

## Leaving no one behind:

# How linking social protection and humanitarian action can bridge the development-humanitarian divide

## *A joint statement of social protection actors to the World 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.

Since before its inception, SPIAC-B members have worked towards supporting national governments to address the compounding vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation of their populations, through more coordinated assistance for the development of **sustainable social protection systems**.

Today, we welcome the important progress that has already been achieved in the sphere of social protection but we know that the achievements up to today are insufficient. In the context of increased complexity and recurrence of natural disasters, conflict, protracted

crises and forced displacement, even these gains may be reversed tomorrow. The countries most in need of humanitarian assistance are often the same as those with the most pressing needs for social protection.

Agenda 2030 has provided us with a clear framework for action, committing countries to expand coverage of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, and achieving substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable by 2030. We know that this must include increased engagement in humanitarian and fragile contexts if we are to leave no one behind.

As the number of people affected by crises and disasters continue to rise, it is widely accepted that a different approach is needed. Aligning the Agenda 2030 and the strategic focus of the World Humanitarian Summit provides a once in a generation opportunity for the development and humanitarian communities to reach those being left behind as a result of disasters, conflict, vulnerability and risk.

## *How can Social Protection systems support an enhanced humanitarian system?*

As part of strengthening development-humanitarian linkages, members of SPIAC-B support the further expansion and strengthening of social protection systems to continue to address chronic vulnerabilities and to scale up the utilization of social protection as a means of responding to shocks and protracted crises. Members of SPIAC-B are convinced that well-designed and implemented social protection systems, can contribute to reduce needs and respond better in different contexts:

### *Managing Disasters Differently*

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As a component of a comprehensive government-driven framework for predictable response to shocks and protracted crises, social protection can contribute to build capacity at individual, household, community and national levels to effectively withstand the negative impact of shocks while contributing to promote sustainable management of resources. While maintaining humanitarian response capacity Governments, development and humanitarian actors also need to:

- promote collective outcomes and investments in preparedness and early action - that are driven by disaggregated data and analysis - and investments that reinforce national and local systems to prevent and reduce the risk of humanitarian needs;
- invest in (i) building and expanding coverage of social protection systems and strengthening institutional capacities, (ii) using social protection systems to build individual, household and community level resilience to stresses and shocks,
- work together on building in adjustment mechanisms that allow systems to more effectively reach and respond to those affected by crises and shocks.

### *Extreme Fragility and Protracted Crises*

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Humanitarian interventions can be used as a window of opportunity to trigger investments in the development of 'nascent' safety nets or social assistance structures. The longer-term aim is to progressively move chronic humanitarian caseloads into social protection systems where possible. To make this a reality, Governments, development and humanitarian actors need to work together to:

- invest in the development of 'nascent' safety nets or social assistance delivery mechanisms, while further strengthening and developing technical and analytical capacity at national and sub-national levels.

### *Forced Displacement*

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Social protection can be incorporated as a cornerstone of any strategy to address the displacement, including IDPs and refugees. To make this a reality, Governments, development and humanitarian actors need to work together to:

- strengthen the effective reach and design of social protection systems to mitigate forced displacement due to shocks and crises and ensure that host communities, IDPs and refugees are equitably assisted in the event of crises.

### *Concrete actions to move the agenda forward*

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