits pending disability assessment, or automatic renewal of their benefits.		Qatar, Algeria, Argentina

→

3. Including categories of vulnerable groups but also regional differences (e.g. rural vs. urban considerations, which are affected more than others).

Recommendations *Immediate*	1.5 Adjust the income threshold or proxy means-tested formula to make those living above or near the poverty line eligible, as this would be key to shock-responsiveness in cases of economic shocks (Sumner, Hoy, and Ortiz-Juarez 2020).		Pakistan
	1.6 Raise the proxy means test cut-off for specific categories (female-headed households, persons with disabilities, elderly people, children, informal workers) or include proxy indicators in the calculation for those categories (Barca et al. 2021).	All	-
	1.7 Add categorical criteria or adjust existing ones to increase inclusion and coverage of vulnerable and marginalised groups (e.g. prioritise female-headed households, pregnant and lactating women, persons with disabilities, refugee households, and allow those categories that already benefit from recurrent programmes to also benefit from emergency ones).	All	Lebanon and World Bank Egypt and WFP Jordan (see Annex 2 for a comparison of targeting methods during crises, and Annex 3 for the World Food Programme's (WFP) new targeting/ prioritisation process for COVID-19)
	1.8 Adjust criteria so that unaccompanied children or households headed by children over 14 years can benefit from emergency measures (UNICEF n.d.).		UNRWA Syria
	1.9 Adjust criteria to make the recipient of the social assistance benefit the female member of the household, as opposed to the head of the household, who is traditionally male, when gender analysis indicates that this is a safe design choice.		Peru
	1.10 Adjust criteria to take into account polygamous households, and permit benefit disbursement for co-wives (Holmes et al. 2020).		-
	1.11 Adjust criteria so that households with a person with a disability can benefit from both recurrent cash assistance and emergency measures.		-
	1.12 Ensure that 'disability criteria' cover more people than just those 'unable to work', especially when national laws adopt such a definition or rely on such categorisations for disability-targeted benefits.		Justification
	1.13 Lower the eligibility age for benefits targeting elderly people to 65 years of age or lower[4] to ensure more older persons are covered (Juergens and Galvani 2020).		Justification
	1.14 Unify/coordinate targeting criteria across the social protection and humanitarian sectors or within them to reduce duplication and increase coverage.	All	Mercy Corps Iraq Basic Needs Working Group Jordan
Recommendations *Long-term*	1.15 Invest in DRM sector-led routine risk monitoring and post-disaster needs assessments.	All	Justification
	1.16 Prepare standard operating procedures/tools for adapting existing programme's eligibility criteria based on the type of crisis and considering 'climate-smart' and 'shock-sensitive targeting' (UNICEF 2021c).	All	- (see UNICEF (2021) in Annex 1 for details on how to enhance preparedness)

4. In line with Article 15 of ILO Convention No. 128 on Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits.

WHAT	Best Practice 2: Use social registries and existing beneficiary databases for beneficiary identification		
WHY	Allows for those who are already registered to be reached rapidly before moving on to covering additional caseloads		
CHALLENGES	• Incomplete data: not including vulnerable groups (especially migrants, stateless persons, informal workers) • Out of date • Irrelevant: information included not helpful for the purposes of verifying eligibility or identifying vulnerability • System interoperability limited		
Recommendations *Immediate*	2.1 Confirm whether data in social registries and existing beneficiary databases are up to date, relevant and cover a sufficient part of the population.	All	-
Recommendations *Long-term*	2.2 Invest in the expansion of social registry coverage, and improve the relevance and currency of data included.	All	UNICEF Syria UNHCR Djibouti
	2.3 Invest in system interoperability (e.g. between social registries, existing beneficiary databases and disability registries).	All	Senegal
	2.4 Develop a national disability registry, invest in adding questions on disability to the social registry survey process which draw on the Washington Group Enhanced Set of Questions or the World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedule, and ensure that questions allow for the identification of people who might not necessarily self-identify as having a disability (e.g. elderly people) (Barca et al. 2021).		Dominican Republic & UNICEF
	2.5 Invest in improving the coverage and digitisation of ID systems and civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems.	All	Justification

WHAT	Best Practice 3: Use alternative databases for beneficiary identification		
WHY	Beneficial strategy in countries where social registries are not well developed and/or databases of existing beneficiaries of social protection programmes are not extensive Allows identification of particular vulnerable groups—i.e. informal workers, children at risk of dropping out, persons with disabilities (if disability registries are not connected to a particular social protection programme) Shifts the burden of proof from the individual to the State (Barca et al. 2021)		
CHALLENGES	• Incomplete: low levels of registration, or excluding vulnerable groups (especially migrants, stateless persons), • Out of date • Irrelevant: information included not helpful for the purposes of verifying eligibility or identifying vulnerability • System interoperability limited		
Recommendations *Immediate*	3.1 Activate identification and registration through the CRVS system for children to receive child grants, older persons to receive pensions, and widows/single mothers to receive benefits.		(see point 2.5 above)

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Recommendations *Immediate*	3.2 Activate identification and registration of informal workers through government databases such as the health insurance beneficiary database or monotax database.		Morocco
	3.3 Activate identification and registration of informal workers through non-governmental databases such as those of syndicates and informal workers' associations, and ensure coordination with women-focused networks and associations, organisations of persons with disabilities etc.		Egypt Thailand
	3.4 Activate identification and registration of children at risk of dropping out or missing out on education, in coordination with the Ministry of Education's student register.		Lebanon and World Bank
	3.5 Activate identification and registration of persons with disabilities through the national disability registry if it is not linked to any social protection benefit and thus does not constitute an existing beneficiary database.		-
	3.6 Coordinate databases and information systems of national and international actors involved in the response to ensure alignment and de-duplication, taking data security measures into account and/or establishing appropriate data-sharing agreements.	All	State of Palestine and Mercy Corps Egypt and WFP, Plan International (see BASIC (2020), ICRC (2019) and CaL P (2021) in Annex 1, and the summary of strategies to respond to data-sharing requests in Annex 4)[5]
Recommendations *Long-term*	3.7 Invest in system interoperability between national entities and across national and international organisations through standards for data exchange (Schoemaker 2020).	All	(see point 2.3 above) (see Linking Humanitarian Information Systems by SPACE 2020 in Annex 1)

WHAT	Best Practice 4: Set up digital registration systems or use existing ones (including online platforms and mobile applications)		
WHY	Allows for larger numbers of individuals to be reached rapidly, most notably those who are not in any registry or database		
CHALLENGES	• Can be exclusionary, as they require a mobile phone, Internet connectivity and/or ID for verification • Less effective if not complemented by existing digitised IDs		
Recommendations *Immediate*	4.1 Complement digital registration with SMS/Whatsapp registration and non-digital options such as helplines and in-person registration to ensure inclusion of women (who are less likely to have a mobile phone, Internet connection or ID), illiterate individuals, elderly people and other vulnerable categories, and the continuation of referral services.	All	Dominica
	4.2 Make SMS registration free, to include those living in extreme poverty.	All	Morocco
	4.3 Allow multiple beneficiary household applications to be made through the same SIM card, to include those without a mobile phone.	All	Namibia
	4.4 Allow registration with functional IDs and alternative ID documents (e.g. work permits, refugee IDs) with sufficient consideration for cost and other barriers for vulnerable groups to renew/access these ID documents.		(see points 1.1–1.3 above)

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5. Data protection concerns and financial service providers will be addressed in the 'Payment Type, Value and Delivery' Practitioner Note in this series.

Recommendations *Immediate*	4.5 Ensure that digital registration systems are disability-inclusive by integrating sign language options and making them screen-reader compatible (Banks et al. 2021).		-
	4.6 Ensure that registration applications include questions that allow for the identification of intersectional vulnerabilities, to better inform the response and pave the way for Cash Plus interventions. This could include collecting information on all household members, including age, gender and disability status.	All	- (For further details see SPACE (2021) in Annex 1)
	4.7 Ensure that registration applications targeting persons with disabilities include questions that allow for the identifications of persons who might not necessarily self-identify as having a disability (e.g. elderly people) (Barca et al. 2021).		-
	4.8 Strengthen data protection by seeking consent, evaluating the amount of data to be collected, processed, stored and shared, updating privacy policies, using encryption, clearly identifying how private actors may use data, and ensuring risk management measures are in place to safeguard against data protection violations (Goodman et al. 2020).	All	Namibia Brazil Morocco (for further details, see BASIC (2020) and ICRC (2019) in Annex 1)
Recommendations *Long-term*	4.9 Invest in strong data protection procedures.	All	(see point 4.8 above) (for further details, see BASIC (2020) and CaLP (2021) in Annex 1)
	4.10 Invest in the creation of a one-stop shop for social protection applications	All	Jordan
	4.11 Invest in using the data collected to develop/expand the social registry	All	(see point 2.2 above)

WHAT	Best Practice 5: Engage local actors in beneficiary identification and registration		
WHY	Local actors are better equipped to facilitate the inclusion of those who are hardest to reach in society (Cabot Venton and Sammon 2020), as they have a better understanding of the community and may also be trusted by them. Lessons from conflict-affected countries in MENA indicate the centrality of community-based approaches in ensuring neutrality of targeting (Al-Ahmadi and de Silva 2018).		
CHALLENGES	• Limited personnel or financial capacity • Balancing between socio-political sensitivities regarding the inclusion of certain vulnerable groups when engaging local actors • Ensuring safeguards against abuse of power and impunity of local actors, especially in regards to risks of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse		
Recommendations *Immediate*	5.1 Carefully consider the diversity of local actors (i.e. women's self-help groups and women's rights organisations, organisations of persons with disabilities etc.), to increase inclusivity of registration processes.	All	Kenya
	5.2 Strengthen capacities of local actors responsible for registration/identification, especially for actors carrying out functionality-based assessments of disability to determine eligibility, registration and enrolment (Banks et al. 2021).	All	Syria Viet Nam
Recommendations *Long-term*	5.3 Include a localisation component in the shock-responsive social protection strategy that ensures local actors' involvement in both decision-making and implementation.	All	-

SECTION 2: FURTHER DETAILS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Best Practice 1: Adjust eligibility criteria, reorganise prioritised categories and/or simplify verification mechanisms is very important in times of crisis, as it **allows for the inclusion of those living above the poverty line and traditionally excluded from social protection**. Governments and practitioners can introduce measures in both the immediate and the long term to increase inclusivity, examples of which or further justifications are demonstrated in the tables below.

- To start with, governments and international humanitarian practitioners can take steps regarding beneficiary ID cards used for identification.
- They can also adjust categorical and/or proxy means-tested targeting criteria for more inclusivity.
- In the long term, efforts should be made to strengthen the national DRM sector to contribute risk assessments that support the readjustment of eligibility criteria.

Table 1.1 Colombia and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Morocco accept expired IDs for refugees

Recommendation	1.1 Waive the requirement for valid IDs and accept expired ones, which is especially advantageous for refugees and migrants	
Country example	UNHCR Morocco	Colombia
Details	UNHCR Morocco and financial service providers reached an agreement to allow documented refugees, especially those with expired documentation, to receive benefits (UNHCR 2020).	The government allowed Venezuelan migrants to register for national emergency social protection measures with expired work permits known as *Permiso de Permencia*. While this practice has succeeded in including Venezuelan refugees in social protection, it still excluded the majority of them (63 per cent) who did not hold work permits in the first place. Consequently, waiving the work permit requirement entirely for other Venezuelan migrants would have been a good tactic for further inclusion (Mazza 2020).

Table 1.2 Making the case for waiving the cost of renewing/issuing IDs

Recommendation	1.2 Waive the cost of renewing/issuing IDs, and simplify the renewal/issuance process
Justification	In countries where ID is necessary for registering in emergency social protection programmes, **assessments should be made of the cost of renewing/issuing IDs and how it might hinder vulnerable groups** from actually benefiting. In Jordan, for example, a special category of Palestinian refugees known as 'Gazan refugees' were technically eligible to benefit from three main social assistance measures introduced or expanded during the pandemic: the *Takaful* 1 Quarterly Cash Assistance Programme, the *Takaful* 2 Daily Wage Worker Emergency Cash Assistance Programme and the Bread Subsidy Removal Cash Compensation. However, to receive benefits, refugees must have a valid 'Gazan Refugee Identity Card', which is a two-year temporary Jordanian passport without a national ID number. The cost of renewing the passport or issuing it for the first time is JOD100–200 (USD140–280) (CSPD n.d.; n.d.), which is unaffordable for the majority of Gazan refugees, who are living below the poverty line (Tiltnes and Zhang 2013). Consequently, it is beneficial to waive or reduce the costs of renewing/issuing ID documents because it, first, leads to the inclusion of vulnerable groups in emergency social protection measures and, second, increases their access to documentation.

Table 1.3 Chile and United Arab Emirates extend IDs and residency permits for foreigners and migrant workers

Recommendation	1.3 Extend or waive expiration dates	
Country example	Chile	United Arab Emirates
Details	In countries where ID is necessary for registering in emergency social protection programmes, another approach to waiving the cost of renewing IDs is to automatically extend them or waive expiration dates. This was done in **Chile**, where the government extended IDs for one, then two years, for foreigners, and until mid-2021 for nationals. Venezuelans with expired passports issued from 2013 will also be considered valid until April 2023, which will facilitate visa renewal and, consequently, access to social protection (KPMG 2021).	This practice is also relevant for protecting migrant workers. The **United Arab Emirates**, for example, automatically issued and renewed work permits and residency visas for migrant domestic workers and construction workers (HRW 2020).

Table 1.4 Qatar, Algeria and Argentina's automatic renewal of benefits for persons with disabilities and simplification of the process for issuing disability status cards

Recommendation	1.4 Simplify the process for issuing persons with disability status cards or automatic renewal for the duration of the crisis		
Country example	Qatar	Algeria	Argentina
Details	Persons with disabilities in Qatar, alongside other vulnerable groups such as widows, orphans and elderly people, can obtain a social security card which allows them to benefit from monthly social assistance from the government. At the beginning of the pandemic, it was announced that social security cards which would expire after 15 March 2020 would be automatically renewed until further notice to enable individuals to continue to benefit (IPC-IG 2021a).	The requirement for a medical check-up for persons with disabilities benefiting from the government's disability pension was waived during the lockdown period (IPC-IG 2021a).	Persons with disabilities in Argentina could benefit from both a simplified process for issuing persons with disability status cards and the automatic renewal of certain benefits during the crisis. Argentina allowed the first-time registration of persons with disabilities remotely, and also automatically renewed all disability registrations for three to six months (Sakellariou, Malfitano, and Rotarou 2020).

Table 1.5 Pakistan adjusts proxy means test scoring to include informal workers and those living near the poverty line

Recommendation	1.5 Adjust the income threshold of means-tested scoring or the proxy means test formula to make those living above or near the poverty line eligible, as this would be key to shock-responsiveness in cases of economic shocks (Sumner, Hoy, and Ortiz-Juarez 2020)
Country example	Pakistan
Details	The Ehsaas Emergency Cash (EEC) programme implemented during the pandemic added four new categories to those already eligible for the country's *Ehsaas Kafaalat* programme, reaching close to 50 per cent of the country's total population. Category 2 included households that were already in the National Socio-Economic Registry and became eligible due to a relaxation of eligibility requirements **allowing those with a proxy means test score of 38 (on a scale of 0–100) or lower to benefit, when it was previously capped at 16.7**. The benefit was a lump sum of PKR12,000 (34 per cent of the average monthly household income), paid through biometric payment points (Markhof 2020; Hammad et al. 2021).

Table 1.7 Lebanon and the World Bank's addition of categorical criteria, Egypt's targeting of newborns, and pregnant and lactating women in emergency and recurrent programmes, and Jordan's inclusion of persons with disabilities in emergency and recurrent programmes

Recommendation	1.7 Add categorical criteria or adjust existing ones to increase inclusion and coverage of vulnerable and marginalised groups (e.g. prioritising female-headed households, pregnant and lactating women, persons with disabilities, and refugee households, and allowing those categories that already benefit from recurrent programmes to also benefit from emergency ones)		
Country example	**Lebanon and the World Bank**	**Egypt and WFP**	**Jordan**
Details	The World Bank's Emergency Crisis and COVID-19 Response Social Safety Net Project includes a component for the horizontal expansion of the main cash assistance programme (National Poverty Targeting Programme). The horizontal expansion of the programme will depend on its previously developed poverty-targeting criteria, but it will require households to also meet a categorical criterion to benefit. In other words, households must be living below the extreme poverty line, but they should also belong to socially vulnerable groups such as women-headed households, households with a member aged 70 or above, households with any member who has a severe disability, and households with children aged 0–18 (World Bank 2020).	Egypt's *Takaful* (conditional cash transfer programme) added a new complementary intervention to existing beneficiary households with children below 2 years of age, and pregnant and lactating mothers, with an additional monthly benefit financed by the WFP. The same categories were targeted by the country's emergency in-kind assistance programme, which focused on providing families with food parcels to cope with food insecurity and limit negative coping mechanisms (IPC-IG 2021a).	In December 2020 the government announced a new six-month[6] emergency cash assistance programme targeting informal workers (*Takaful* 3) or unemployed individuals. The programme's eligibility criteria were based on the first emergency cash assistance programme (*Takaful* 2) but were amended to allow households that receive a disability grant from the National Aid Fund to also benefit from the emergency assistance (*Takaful* 3) (IPC-IG 2021a). Approximately 12,400 households with members with a disability who received a disability grant in 2019 are also eligible for *Takaful* 3 (NAF 2019).

Table 1.8 United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA) Syria provides cash transfers to unaccompanied children

Recommendation	1.8 Adjust criteria so that unaccompanied children or households headed by children over 14 years can benefit (UNICEF n.d.)
Country example	**UNRWA Syria**
Details	To contribute to child protection outputs, UNICEF's Humanitarian Cash Transfer Guidelines recommends the provision of financial support to unaccompanied children and households headed by children over the age of 14 (UNICEF n.d.). This is relevant because unaccompanied children and child-headed households are impacted by multiple vulnerabilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially since the majority of them are refugees living below the poverty line (UNICEF Middle East and North Africa 2020). There are limited data on the number of unaccompanied children or child-headed households in MENA, but some of what was found is shown below.

Country	No. of unaccompanied children	Source
Libya	12,000	UNICEF Libya (2021)
Egypt	4,577	UNICEF Middle East and North Africa (2020)
Jordan	4,848	UNICEF Jordan and NCFA (2017)

Noting the additional risks facing unaccompanied children from the COVID pandemic, UNRWA Syria implemented a five-month cash assistance programme benefiting 415,781 refugees, including the most vulnerable categories such as female-headed households and unaccompanied minors (UNRWA 2021). No data are available on the number of unaccompanied minors actually benefiting or how they were identified in the first place, but their prioritisation is noteworthy nonetheless.

Table 1.9 Peru provides emergency cash assistance to female household members

6. With the possibility of providing the cash assistance for one year.

Recommendation	1.9 Adjust criteria to make the recipient of the social assistance benefit the female member of the household, as opposed to the head of the household, who is traditionally male
Country example	Peru
Details	To ensure that female members of the household can benefit from assistance, the Peruvian government named the oldest female household member aged 18–60 as the primary recipient of its emergency cash assistance programme. For households where none of the female members meet the criterion, a male can receive the assistance. This means that funds are less likely to be exploited by other members of the family and that women have more control over how the money is spent (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation et al. 2020). In the long term, research has shown that directly paying women contributes to their financial inclusion and higher nutritional outcomes for the household, and increases their likelihood of being employed (Bull et al. 2021). However, an important consideration when specifying that a female household member is the primary recipient is the increased risk of gender-based violence or domestic abuse that this might cause (Heise 2011). An important consideration to avoid that is to include gender components such as gender analysis and sensitization for the community (Bell 2015)'

Table 1.12 Making the case for careful consideration of disability criteria

Recommendation	1.12 Ensure that 'disability criteria' cover more people than just those 'unable to work', especially when national laws adopt such a definition or rely on such categorisations for disability-targeted benefits
Justification	In some MENA countries, the adopted definition of disability limits the coverage of disability-targeted benefits to those unable to work. Examples of countries with the limited definitions in social protection programmes include: • **Algeria**'s *La Pension Handicapée à 100%* assistance benefit is restricted to those whose disability results in a total incapacity to work;[7] and • **Morocco**'s RAMED health insurance programme, which was used to identify informal workers to benefit from emergency cash transfers during the pandemic, defines persons and children with disabilities as those who are permanently and definitively unable to work (ESCWA 2017). Such very narrow definitions exclude other forms of disability when existing programmes are horizontally or vertically expanded during crises. Countries such as Fiji, Georgia, Namibia and Thailand have universal disability cash transfers that are compatible with work, to take disability-related costs into account (including those disability costs associated with seeking and keeping work).

Table 1.13 Making the case for careful consideration of age eligibility for elderly-targeted benefits

Recommendation	1.13 Lower the eligibility age for benefits targeting elderly people to 65 years of age or lower[8] to ensure more older persons are covered (Juergens and Galvani 2020)
Justification	Seven social assistance measures targeting people above 60 were mapped in the MENA region to respond to COVID-19. These measures and their eligibility ages are shown below.

Country	Measure	Age eligibility
Saudi Arabia	Social Security Pensions (non-contributory)9	60+
Egypt	Expansion of *Karama* Programme	65+
Jordan	Expansion of Recurrent Cash Assistance	65+
Syria	Support for Vulnerable Persons	70+
Jordan	One-off In-kind Assistance	70+
Lebanon	Expansion of National Poverty Targeting Programme	70+
Iraq	Emergency Grant	Males: 18–65 / Females: 18– 55

Source: IPC-IG (2021a).

The last four measures indicated in the table above are less inclusive, especially Iraq's programme, which is problematic, as there was no other measure indicated which provides the excluded age groups with assistance. As elderly individuals are among the most vulnerable in crisis situations, it is thus recommended that in such times, programmes that target elderly people carefully consider the age edibility criteria and take into account the fact that International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 128 on Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits recommends that old-age benefits start at 65 years of age (1967).

Table 1.14 Mercy Corps Iraq coordinates eligibility criteria with the government to ensure limited duplication

7. It is important to mention here that persons with disabilities whose disability percentage is less than the measured threshold of 100 per cent could benefit from another cash transfer programme known as the Allocation Forfaitaire de Solidarité.

8. In line with Article 15 of ILO Convention No. 128 on Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits.

9. Saudi Arabia's main cash assistance programme is called 'Social Security Pensions' when directly translated from its Arabic name.

Recommendation	1.14 Unify/coordinate targeting criteria across the social protection and humanitarian sectors or within them to reduce duplication and increase coverage	
Country example	Mercy Corps Iraq	Basic Needs Working Group Jordan
Details	As the leaders of Iraq's Cash Consortium, Mercy Corps used a proxy means test to conduct an overlap analysis to identify the potential incidence of co-eligibility within the government's main safety net programme and assistance programmes administered by international humanitarian agencies. The analysis was then used to make targeted referrals to the government's programme and provide legal assistance to support individuals' access to documentation to enable them to benefit (Mercy Corps 2020).	The Basic Needs Working Group (which comprises more than 30 organisations) coordinated targeting by making use of a single list of beneficiaries, which can be accessed by all partners and uses a scoring approach to target assistance. Partners also made use of the Refugee Assistance Information System to indicate which beneficiaries they have reached, to avoid duplication (UNHCR 2020).

Table 1.15 Making the case for investing in DRM systems

Recommendation	1.15 Invest in DRM sector-led routine risk monitoring and post-disaster needs assessments
Justification	DRM systems play an important role in preparing for a crisis and planning the social protection response (OPM 2015). **Regular risk monitoring** by the DRM system can strengthen the social protection sector's preparedness for different types of crisis, and contribute to the preparation of contingency plans for the social protection sector at the local, regional and national levels. **Post-disaster needs assessments** by the DRM system can inform the adjustment of eligibility criteria of new or routine programmes. The DRM system's contribution to shock-responsive social protection, however, is predicated on the extent to which the latter is reflected in the former. In countries where DRM is completely separate or unconcerned with social protection, a review of policies and legislation is required (Barca et al. 2020).

Best Practice 2: Use of social registries and existing beneficiary databases has been proven to facilitate the rapid identification of beneficiaries and quick implementation in countries that have them (Barca 2020; Hammad et al. 2021). However, this practice may potentially result in certain exclusions, as some of the most vulnerable groups, which are already locked out of government databases, can then also become locked out of emergency responses (Barca et al. 2021). In the short term, identification and registration through social registries and existing databases can be made more inclusive through the adjustment of eligibility criteria to ensure wider coverage (see Tables 1.4–1.6 in the section above). To enhance the inclusivity of social registries and their potential benefit for future crises, the following recommendations should be considered.

Table 2.2 Syria's and Djibouti's efforts to expand social registries to vulnerable groups

Recommendation	2.2 Invest in the expansion of social registry coverage, and improve the relevance and currency of data included	
Country example	UNICEF Syria	UNHCR Djibouti
Details	UNICEF introduced a cash transfer programme for **children with extreme disabilities** in Syria to mitigate the effects of COVID. It used the programme to update the national registry with information on children with disabilities alongside the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the relevant department. The purpose of the update is to increase the accuracy of the registry to enable its use for case management, whereby children are linked to other specialised disability services (Barca et al. 2021). UNICEF collaborates closely with non-governmental organisations and child-friendly spaces such as school clubs to identify eligible children, placing particular focus on identifying girls with disabilities, given the social stigma (UNICEF 2021b).	Djibouti's Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity introduced the Voucher System to Vulnerable Families programme during the COVID pandemic and used the country's social registry for the identification of beneficiaries. However, noting that the registry excludes **refugee households** and other forcibly displaced populations, the Ministry partnered with UNHCR to actively identify such households to benefit from the programme and simultaneously add their data to the country's registry (Hammad et al. 2021).

Table 2.3 Senegal invests in system interoperability

Recommendation	2.3 Invest in system interoperability (e.g. between social registries, existing beneficiary databases and disability registries)
Country example	Senegal
Details	In providing emergency relief during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Senegalese government announced linkages between the disability registry and the social registry to ensure that persons with disabilities also benefit from assistance. Interoperability between social registries or existing beneficiary databases and disability registries could be relevant for MENA countries such as Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia (ESCWA 2017).

Table 2.4 Dominican Republic includes disability questions in social registry survey

Recommendation	2.4 Develop a national disability registry, invest in adding questions on disability to the social registry survey process which draw on the Washington Group Enhanced Set of Questions or the World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedule, and include questions that allow for the identifications of persons who might not necessarily self-identify as having a disability (e.g. elderly people) (Barca et al. 2021)
Country example	Dominican Republic
Details	In 2018, the Dominican Republic included questions on disability in the survey for the Unique System of Beneficiaries, which enabled the government and UNICEF to rapidly identify families with children with disabilities to provide them with emergency assistance during the pandemic (Cote 2021).

Table 2.5 Making the case for improving the coverage and digitisation of IDs and CRVS

Recommendation	2.5 Invest in improving the coverage and digitisation of IDs and CRVS systems
Justification	Digitised IDs and accurate CRVS systems have been vital to ensure the rapid identification, verification and registration of individuals in emergency social assistance measures during COVID. In **Namibia**, for example, the government announced an emergency income grant for Namibians working in the informal economy that can be applied for by sending a text message containing their surname and ID number. The integrated civil registration and identity system was then used to verify applicants' age (those below 18 or above 59 were excluded, as they benefit from other measures), citizenship and ID number, and whether the applicant was alive. Interoperability with the tax system enabled verification of an individual's participation in the informal economy. A total of 767,000 individuals benefited from the grant, and the process of application, verification and grant disbursement took no more than 72 hours—an achievement made possible by the government's digitised and interoperable information system. Unlike in Namibia, where 82.9 per cent of the population possessed ID cards and 93.5 per cent deaths are registered (Bayer Forsingdal, Munyika, and Dokovic 2021), the situation in some **MENA countries**, especially those affected by crisis, is much worse, as summarised below. • UNHCR (2019) estimates that there are **370,519 stateless** individuals in the region, with countless more living as *bidoon*[10] in Gulf countries, stateless Palestinian refugees outside its mandate and others. • **Around 83 per cent of Syrian children born in Lebanon lack birth registration** documentation and face the threat of becoming stateless (IFI 2020). • In the poorest regions, up to **70 per cent of Yemeni adults lack national IDs**, although this number is reduced to 50 per cent in other districts (Qaid 2021). • **Around 40 per cent of the Moroccan population** do not have the recognised national electronic ID card (World Bank 2016). Any investment in developing ID and CRVS systems should take into account current legal frameworks and how they could potentially exclude women or other categories from obtaining documentation. **For further details on designing identification systems, see the Identification for Development Practitioner's Guide in** Annex 1.

10. Stateless individuals who did not access citizenship at the time of their country's independence.

Best Practice 3: Use of alternative databases for beneficiary identification is important in contexts where social registries are not well developed or where databases of social protection programme beneficiaries are limited, which is the case in most MENA countries (Machado et al. 2018). A range of different databases can be used, and the following recommendations are suggested to ensure a more inclusive process.

Table 3.2 Identifying informal workers through alternative governmental databases in Morocco

Recommendation	3.2 Activate identification and registration of informal workers through government databases such as the health insurance beneficiary database or monotax database
Country example	Morocco
Details	In March 2020, Morocco introduced an emergency cash benefit for informal workers. The government used the health insurance programme's (RAMED) database to identify and register eligible informal workers in the emergency benefit programme.

Table 3.3 Identifying informal workers through non-governmental databases in Egypt and Thailand

Recommendation	3.3 Activate identification and registration of informal workers through non-governmental databases such as those of syndicates and informal workers' associations, and ensure coordination with women-focused networks and associations	
Country example	Egypt	Thailand
Details	For its cash assistance benefit targeting self-employed workers in the tourism sector, the government relied on the database of registered tour guides at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. However, noting the possibility of having out-of-date and incomplete information, the Ministry collaborated with local-level syndicates to cross-check information and populate the database (Hammad et al. 2021).	In Thailand, the government collaborated with HomeNet, an association of home-based workers, to support the enrolment of 3,500 individuals in the government's emergency cash assistance programme (ILO 2020).

Table 3.4 Identifying children at risk of dropping out in Lebanon

Recommendation	3.4 Activate identification and registration of children at risk of dropping out or missing out on education, in coordination with the Ministry of Education's student register
Country example	Lebanon and the World Bank
Details	The World Bank's Emergency Social Safety Net Programme in Lebanon aims to horizontally expand the country's National Poverty Targeting Programme. In addition to the standard monthly benefit, the World Bank added a component specifically for eligible families with children aged 13–16 years registered in public schools. The component provides these families with the following additional benefits (which vary by type of stream and the child's level): • **benefits paid directly to the school:** school registration fees and parents' council fees; • **one-off benefits paid to households at the start of the school year:** for textbooks, school uniforms and equipment; and • **benefits paid to households every month:** transport expenses. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education will use its student registry, which allocates each student a unique ID to monitor their monthly attendance, to ensure the attendance conditionality is met (World Bank 2020).

Table 3.6 Coordinating databases in Egypt and the State of Palestine

Recommendation	3.6 Coordinate databases and information systems of national and international actors involved in the response to ensure alignment and de-duplication, taking data security measures into account and/or establishing appropriate data-sharing agreements **(see BASIC (2020), ICRC (2019) and CALP (2021) in Annex 1, and Annex 4 for strategies to respond to data-sharing requests)**	
Country example	State of Palestine and Mercy Corps	Egypt, WFP and Plan International
Details	Mercy Corps received access to the Ministry of Social Development's single registry to reach caseloads which the Ministry could not serve due to financial limitations (Mercy Corps 2020).	The Ministry of Social Solidarity shared a database of 77,600 vulnerable households that were rejected from the *Takaful* and *Karama* programmes with international partners, to provide them with EGP400 monthly cash transfers (State Information Service Website 2021).

Best Practice 4: The setting up of digital registration systems or use of existing ones (including online platforms and mobile applications) is essential to reach significant proportions of the population who are not benefiting from any social assistance programmes or are missing from government databases and registries. It is important to note here that very few MENA countries have social registries to start with (Machado et al. 2018), and the coverage of existing social protection programmes is relatively small (IBC-SP 2020). Digital registration systems may, however, exclude some vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities (Barca et al. 2021); it is thus imperative to consider the following recommendations for more inclusive digital registration systems in crisis situations.

Table 4.1 Complementing digital registration methods in Dominica

Recommendation	4.1 Complement digital registration with SMS/Whatsapp registration and non-digital options such as helplines and in-person registration to ensure inclusion of women (who are less likely to have a mobile phone, Internet connection or ID documents), illiterate individuals, elderly people and other vulnerable categories, and the continuation of referral services
Country example	Dominica
Details	Registration for Dominica's Social Cash Transfers Assistance Programme was possible online, via telephone or in person through local actors. With the support of village councils, enumerators were deployed to 45 locations/registration points throughout the country to interview applicants face to face and to collect information on tablet computers and phones. In several cases, home visits were also carried out to interview those unable to access the registration points (Hammad et al. 2021). While home visits are discouraged in a health crisis such as COVID, they are still necessary to reach elderly people and persons with disabilities.

Table 4.2 Morocco's toll-free SMS registration method for informal workers' emergency benefit

Recommendation	4.2 Make SMS registration free, to include those living in extreme poverty
Country example	Morocco
Details	In March 2020, Morocco introduced an emergency cash benefit for informal workers. Informal workers who are existing beneficiaries of the country's health insurance programme (RAMED) can apply for the emergency benefit programme through the toll-free number 1212, which can also be called to request more information on the registration process and to file complaints (Hatim 2020).

Table 4.3 Namibia allows more than one application on the same mobile phone number

Recommendation	4.3 Allow multiple beneficiary household applications to be made through the same SIM card, to include those without mobiles
Country example	Namibia
Details	Registration for Namibia's Emergency Income Grant was not linked to a phone number, unlike other emergency programmes which use numbers as financial addresses linked to mobile money accounts. Individuals simply had to send their name and national ID number to a toll-free number, and up to 10 individuals could apply from the same SIM card (Gelb and Mukherjee 2020). To receive the benefit, individuals must enter a mobile phone number to which their chosen bank can send an 'e-token'.[11] The selected number to receive the e-token does not need to be the same as the one used for registering (Namibia Trade Directory 2020).

Table 4.8 Data protection approaches in Namibia, Brazil and Morocco

Recommendation	4.8 Strengthen data protection by seeking (renewed) consent, evaluating the amount of data to be collected, processed, stored and shared, updating privacy policies, using encryption, clearly identifying how private actors may use data, and ensuring risk management measures are in place to safeguard against data protection violations (Goodman et al. 2020)		
Country example	Namibia	Brazil	Morocco
Details	Namibia's digital registration process for the Emergency Income Grant required all applicants to express their consent to allowing involved institutions to process their personal data. Mobile money companies were not allowed to access the civil registration system to process the data; instead, processing was conducted by the Ministry of Home Affairs (Dokovic et al. 2020).	Brazil launched an app to receive the applications of informal workers and unemployed people for the country's emergency cash transfer programme *Auxílio Emergencial*. The app focused on minimal data collection, clearly indicating which ID document is required for registration, and the associated legal frameworks identified the databases used to verify beneficiary eligibility, and which entity is responsible for data processing, and set operational procedures related to data-sharing among public entities. Drawbacks of the newly developed app are the outdated privacy policy it uses from 2016, and the lack of risk assessments (Barbosa et al. 2020).	Morocco's National Control Commission for the Protection of Personal Data (CNDP) introduced a number of measures in late March 2020 to ensure compliance with existing data protection laws. The CNDP created a crisis unit responsible for: • receiving and processing citizens' and data controllers' complaints via a helpline or an email (CNDP 2020a); • managing a special register of notifications received during the pandemic; and • publishing regulations related to data protection risks (CNDP 2020b). One of the regulations issued, for example, authorised the use of biometric facial recognition as 'proof of life' by social security institutions, provided that the data are stored separately and that the relevant institutions submit an authorisation request to the CNDP (DataGuidance 2020).

Table 4.10 One-stop shop for social protection applications in Jordan

Recommendation	4.10 Invest in the creation of a one-stop shop for social protection applications
Country example	Jordan
Details	Prior to the pandemic, Jordan's main cash assistance provider, the National Aid Fund, created an online portal to receive applications for its various programmes. As new emergency social assistance measures were introduced to cope with COVID, its application process was integrated into the existing online portal.

11. E-tokens offer more than one e-money option to receive the benefit.

Best Practice 5: Engaging local actors in beneficiary identification and registration is essential in times of crisis to achieve 'last-mile outreach' and facilitate greater inclusion in emergency social assistance responses. Rural populations, informal workers, undocumented migrants and other vulnerable groups are more likely to be identified by trusted local actors than by government or international humanitarian practitioners (Cabot Venton and Sammon 2020). To improve the efficiency of the partnership with local actors, the choice of who to involve has to be carefully considered, and appropriate training and capacity-building should be provided. Finally, in the long term, local actors have to be involved in all stages of the shock response. For further details see the tables below.

Table 5.1 Inclusion of a variety of local actors in Kenya

Recommendation	5.1 Carefully consider the diversity of local actors (i.e. women's self-help groups, organisations of persons with disabilities etc.), to increase inclusion of registration processes
Country example	Kenya
Details	The government collaborated with organisations of persons with disabilities at the local level to identify persons with disabilities eligible for the emergency cash transfer programme (Cote 2021).

Table 5.2 Strengthening the capacities of local actors

Recommendation	5.2 Strengthen capacities of local actors responsible for registration/identification, especially for actors carrying out functionality-based assessments of disability for determining eligibility, registration and enrolment (Banks et al. 2021)	
Country example	Syria	Viet Nam
Details	To implement its National Plan for Emergency Response, which included cash and in-kind assistance to elderly people and persons with disabilities, as well as cash assistance to informal and self-employed workers, the Syrian Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour adopted a decentralised approach that depends on local committees and volunteers. To achieve this, the Ministry did the following: • collaborated with the Ministry of Local Administration to identify the smallest administrative units; • sought local administrators, or local chiefs (*mukhtars*) in the identified units, depending on their type; • reached out to potential volunteers from the identified units with previous connections to community-based organisations operating in their area; • established local committees comprising local administrators, chiefs and a team of volunteers; and • trained local committees (Lana Plus TV 2020). The local committees were essential in identifying and registering elderly people and persons with disabilities who faced difficulties in accessing or using the online registration portal for assistance (IPC-IG 2021a).[12]	Due to the pandemic's restrictions on movement, the government of Viet Nam allowed simplified functional assessments to be implemented through local actors such as committees or social workers (Cote 2021; Barca et al. 2021).

12. While it is unclear from the information available whether local committees were required to assess whether or not individuals can be categorised as persons with disabilities, it is important to ensure that local actors involved in their registration are trained on these procedures.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Resources on targeting, identification and registration

Area	Institution	Year	Name	Description
COVID targeting	WFP	2020	Targeting and Prioritisation of Impoverished and Food-Insecure Populations Affected by COVID	Guidance on how to adjust targeting and re-prioritise by geographic area, socio-economic group and household-level/individual targeting for the COVID-19 pandemic
COVID disability targeting	SPACE	2021	How Targeting Mechanisms Can Identify People with Disabilities for Inclusion in Social Protection Programmes	Indicates ways to include persons with disabilities through • outreach • identification and registration • needs assessment/selection
COVID gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)	SPACE	2020	Gender and Inclusion in Social Protection Responses during COVID-19	Provides key GESI considerations for • coverage • adequacy • comprehensiveness
	SPACE	2020	Strengthening Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) During the Implementation of Social Protection Responses to COVID-19	Provides key GESI considerations for • pre-needs assessment • determining eligibility • enrolment and registration • delivery/payment modalities • protection and safeguarding • grievance redress mechanisms • monitoring and evaluation • local engagement
Targeting in crises	UNICEF	2021	Technical Note: Targeting for Social Protection in Humanitarian and Fragile Contexts	Provides recommendations for enhancing preparedness of targeting processes by • encompassing a greater focus on shocks within routine targeting • implementing pre-planned changes to routine targeting approaches
	SPAN	2019	Operational Note 2: Targeting	Discusses the pros and cons of various targeting methods during crises. See Annex 2 for further details.
COVID rapid identification and registration	SPACE	2020	Options for Rapid Expansion of Social Assistance Caseloads for COVID-19 Responses	Highlights the pros and cons of using social registries, existing databases, waiting lists and humanitarian databases, among others
COVID inclusive information	SPACE	2021	Inclusive Information Systems for Social Protection: Intentionally Integrating Gender and Disability	Provides strategies for increasing inclusion of persons with disabilities in information systems at all stages of the social assistance delivery chain
Humanitarian crises rapid identification and registration	Better Assistance in Crises (BASIC)	2020	Review and Analysis of Identification and Registration Systems in Protracted and Recurrent Crises	Analysis and recommendations on the use of identification and registration management information systems by humanitarian organisations and linking them to government social protection systems

Area	Institution	Year	Name	Description
COVID data-sharing	SPACE	2020	Linking Humanitarian and Social Protection Information Systems in the COVID-19 Response and Beyond	Guidance for humanitarian practitioners on linking data and information systems with the national social protection sector by considering: • the nature of the intervention • political context • policy context • legal context • technological context
Data-sharing in humanitarian contexts	Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP)	2021	Responsible Data Sharing with Governments	Discusses legitimate, semi-legitimate and illegitimate data-sharing requests from governments to humanitarian organisations and provides strategies for how to respond and ensure data protection
Identification system development	Identification for Development (ID4D)		Identification for Development Practitioner's Guide	Includes a road map for the design and development of ID systems and tackles issues such as legal frameworks, privacy policies and interoperability; also includes useful resources for planning and designing ID systems, such as a diagnostic methodology
Biometrics policy	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	2019	Policy on the Processing of Biometric Data	

Annex 2: Comparing different types of targeting methodologies in crisis situations

Selection Method	Benefits	Risks
Categorical	• Easy implementation • Possible to address the groups most affected or exposed to shocks (e.g. widows, ex-combatants, refugees and IDPs) • Minimal eligibility manipulation	• Low selection accuracy
Geographical/Seasonal	• Easy implementation • Possible to address worst affected areas or areas affected in a certain time period • Useful first-level targeting	• Low selection accuracy • Potencial for migration
Means test	• Good selection accuracy • Potentioal to estimate damage	• Costly and difficult implementation • High eligibility manipulation if non-verified • Possible stigma and social conflicts
Proxy means test	• Maximal selection accuracy • Low eligibility manipulation • Possibility of including exposure to shocks in proxy indicators	• Costly and difficult implementation • Hard choise of proxy indicators • No transparency • Low public support leading to social unrest and conflicts
Community-based/ participatory tools	• Advantage of local information • Increase of social cohesion • Effective in decentralised countries • Potencial to estimate damage	• Local capture and eligibility manipulation • Control and monitoring in the absence of supervising teams
Self-selection	• Effective short-term intervention • Liked to recovery and reconstruction activities • Skill and income generation	• Costly participation • Potencial gender bias • Opportunity costs to participation • Stigma
Universal	• Easy implementation • High public support • No costs of targeting, e.g. migration or social conflicts/unrest/stigma	• No selection accuracy • Costly

Source: SPaN (2019).

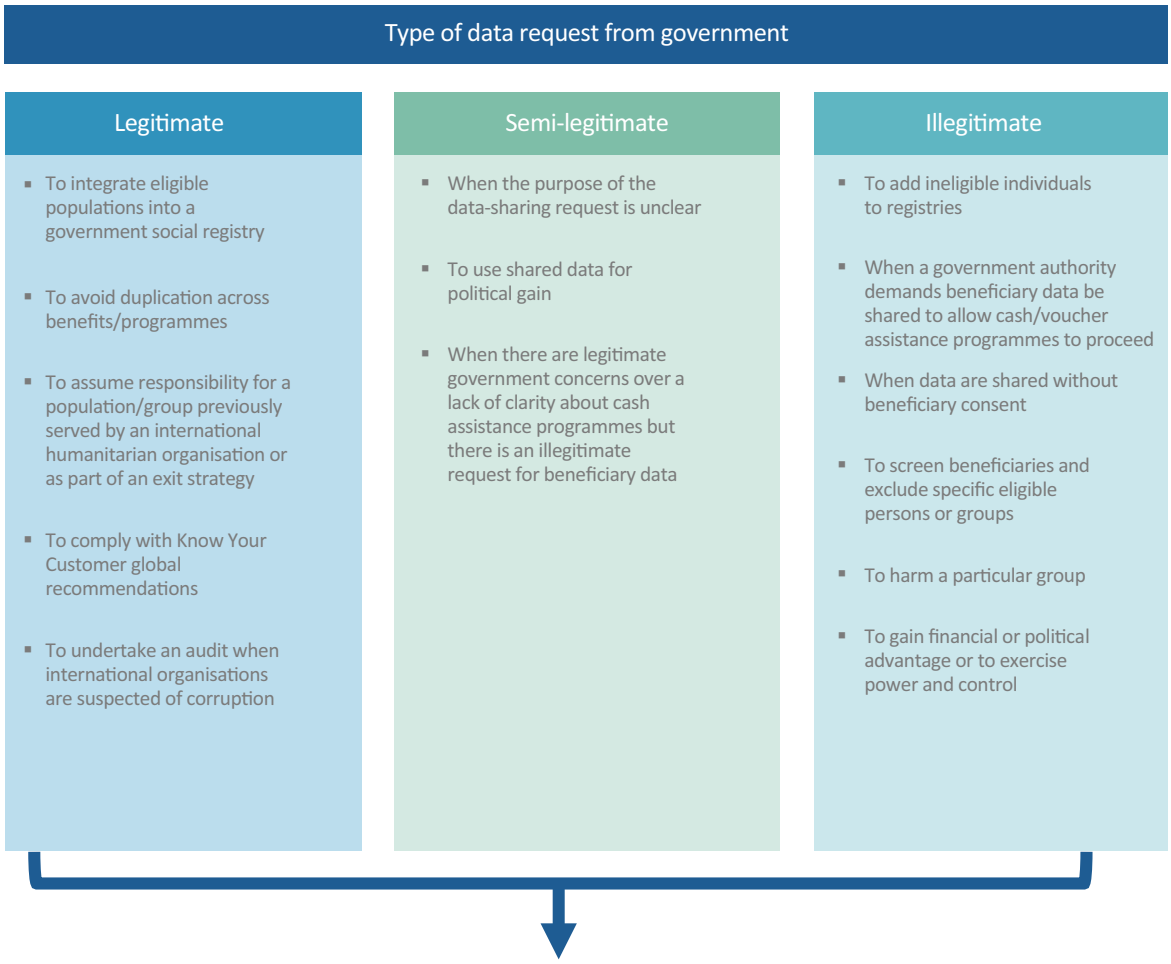
Annex 3: Example of a re-targeting/re-prioritisation process for COVID-19

Proposed targeting (eligibility) criteria for programmes addressing socio-economic impacts

Priority geographic areas	Socio-economic groups	HH-level/individual/targeting/ prioritization criteria
• COVID-19 **hotspot areas** facing extended measurements of lockdown and restrictions **in** movements • Areas with high levels of pre-COVID acute food insecurity **(IPC phase 3 and above)** • **Poor urban areas** (densely populated/slums)	• Households depeding on **informal employment**, remittances and other informal support • **Urban poor** living in slums and other densely populated areas • **Undocumented international migrants (including seasonal migrants)** and their dependents • **Internal labour migrants** (including seasonal) and their dependents • **Displaced populations** (refugees and IDPs)	• **Children and their families** put under additional strain e.g. due to the death or isolation of caretakers • **Single parents** who are facing the double burden of work and taking care of children and elderly • **Female, elderly and child-headed households** • Large households with many children and elderly people

Source: Husain et al. (2020).

Annex 4: Strategies for responding to data-sharing requests from governments



- **Consider the best interest** of the affected population when considering the request.
- **Know national data privacy laws** and the international organisations' own data protection principles; in the absence of both, existing sector standards such as the OCHA's Data Responsibility Guidelines can be used.
- **Set policies and procedures** for how to respond to data requests based on national laws, international organisations' own principles or sector standards, taking into account different scenarios and escalation paths
- **Establish data-sharing agreements** with governments, including specific clauses for financial service providers to manage central bank data-sharing requests.
- **Incorporate data minimisation and data security** (encryption, tokenisation or pseudonymisation) by design, and offer beneficiaries ways to enrol with minimal personal data-sharing.
- **Use technologies** to minimise the amount of data to be shared and thus preserve privacy (moving data from devices to the cloud, encrypting phones, using blockchain or using secure systems with limited access)
- **Protect enumerators** by using secure data collection methods that reduce their direct access to personal data.
- **Coordinate** approaches to data requests from governments with other international humanitarian organisations in the country, and notify them when, if and how data requests are made.

Source: Based on CaLP (2021).

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