



ON-DEMAND AND UP-TO-DATE? DYNAMIC INCLUSION AND DATA UPDATING FOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE



VALENTINA BARCA AND MADHUMITHA HEBBAR
MARCH 2020



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication, which has been in the writing since 2018, benefited greatly from external peer review by Martina Bergthaller as well as from the valuable comments of Tom Mtenje. Moreover, the continuous support of Ralf Radermacher and the GIZ team Dominique Leska, Christina Betting and Fabian Klinge are gratefully acknowledged. A large amount of the core content is based on key informant interviews with experts in this field, whom we thank for their time and dedication: Philippe Leite (World Bank); Ludovico Carraro (Oxford Policy Management); Francisco Ayala (Ayala Consulting); Fabio Veras Soares (UNDP IPC); Armando Barrientos (University of Manchester); Veronika Wodsak (ILO); Colin Andrews (World Bank); Carlo del Ninno (World Bank); Kelvin Hui (GIZ); Franziska Gassmann (Maastricht University); and Dianne Dunkerly (South African Government). Participants from the South-South Learning Event on Beneficiary Identification and Social Registries (Yogyakarta 26–28 November 2018) are also warmly thanked for their inputs and ideas, which have been integrated in this paper. Finally, we particularly thank Oxford Policy Management for their extensive input into this publication.



CONTENTS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES, AND BOXES	IV
ACRONYMS	V

CHAPTER 1	INTRODUCTION	01 – 07
	WHY IS THIS TOPIC IMPORTANT?	02
	ENSURING DATA CURRENCY ALONG THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY CHAIN: KEY TOUCHPOINTS	03
	FOCUS OF THIS PAPER	07
CHAPTER 2	ENSURING DYNAMIC INCLUSION AND UP-TO-DATE DATA: MAIN APPROACHES	08 – 25
	PERMANENT LOCAL OFFICES	11
	DIGITAL WINDOW	16
	ONGOING/PERIODIC 'ACTIVE' OUTREACH	18
	INTEGRATION OF EXISTING DATABASES	20
CHAPTER 3	TACKLING THE MAIN CHALLENGES TO CONTINUOUS AND ON-DEMAND REGISTRATION	26 – 37
	LOW UPTAKE	27
	DATA VERIFICATION/VALIDATION	32
	CHANGES IN STATUS	32
	LACK OF CAPACITY	34
	FINANCE AND POLITICAL ECONOMY	37
CHAPTER 4	CONCLUSION	38 – 40
	REFERENCES	41
	ANNEX 1: COMPARING 'ON-DEMAND' AND 'CENSUS-SWEEP'	45
	ANNEX 2: SUMMARY OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PRE-REQUISITES	47



LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES, AND BOXES



<u>TABLE 1</u>	NUMBER OF LOCAL OFFICES PERFORMING SOCIAL WELFARE FUNCTIONS	36
<u>FIGURE 1</u>	POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY ARE DYNAMIC AND SO ARE POPULATIONS	02
<u>FIGURE 2</u>	THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY CHAIN	03
<u>FIGURE 3</u>	KEY TOUCHPOINTS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND UPDATING	05
<u>FIGURE 4</u>	DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO REGISTRATION AND UPDATING	06
<u>FIGURE 5</u>	TYPOLGY FOR THIS STUDY	10
<u>FIGURE 6</u>	MAIN CHALLENGES TO CONTINUOUS AND ON-DEMAND REGISTRATION APPROACHES	28
<u>FIGURE 7</u>	BRANDING OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES	29
<u>FIGURE 8</u>	PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS WITH ACCESS TO A SOCIAL WORKER IN 2015 (%)	34
<u>FIGURE 9</u>	NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORKERS PER 100,000 PEOPLE	36
<u>BOX 1</u>	TYPES OF PERMANENT LOCAL OFFICES	11
<u>BOX 2</u>	DECONCENTRATED LOCAL WELFARE OFFICES	12
<u>BOX 3</u>	MUNICIPAL/LOCAL OFFICES	14
<u>BOX 4</u>	DIGITAL WINDOWS	17
<u>BOX 5</u>	PERIODIC 'ACTIVE' OUTREACH	19
<u>BOX 6</u>	INTEGRATION OF CRVS AND ID DATABASES	21
<u>BOX 7</u>	DATA SHARING ACROSS GOVERNMENT DATABASES	23
<u>BOX 8</u>	THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS IN ADDRESSING LOW UPTAKE OF ON-DEMAND REGISTRATION SYSTEMS	30
<u>BOX 9</u>	DEREGISTRATION OF DECEASED RECIPIENTS	32
<u>BOX 10</u>	MANDATED PERIODIC RECERTIFICATION	33
<u>BOX 11</u>	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DATA UPDATING IN THE PHILIPPINES	34
<u>BOX 12</u>	CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS AT LOCAL LEVELS OF ADMINISTRATION, EXAMPLES FROM KENYA AND ZAMBIA	35

ACRONYMS

BOMS	beneficiary operations management system	MLSSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of the Azerbaijan Republic
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	MOU	memorandum of understanding
CRVS	civil registration and vital statistics	SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
GIS	geographic information system	SISBEN	System of Identification of Social Program Beneficiaries (Colombia)
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	SMS	short message service
ICROP	Integrated Community Registration Outreach Programme (South Africa)	TRANSFORM	Leadership and Transformation Learning Package on Building and Managing Social Protection Floors in Africa
ID	identity document	UK	United Kingdom
ILO	International Labour Organization	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IPC	International Policy Centre	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ISAS	Integrated Social Assistance System (Turkey)	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
KII	key informant interview	VENTAS	Unified Electronic Application and Awarding Sub-system (Azerbaijan)
LMIC	low- and middle-income country	WHO	World Health Organization
MIS	management information system		

1

INTRODUCTION



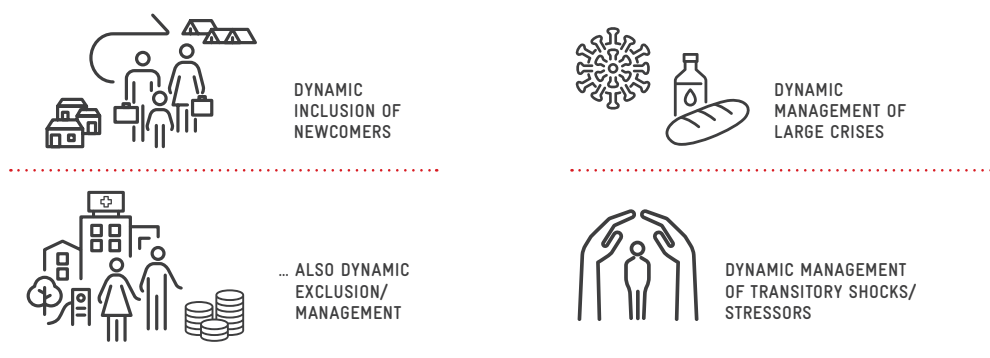
WHY IS THIS TOPIC IMPORTANT?

Recent years have seen a sharp increase in the number and coverage of social assistance¹ programmes worldwide and the broader institutionalisation of social protection systems (ILO, 2017; World Bank, 2018b). While many countries still face significant fragmentation, there is a growing trend towards integration along the various phases of the social assistance delivery chain, for both front and back-office functions (Rawlings, Murthy & Winder, 2013). **One notable example is the integration of social assistance information systems**, via integrated beneficiary registries and social registries (Leite *et al.*, 2017; Barca, 2017; Chirchir & Barca, 2020). At the same time, an increasing percentage of social assistance programmes worldwide are managed digitally, via what are commonly referred to as programme management information systems (MISs) (also known as beneficiary operations management systems, or BOMS, see Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming²).

The more we use information systems to support decision-making in, and the management of, social assistance programmes, the more the quality of the underlying data is important to enable us to reap the benefits of digitisation, while not exacerbating the risks. **One of the key dimensions of data quality³ is its currency, that is, the degree to which data are current** (up-to-date) and, thus, represent individual and households' real circumstances at the required point in time (Wang & Strong, 1996). This is critical for social assistance because it ensures that a programme is inclusive, adequate and cost effective:

- **Inclusiveness:** Given the dynamic nature of poverty and vulnerability, any social assistance programme that bases eligibility decisions on a static snapshot will likely face serious challenges in providing support to those most in need, especially when the snapshot is outdated (Barca, 2017). The same principle is true for categorical programmes, whereby the beneficiary status may be triggered by a life event, such as a child grant for a newborn.
- **Adequacy:** Targeting is not the only issue at stake. Up-to-date data can also ensure that benefits truly cater to household and individual needs in terms of the adequacy of provision. For example, the size of a transfer may vary depending on the changing number of household members, changing status (e.g. illness and disability) and the types of shocks faced, among other things. Similarly, the type of services and linkages across programmes also need dynamic updating.
- **Cost effectiveness:** Delivering benefits and services to the right people at the right time requires up-to-date information from beneficiaries.

FIGURE 1
POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY ARE DYNAMIC AND SO ARE POPULATIONS. A STATIC SNAPSHOT IS PROBLEMATIC!



¹ This paper focuses on non-contributory social protection schemes (social assistance) and will only touch on contributory schemes (social insurance) where relevant.

² Note that this publication was circulated and published after the core draft of this paper was finalised. Insights from it have been integrated where possible in the final stages of editing.

³ In this paper we do not touch on the other dimensions, which are also very important (e.g. completeness, accuracy, accessibility, etc.).

ENSURING DATA CURRENCY ALONG THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY CHAIN: KEY TOUCHPOINTS

For any social protection information system to be fully effective, it requires up-to-date data to ensure (Barca, 2017):

- The dynamic inclusion of newcomers (e.g. migrants, newborns, etc.) and reflect new household compositions (e.g. marriage, etc.)
- The dynamic inclusion and management of changed circumstances due to individual shocks/stressors (e.g. job loss, crop failure, disability, childbearing, old age) and covariate shocks (e.g. natural disasters, conflict)

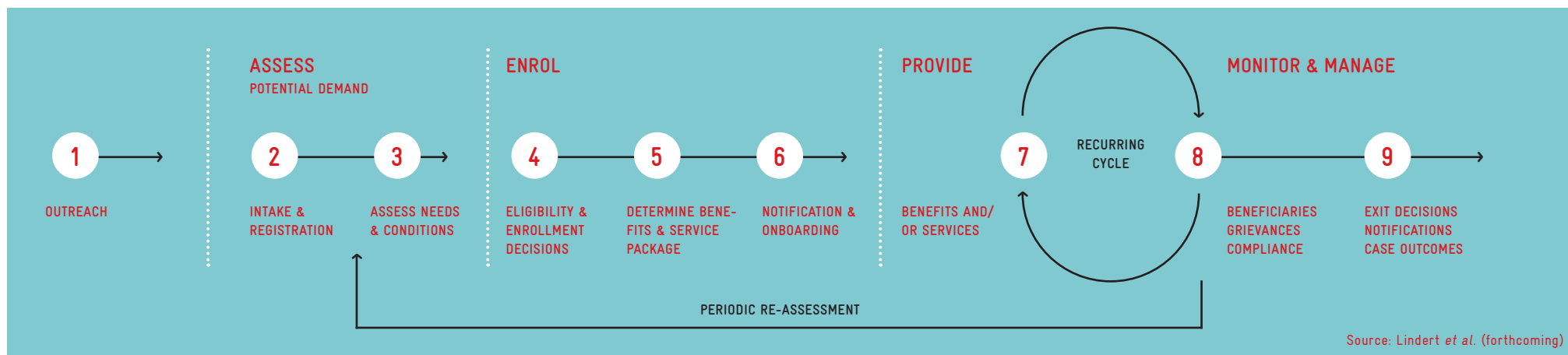


The principle of 'dynamic inclusion' holds that anyone who needs social assistance can access it at any time.

- The dynamic exclusion and management of those who are no longer eligible or have passed away

Along the social assistance delivery chain (Figure 2), there are various points in time when data for the delivery of social assistance is collected and updated, ultimately in a cyclical manner (Figure 3). Not all countries offer all of these (in fact, most offer a limited sub-set) or operationalise these in the same way. As this paper will show, choices depend on their history, capacity and user programmes, among other things.

FIGURE 2
THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE DELIVERY CHAIN



We call these data-collection/updating moments ‘touchpoints’⁴ and list them here for clarity, focusing on the data relevant aspects⁵ of each stage (Leite *et al.* 2017; Barca 2017; TRANSFORM, 2017; Smith, forthcoming; Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming; also see Figure 3).

- **Registration:** This is the process of collecting information on potential beneficiaries (individuals, households or families) considered for inclusion in social protection programmes. The information collected is used in subsequent stages to uniquely identify applicants and ascertain their eligibility according to each user programme’s eligibility criteria. Additionally, registration may require the verification of identity or validation of attributes through the collection of supporting documents, household visits or integration with other databases. Registration can be offered in the following ways (see Chapter 2):
 - › Via census surveys (with **re-registration** every few years)
 - › Continuously and on-demand, via permanent offices/capacity or online
 - › Periodically, via outreach efforts and home visits that prioritise areas with low uptake/high vulnerability or continuously rotate across a country
 - › Via the integration of existing databases (rarely the case)
- **Enrolment:** The process through which programmes convert an eligible applicant (assessed on the basis of data from registration) into a beneficiary. The personal data of eligible applicants can be collected at this stage (e.g. bank account or biometric details). In some cases, the phases of registration and enrolment overlap, often with the consequence that data on non-eligible applicants is not retained⁶. Moreover, by definition, the coverage of data on households enrolled vis-à-vis those registered is lower (see Figure 3). In some countries, not all applicants who are eligible according to data collected during registration are enrolled because of quotas and budget limitations. However, these potential beneficiaries are often retained on ‘waiting lists’ that are evaluated for inclusion when current beneficiaries exit the programme.

- **Ongoing updates of beneficiary information:** This involves ensuring data on beneficiaries is accurate and up-to-date, via ongoing case management, to: (a) support ongoing operations (e.g. change in address or bank account number); (b) trigger changes in entitlements where relevant; (c) link beneficiaries to required complementary services as circumstances change; and (d) exit from the programme when no longer eligible⁷. Updates of beneficiary data can be offered via any combination of the following (see Chapter 2):
 - › Continuously and on-demand, via permanent offices and capacity (e.g. at local programme offices, payment points, etc.), on the phone or online
 - › Periodically, via outreach efforts and home visits that prioritise areas with low uptake/high vulnerability or continuously rotate across a country
 - › Via (continuous) integration of existing databases
- **Planned and periodic recertification, or reassessment, of beneficiaries:** This refers to the periodic process adopted by some programmes to ensure that beneficiaries resubmit all the information needed to prove their ongoing eligibility (including triggering exit for those who no longer qualify). Recertification can be offered in the following ways (see Chapters 2 and 3):
 - › On-demand, via permanent offices and capacity or online
 - › Via census, outreach efforts and home visits
 - › Via (once-off) integration of existing databases

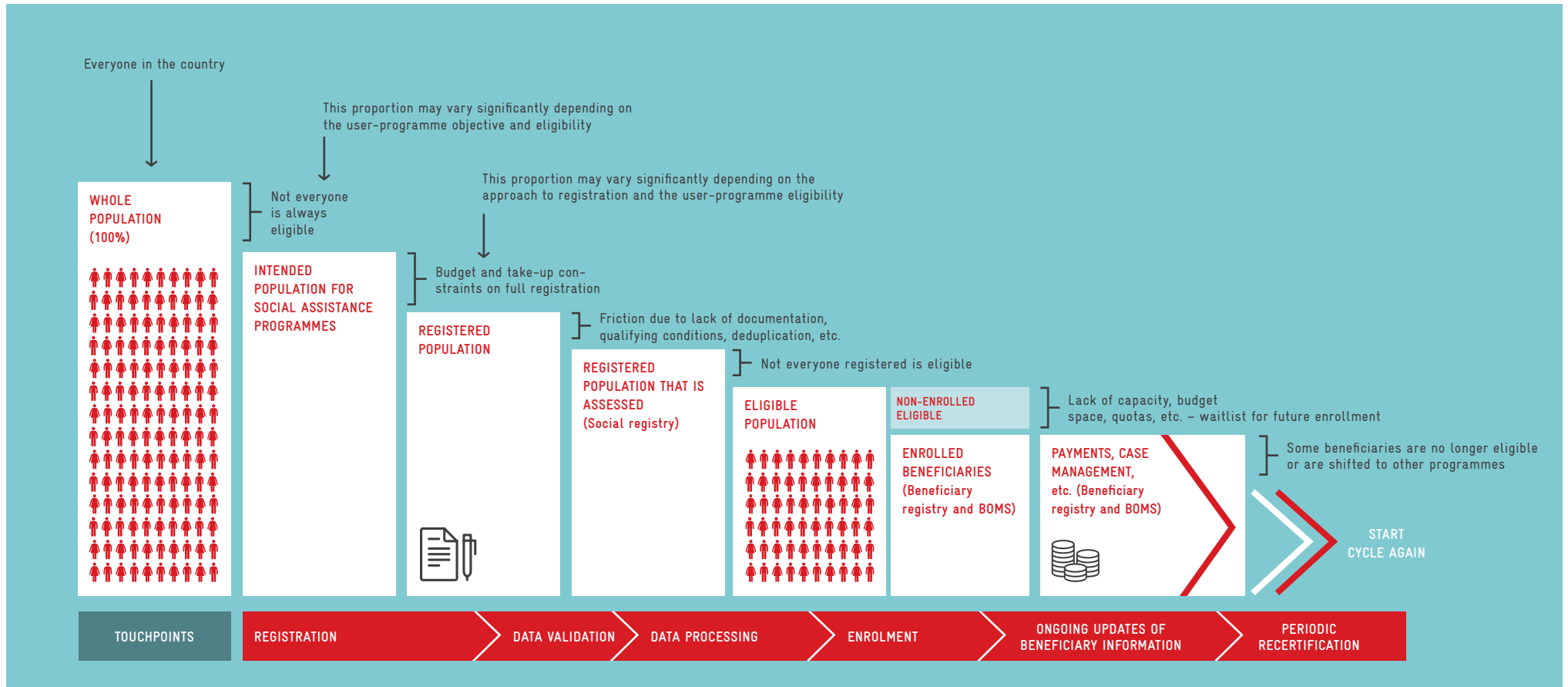
⁴ This is aligned with the World Bank *Sourcebook on the Foundations of Social Protection Delivery Systems* (Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming) and also conveys the sense of a person-government interaction.

⁵ Aspects that have implications for how up to date information is.

⁶ For example, this is often the case when community-based targeting is implemented.

⁷ Notably, some programmes operating on a fixed budget take advantage of exits to enrol new beneficiaries from a waiting list of registered individuals/households.

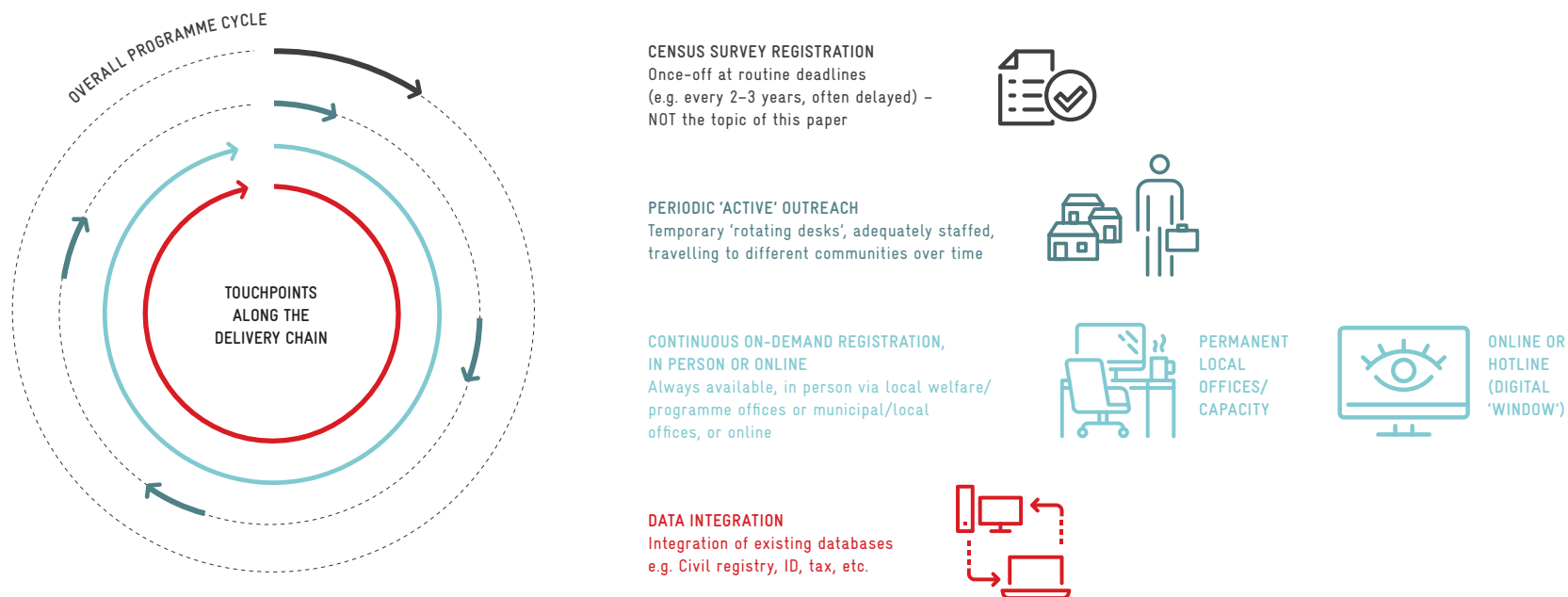
FIGURE 3
KEY TOUCHPOINTS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND UPDATING



Source: Adapted by authors from Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming)

Importantly, these key touchpoints operate as a cycle, with potential beneficiaries registered, assessed, enrolled if eligible and delivered benefits/services either for a set period of time or until their circumstances change (depending on programme rules).

FIGURE 4
DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO REGISTRATION AND UPDATING



What changes significantly across countries is the approach adopted for registration, enrolment, data updating and recertification (Figure 4), which affects the nature and length of the cycle. These differences depend on the nature of underlying programmes and the design and implementation choices. For example, a once-off census survey registration means that large cohorts of individuals, families or households enter the cycle at the same point in time. Continuous on-demand registration leads to each beneficiary being on a different 'cycle' depending on when they enter the system. This is the core subject of this paper.

FOCUS OF THIS PAPER

This paper does not focus on census-survey registration, but on:

- **Continuous and periodic registration approaches**, ideally guaranteeing dynamic inclusion (which may be offered in conjunction with registration efforts via ‘push’ or administrator-driven models⁸ such as census sweeps, but such efforts are not the core object of analysis)
- **Approaches for updating and recertifying beneficiary data**

First, **the benefits and limitations of census sweep approaches to registration (and data updating) are already well documented** (Barca, 2017; Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming). The **key drawback** in terms of data currency is that scheduled census sweeps are set far apart (e.g. two years in Costa Rica; three years in Colombia, Indonesia and Mexico), and these deadlines are often not met due to financial and logistical problems. This can lead to registries being updated every 5–8 years, with obvious implications for the inclusion of new cases (Barca, 2017; Leite *et al.*, 2017). Annex 1 documents the main differences between on-demand and census-sweep approaches, including the main advantages and disadvantages.

Of course, there are some good reasons why many countries choose to start from such census-survey ‘fixed-list systems’. One of these is to inform the initial building of national social registries serving multiple programmes, as they capture data on large percentages of the

population in one go (Leite *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, “many of the key ingredients for implementing dynamic inclusion systems remain elusive, including: (a) fiscal space and flexibility; (b) political will to remove those who no longer qualify to make room for those who do; (c) flexible eligibility criteria that can accommodate and signal changing circumstances; and (d) limited administrative capacity, including a permanent and widespread network of access points for citizen interface” (Leite *et al.*, 2017). We will come back to these issues in Chapter 3.

Second, **on-demand approaches to registration – and other options for ensuring continuous or periodic updating of data – have received less attention in the literature.** These approaches are often lumped together, without doing justice to the opportunities and challenges involved in the different options, where each may be best suited, and why (as will be discussed in Chapter 2). Yet there is a growing body of experience coming from countries that have been experimenting with such approaches, and others (many former Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] countries) that introduced on-demand approaches from the outset. This paper aims to address this gap⁹.

⁸ This is the language used in the forthcoming World Bank *Sourcebook on the Foundations of Social Protection Delivery Systems* (Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming).

⁹ The insights are based on a narrative review of the academic and grey literature on social assistance delivery systems in LMICs and on semi-structured key informant interviews (KII) conducted with practitioners (see Acknowledgments for list of experts interviewed).

2

ENSURING DYNAMIC INCLUSION AND UP-TO-DATE DATA: MAIN APPROACHES



In this chapter, we discuss the main approaches to ensuring the dynamic inclusion of potential beneficiaries via continuous or periodic registration, and dynamic updates – and potentially recertification – of beneficiary data. Building on the discussions in Chapter 1, the following main approaches currently being used by low- and middle-income country (LMICs) were identified during our research:

- **Permanent local offices/capacity:** Operationalised as deconcentrated¹⁰ social welfare offices (or programme-specific offices) and/or trained staff within local government offices (e.g. at municipal level)
- **Online, via a ‘digital window’:** Online application or data updating accessible by all citizens



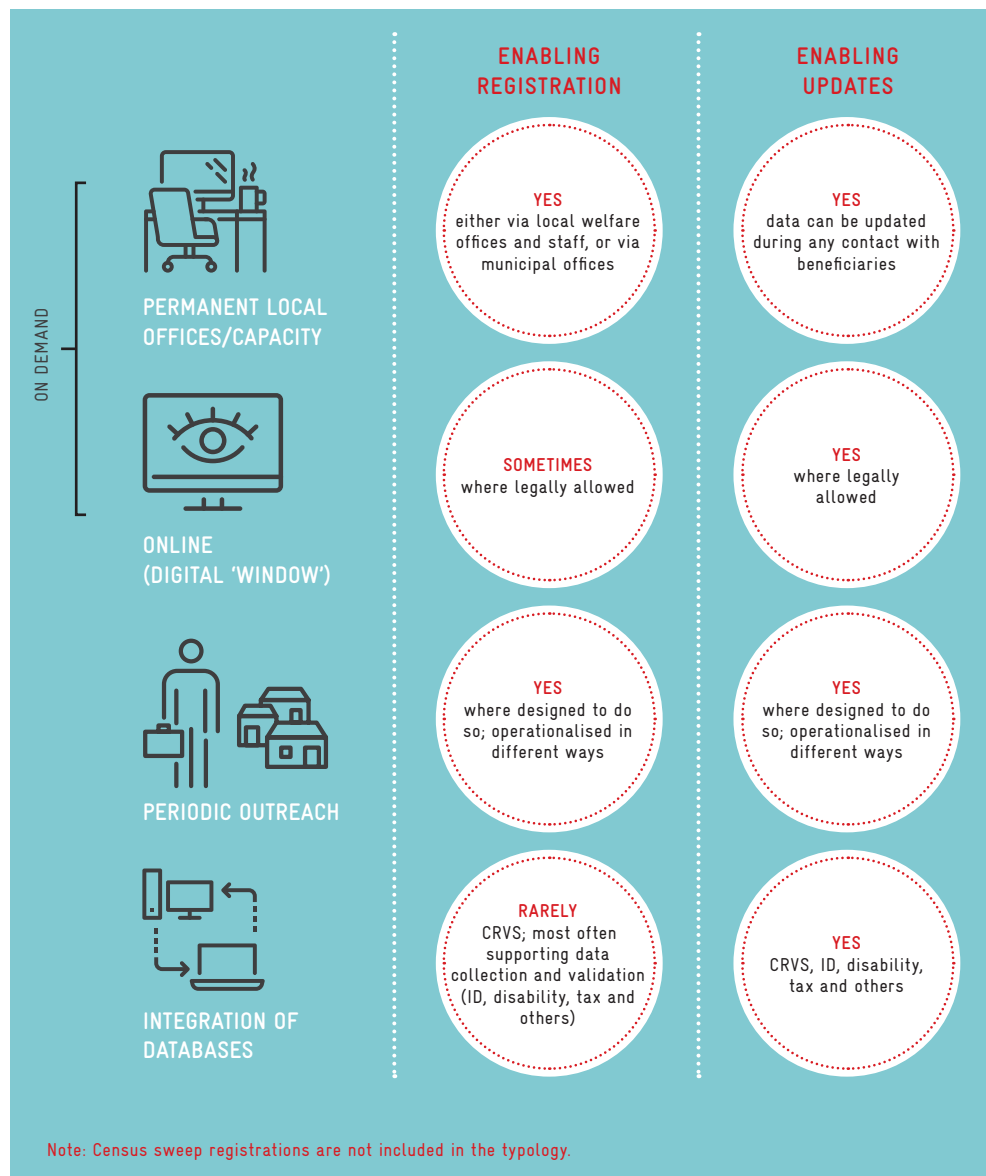
Importantly, only the first two can truly be classified as ‘on-demand’ approaches, enabling continuous registration where designed to do so (i.e. not limited by other factors, as are periodic application windows).

- **Periodic outreach:** Rotating ‘desks’ set up at local level and/or home visits that prioritise areas with low uptake/high vulnerability or continuously rotate around a country
- **Integration of existing databases:** Other government databases, most notably civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) and identity document (ID) data bases, but also tax registries, disability registries, land/asset registries, and bank data, as well as data from humanitarian partners

In this chapter, we describe how (on-demand) registration and/or data updating works for each of these approaches, building on specific country cases and identifying opportunities, challenges and prerequisites. Figure 5 shows the commonalities and differences between these approaches when it comes to enabling registration and/or updates. More details can be found in Annex 2.

¹⁰ Deconcentration is the process by which the agents of central government control are relocated and geographically dispersed. Unlike decentralization, there is no transfer of authority between levels of government in a deconcentration process.

FIGURE 5
TYPOLGY FOR THIS STUDY



It is worth stressing some aspects at this stage:

- **Census sweeps are purposely omitted** from the typology as they are not an option for dynamic inclusion/updates (see Chapter 1 and Annex 1).
- **Countries with mature social protection systems tend to operate several of these complementary approaches together** to maximise outreach efforts and uptake (see Chapter 4). This includes the use of census sweeps, which are generally scheduled two to five years apart.
- **The distinction between registration and updates (including recertification) is an important one, but often overlooked in the literature.** The same approach (sometimes called ‘citizen interface’) may be more or less relevant for each function. We discuss this further in the sections below.
- **The typology is framed in terms of the applicant/beneficiary ‘user journey’** – the experience people have when utilising/interacting with a service. The focus is, therefore, on front-office, and not back-office, functions. However, each of the options outlined above has different implications in terms of the back-office functions required. An important distinction between registration and updates/recertification that is worth stressing is that:
 - › The approaches related to **registration** could feed data (a) into one or several programme-specific registries (potentially aggregated nationally¹¹) or (b) directly into a national social registry that performs a ‘gateway function’ for a set of user programmes. The only difference between the two is the level of integration of front and back-office functions, affecting costs, capacity and user experiences.
 - › The typology approaches related to **updates/recertification** usually feed data into beneficiary registries directly. There is potential for this data to be subsequently fed back into the social registry, if these changes/updates are trusted (i.e. no suspicion of collusion, etc.)¹².

¹¹ This is the case in Mexico, for example.

¹² One exception is data from existing databases, often channelled via the social registry (or sometimes via an integrated beneficiary registry). This is because it is less common for individual programmes to have the institutional capacity to establish data sharing agreements with a wide array of government counterparts.

PERMANENT LOCAL OFFICES

Permanent local offices are the most common mechanism adopted by countries providing continuous, on-demand registration for social protection programmes. While they have been called different things in different countries depending on variations in their operationalisation (one-stop-shops, single window services, citizen service centres), they share a common principle of adopting a systemic approach to social protection outreach and registration, enabling user-triggered registration and data-updating (ILO, 2017). See Box 1 for variations on permanent local offices experimented with by countries.

BOX 1 TYPES OF PERMANENT LOCAL OFFICES

The organisation of permanent local offices can follow different degrees of coordination and integration. These include:

- ‘Single door’ or ‘one-stop-shop’ approaches, which involve grouping different agencies together, including social welfare/assistance, under the same roof
- ‘Single window’ approaches, which consist of empowering one institution to deliver services on behalf of different service providers
- ‘Single broker’ approaches, which consist of adding a coordination layer (a broker) to ease the user experience

Moreover, interactions with staff at permanent local offices can follow two key variations:

- User-triggered (the user travels to the centre)
- Staff/social worker-triggered (staff within local offices know their communities in depth and actively seek potential beneficiaries, in some case via scheduled appointments)

Source: GIZ (2016); Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming)

The following sections discuss two main approaches for continuous (on-demand) registration and data updating, which share many benefits, challenges and pre-requisites, but also present important differences: deconcentrated/local welfare or programme offices and municipal/local offices¹³. **No matter what the model, continuous training of staff at lower levels of administration is key. Moreover, true continuous and ‘on-demand’ registration is only available where local offices are ‘open’ for registration throughout the year**, rather than only at periodic intervals (as is the case in many LMICs).

It is also worth stressing that each and every contact with programme beneficiaries via permanent staff (e.g. during payment camps) can be leveraged to update their information.

Of course, this is only an option for data updating/recertification, not registration. For instance, Mexico’s Prospera programme used the first payment period of the year to ask beneficiaries if there had been any changes to their (pre-populated) basic information via a Unique Updating Form (Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming). Similarly, South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) staff take advantage of any contact with beneficiaries (in person or on the phone) to ask routine updating questions (KIIs).

¹³ Among these, there are also significant variations across countries in terms of the size and capillarity of the workforce supporting the implementation at local levels of implementation (see Chapter 3).

DECONCENTRATED LOCAL WELFARE OR PROGRAMME OFFICES

A popular approach to organising a network of permanent local offices is through deconcentrated local welfare offices, under a central welfare ministry/agency. **Deconcentrated local welfare offices are able to ensure that services are truly inclusive as they provide uninterrupted opportunities for beneficiary-led registration, as well as data updating.** Many examples of local welfare offices come from former CIS countries, with some notable examples from Mauritius and South Africa (Box 2).



BOX 2 DECONCENTRATED LOCAL WELFARE OFFICES

- In **Georgia**, the Social Services Agency (SSA) operates an extensive network of local and regional social welfare offices, which offer on-demand registration services. The application is followed by a home visit by the social welfare agent. These centres are conceived with a broad mandate, as they provide access to a range of social programmes, social worker support, and labour services.
- In **North Macedonia**, there are 30 Centres for Social Work, centrally managed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, catering to 84 municipalities in the country. There are talks of increasing these to 80. The Centres have two main functions: provision of social services and administration of social assistance programmes, which are supported through the Cash Benefits Information Management System (CBMIS)¹⁴. Centres offer on-demand registration to various schemes.
- In **Montenegro**, people apply for social assistance benefits at local Centres for Social Work, which have 22 branches countrywide, using a common on-demand application for different schemes (for means and asset testing).
- Individuals in **Mauritius** can register with the Social Registry of Mauritius through the 34 local offices of the Ministry of Social Security and National Solidarity. On-demand registration services are provided for all programmes, irrespective of whether they are administered by the Ministry.
- In **South Africa**, the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) operates 389 permanent local offices and 1,163 'service points' (mobile or fixed infrastructure, where registration, enrolment and updating services are rendered on a rotating basis according to a schedule, see later in this chapter) throughout the country.

Sources: HelpAge International & Development Pathways (2011); Leite *et al.* (2017); Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming); Barca (2020); KIIs

¹⁴ This performs integrated social registry and BOMS functions.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PREREQUISITES

One of the main advantages of investing in deconcentrated local welfare offices is that it builds permanent administrative capacity in delivering social protection. It ensures that qualified staff with sectoral knowledge are recruited and that their capacities are augmented over time. The permanent human touchpoint provides a platform for integrated case management across social protection functions, from registration through to grievance redress and beyond. More generally, any interaction with users via permanent capacity is an opportunity to update and correct existing information. **However, this type of human touchpoint can be a double-edged sword, if the institution does not enjoy public trust.** For instance, 33% of those not registering in the social registry in Georgia believed that the evaluation of their application would not be carried out properly (UNICEF & USAID, 2011).

The prejudices and opinions held by inadequately trained social welfare agents can also make the registration process stigmatising and exacerbate low uptake. For instance, a study by Hossain (2011) in the Naogaon District of Bangladesh found that 92% of Adivasis (ethnic minorities) were eligible for social protection schemes, but only 8% were recipients due to widespread discrimination against Adivasis at the local level. A similar study on low uptake in Moldova reported equivalent problems for Roma minorities, as well as the active discouraging of registration across applicant categories due to social assistant prejudices and misinterpretations of the system (Barca, Carraro & Sinchetru, 2010).

This model can also be more challenging to implement in large, populous countries, as a reasonably dense network of deconcentrated offices may become costly to achieve. This capacity challenge is further discussed in Chapter 3. **In any case, on-demand systems relying solely on permanent offices (with no complementary efforts) face significant challenges in guaranteeing access to vulnerable groups,** because of the multiple exclusionary forces they specifically face. This is also discussed in detail in Chapter 3.



MUNICIPAL/LOCAL OFFICES

This option enables registration and updates for social assistance programmes via trained staff within local/municipal offices. It is led and implemented by local governments, and is common in countries with relatively high levels of decentralisation. The role of the central government and social welfare ministry/agency is limited to creating a common framework and providing adequate training to front-office municipal staff. This forms the basis of a formalised partnership/collaboration agreement between the central agency and the local government. The centres of local government operate the front office autonomously, whereas back-office functions (such as data management) are managed centrally.

Similar to deconcentrated local welfare offices, this approach allows for continuous registration and data updating, triggered by (potential) beneficiaries. This option has been commonly implemented at scale in Latin America, with some countries using the approach to enable updates for data originally collected using push mechanisms such as census sweeps (e.g. Chile, see Box 3). **In practice, the approach can be operationalised in different ways.** For example, in some cases administrative responsibilities are dispersed across several levels of implementation (e.g. Cambodia, Indonesia). It can also be organised as a ‘one-stop-shop’ (see Box 1), bringing together multi-sectoral personnel of government authorities (and in some cases non-governmental institutions) under one roof (e.g. Mongolia) (see Box 3).

BOX 3 MUNICIPAL/LOCAL OFFICES

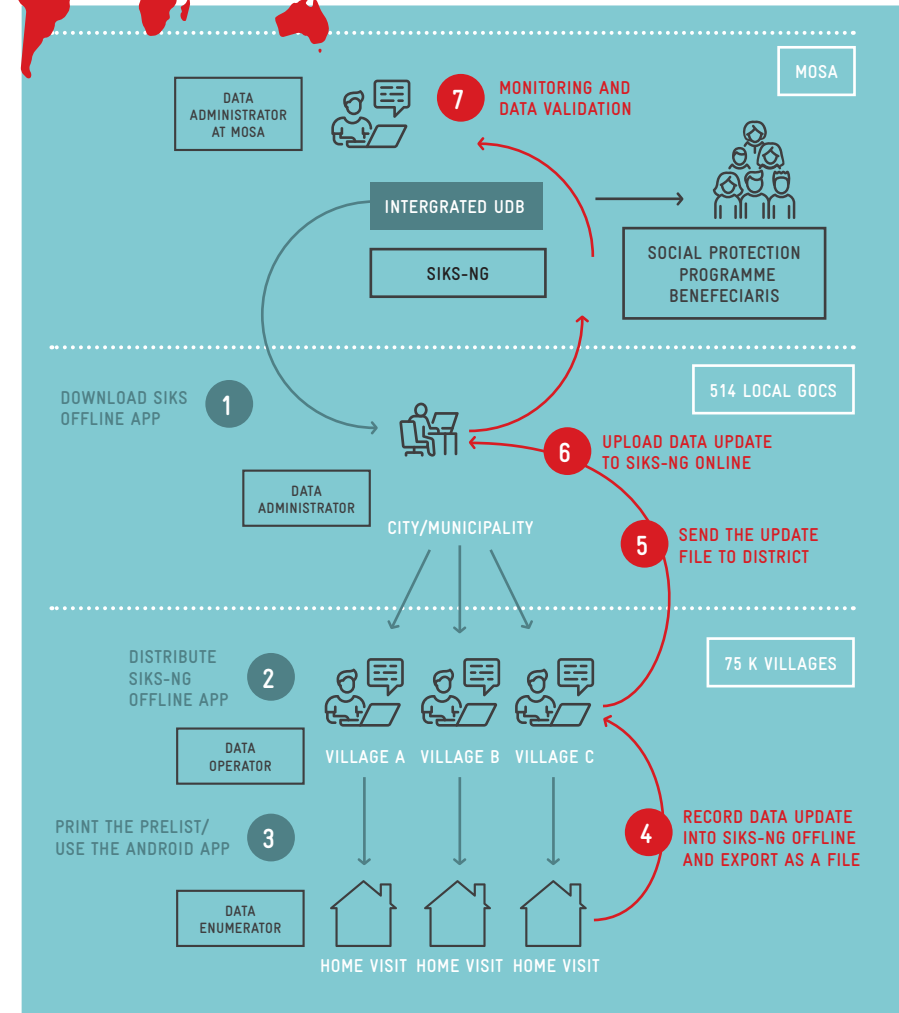
- **Brazil's** 5,570 municipalities are at the forefront in the management of the Cadastro Único social registry. The municipalities collect and update data using a combination of agents: (a) fixed service stations called Centros de Referência de Assistência Social (Social Assistance Reference Centres); (b) home visits to families; and (c) mobile service stations, including registration task forces. The municipalities carry out a broad set of activities, including identification of low-income areas, registration, data collection, data updating, verification, training, and outreach. They provide the team and equipment, whereas the federal agent provides the software, data bank and broader digital infrastructure. The Ministry of Social Development provides regulation, training, and interoperability between Cadastro Unico and other government databases, monitoring financing to local governments and payments to the federal payment agent. By law, registered information must be updated (recertified) every 24 months (from the date of last interview) or whenever there is a change in the family's composition, address or socioeconomic conditions. Every year, Cadastro Único manages some 14.4 million updates and/or new entries, equivalent to 25% of the national population.
- In **Colombia**, the System of Identification of Social Program Beneficiaries (SISBEN) social registry produces a household vulnerability index, based on data from a census sweep conducted every three years¹⁵, which is used to identify the beneficiaries of social assistance programmes. The country's 1,100 municipalities are responsible for the management of SISBEN in their territories. Specifically, they are responsible for processing new applications and updating existing beneficiaries' data¹⁶ on a rolling basis. Citizens can travel to municipal centres to request a home visit at any time, which is successively arranged (National Planning Department, n.d.).

¹⁵ As is often the case with census sweeps, this periodicity has not been respected in practice. As discussed in Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming), SISBEN, in its first version (SISBEN I), started being implemented in 1995. The implementation of SISBEN II started in 2005 (10 years after SISBEN I), and SISBEN III started being applied in 2011. SISBEN is currently going through its fourth round of updates.

¹⁶ For example, correcting names, adding or removing household members, or requesting a new assessment of a household's vulnerability.



- Cambodia** has piloted and is now scaling up a method for on-demand registration to complement the three-yearly census sweep that supports IDPoor, the country's social registry. The household – or the village representative on behalf of the household – can request the Commune Council to re-assess a household's poverty status. If the request is approved by the Council during its monthly meeting, the household is administered the IDPoor questionnaire by the Commune Coordination Team. The Commune Council takes the final decision to update the household's poverty status in its next monthly meeting. The training, technical support, implementation and process monitoring are done at the provincial and district levels.
- In **Mongolia**, one-stop-shops – scaled up nationwide since 2011¹⁷ – deliver civil registration services, social protection and employment counselling services, as well as notary and banking services, at the provincial (*aimag*) and district (*soum*) levels. Officers working in the one-stop-shops come from different types of organisations: local government, deconcentrated divisions of centralised authorities, and private enterprises. One-stop-shops are placed under the responsibility of heads of governor's offices, who can decide to include complementary lines of services in one-stop-shops according to local needs.
- In **Indonesia**, a new system – the Social Welfare Information System-Next Generation (SIKS-NG) – is being developed for continuous registration in the Unified Database, which is the country's social registry. A recent Decree by the Minister of Social Affairs (MoSA) states that the Unified Database can be updated any time by local government (see workflow image). Data should be sent twice a year (in May and November) to the central level Unified Database (meaning newly eligible households could then be enrolled into national social protection programmes). It is important to note this is de-facto periodic, not continuous, registration.



Sources: ILO (2015c); Bergthaller (2018); Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming)

¹⁷ Recent evidence, however, points to the lack of long-term sustainability of the model.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PREREQUISITES

This approach has similar opportunities, challenges and prerequisites as deconcentrated local welfare offices. The main difference is that, usually, these offices are closer to – and, therefore, more accessible for – citizens than a handful of district social welfare offices scattered across a country. On the other hand, they offer less central control over the registration process, potentially leading to lower quality services to citizens. For example, in the Kyrgyz Republic, the government has recently decided to roll back a system of municipal trained staff performing social welfare functions, transferring responsibility back to district offices to enhance control and coordination.

DIGITAL WINDOW

A major challenge faced by vulnerable applicants in accessing social protection is navigating the complex application process, which is often delivered by weak, slow and unaccountable administrative structures (Kidd, 2014). Information technology has the potential to improve uptake and dynamic inclusion by streamlining registration and data updating. For example, high income countries typically provide for electronic applications, either through personal devices or e-government kiosks. **Several LMICs have started experimenting with digital windows for the registration and updating of data,** as Box 4 shows.

However, it is more common for countries to use digital windows to complement other registration approaches, or as a tool to enable continuous updates for beneficiaries¹⁸.

Most often, this is because of legal constraints, especially in contexts with no universal digital ID for authentication (in other words, it is difficult for governments to trust digital registration/updating in the absence of a strong system for digital identification).

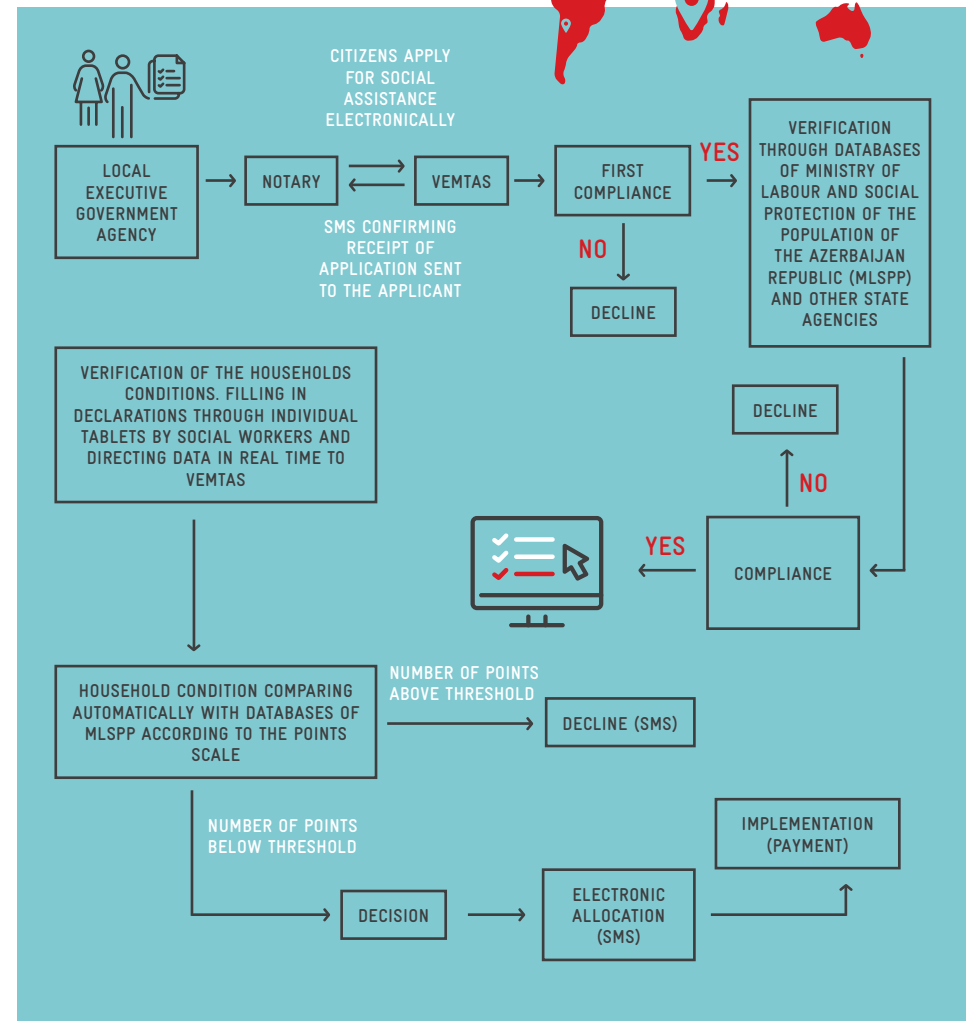


¹⁸ Chile's online application enables current beneficiaries to specify changes to their address, household composition, family ties, housing characteristics, education, health and occupation/income (MDS & World Bank, 2018).



BOX 4 DIGITAL WINDOWS

- In **Azerbaijan**, the Unified Electronic Application and Awarding Sub-system (VEMTAS) accepts applications continuously online as part of the broader Transparency Azerbaijan agenda, which aims to reduce petty corruption in public services (see website of International Social Security Association)¹⁹. VEMTAS replaces the previous process of assigning social assistance, which involved up to seven different agents, resulting in corruption and lack of transparency. The new system is completely paperless, as the system collects data from 21 different entities, including the Ministry of Taxes, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Applicants can access the VEMTAS either on personal communication devices, through special e-government info kiosks, or at post offices. Applicants are informed via SMS of the success of their application within 15 days and, once approved, social assistance is provided for 2 years. The system is not fully electronic, however, intermittent verification is completed through a home visit by the social agent (see Figure 5).
- In **Chile**, an online interface called Mi Registro Social de Hogares enables citizens in possession of a unique ID to register within the social registry and update their information (they can only do this after a once-off authentication at the local municipality to retrieve their 'unique key' to access government e-services). The same interface is adopted by municipal workers, where citizens can also apply on-demand and update their information, streamlining their workload.
- Turkey, Uzbekistan and South Africa** are also looking into options to enable registration (or at least part of the data collection process) via digital windows.



Sources: Huseynov (n.d.); MDS & World Bank (2018); KII's

¹⁹ See <https://ww1.issa.int/gp/173529>

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PREREQUISITES

A digital citizen interface can be an asset in eliminating petty corruption at the point of registration, accelerating bureaucratic processes and reducing administrative costs. Other advantages of digital windows include their (theoretical) ubiquitous accessibility (when an Internet connection is available and conditional on the caveats below) **and the privacy they offer for applicants** (no public queues, etc.).

However, the potential for online registration and updates is contingent on the availability of the Internet and mobile phone network penetration in a country. For instance, Azerbaijan has wireless penetration of over 100%, making a digital approach more viable (World Bank, 2014) and Internet penetration in Chile is at 82% (World Bank, 2019). While Internet penetration is gradually rising in LMICs, the current scale is inadequate to build inclusive registration systems, if these are not complemented by other approaches.

Even with rising Internet connectivity, vulnerable groups are often late adopters of technology, and face challenges in terms of illiteracy and exclusion. For example, aggregate statistics in Chile show that citizens still prefer to register and update their information via physical municipal offices (68.9% in 2017; MDS & World Bank, 2018), rather than online. This means that digital windows that are not complemented by other registration and updating approaches could pose a serious challenge in terms of guaranteeing inclusion (especially for the elderly, the disabled and those who are illiterate). In Estonia, digital literacy training was offered to all citizens in order to support the e-government platform roll-out and significant budget funds have been put towards outreach and communication efforts over the years²⁰. Overall, countries with higher rates of literacy and digital literacy are better placed for such an approach.

In some countries, a digital window may necessitate revisions in laws and regulations. For instance, South Africa has been exploring the possibility of introducing a digital window, but is constrained by legislation which mandates that applications be made in the presence of an SASSA official. The issue in the background is the need for the authentication of an individual's identity, which is potentially solvable via digital IDs. **In other contexts, digital windows**

may be constrained by the lack of a universal digital ID that can be used as a means to authenticate online users²¹ (Barca, Makin, & Bamezai, unpublished).

More broadly, digital windows require some alternate form of ensuring accountability and verifying information provided. This has been operationalised via spot-checks, blanket home visits to all those deemed eligible, and/or integration with existing data sources (discussed later in this chapter).

ONGOING/PERIODIC 'ACTIVE' OUTREACH

In countries that lack the fiscal and administrative capacity to institute accountable permanent structures – or that want to complement permanent on-demand registration – periodic outreach provides intermittent opportunities for proactive registration and updating. While this approach is not continuous or 'on-demand' by definition, it ensures that systems are at least partially dynamic, while also catering to the needs of hard-to-reach communities.

In practice, 'active' outreach is operationalised as temporary 'rotating desks', adequately staffed, travelling to different communities throughout the year. Where the population is adequately warned, they can apply or update their information at these desks at the designated time. The periodicity with which this is done and underlying approach varies widely – although communities are often prioritised based on their level of remoteness and vulnerability (e.g. see Box 5). Some countries also prioritise frequent registrations in micro-areas (identified using geo-spatial information) that are more prone to shocks and stressors that often trigger frequent changes in household conditions.

²⁰ Private discussion with Anneli Kiirats, Estonian E-Governance Academy. For example, registration for ID in Estonia is still not 100%, largely because of digital literacy barriers.

²¹ There are other options for secure identification, but these are second best.



BOX 5 PERIODIC 'ACTIVE' OUTREACH

- In **South Africa**, the Integrated Community Registration Outreach Programme (ICROP) was introduced in 2007 to facilitate improved access to a basket of basic integrated services. ICROP was conceptualised to remove several barriers to accessing social protection programmes, including distance and cost of accessing SASSA offices, poor access to information on social grants at the local level, lack of integration of services, and lack of documentation needed to apply for social grants. ICROP facilitates mobile registration at any designated point using a self-sufficient team of six members: as long as there is an SASSA official at the designated point, the application can be processed and completed, easing travel burdens especially for vulnerable groups. Between 2007 and 2013, ICROP served over 730 wards and completed more than 320,000 applications for children to access the Child Support Grant. An evaluation of ICROP by UNICEF showed that between 2008 and 2012 ICROP priority districts showed a 58% decrease in exclusion, while non-priority districts saw a reduction of 48%.
- **Pakistan** is also in the process of developing a similar approach following challenges with its pilot of a fully on-demand registration system.
- Four mountainous councils of **Lesotho** have piloted periodic 'service days' to bring hard to reach services and service providers to the community's doorstep. The service days were organised by one-stop-shops managed by Community Council staff. The service days also provided information to beneficiaries to improve the up-take of services at more permanent structures, such as one-stop-shops.
- In **Zambia**, a similar mechanism is used by the Social Cash Transfer Scheme, whereby potentially eligible households are required to come to designated points at specific times and locations with required documents to formally register their interest in the programme. The registration is followed by a community meeting to ensure that no household is left behind.
- **Mexico's** Sistema de Focalización de Desarrollo (SIFODE) social registry prioritises frequent registration in areas with a high 'social gap' index, a high degree of marginalisation and/or indigenous populations.
- **Brazil** has been developing innovative strategies for 'Busca Ativa' (active search) in several vulnerable population categories (e.g. indigenous people, river-communities in the Amazon, street children, etc.), with specific guidelines²² for how to reach each via active outreach.

Sources: Department of Social Development, SASSA & UNICEF (2016); ILO (2015a); ILO (2017); KIIs

22 See Ministry website (<https://www.gov.br/cidadania/pt-br>) for details in Portuguese.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PREREQUISITES

One of the shortcomings of permanent local offices, especially in geographically large/diverse²³ countries, is that distance to the office can become a barrier to on-demand registration. Temporary 'rotating desks', which are less costly to deploy than permanent structures, can be a great asset in countering this challenge. This approach constitutes:

- A cost-saving alternative in contexts where there is little capacity to institute deconcentrated offices (although it can still exclude beneficiaries in the intermittent periods, with sufficient periodicity, it addresses the last mile service delivery problem on an ad-hoc basis)
- A strong complement to on-demand registration, especially for hard-to-reach communities and groups

The key to the effectiveness of this approach is periodicity and predictability. It requires frequent and predictable rotation to ensure inclusiveness. For instance, the mobile registration for the Social Cash Transfer Scheme in Zambia is preceded by a series of outreach activities by community volunteers, and households are appraised of the registration date and process in advance.

²³ The jungles of Brazil or the mountainous areas of Pakistan are two examples.

INTEGRATION OF EXISTING DATABASES

Existing administrative databases offer vast potential to support or trigger continuous registration, as well as ensure data updates. This is beyond the validation, verification and authentication functions they already perform in many countries (Barca, 2017), which are not discussed in this paper. **Data exchange between databases/programmes can be operationalised either via interoperability (whereby access to data can be continuous) or other ad-hoc data sharing agreements** (e.g. batch sharing via email, CDs, USBs, etc.). This distinction – which depends on a wide array of country-specific factors – obviously affects the ease and periodicity of access to the data. **However, integration can only be truly and fully achieved in contexts where a unique identifier (such as a national ID) is ubiquitous.** Workarounds do exist (e.g. algorithmic data matches), but they are not perfect (Barca, 2017; Leite *et al.*, 2017; Barca *et al.*, unpublished). Below, we discuss three variants on this approach.

CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS AND ID²⁴

A well-functioning civil registration or robust up-to-date national identification system can serve as a platform for registration in the case of lifecycle-linked social transfers (such as child grants or old age social pensions). The real potential of this approach lies in designing proactive benefit systems, i.e. systems that automatically initiate registration and subsequent enrolment, without expecting citizens to proactively apply. However, there are few instances of countries fully adopting this model, especially in LMICs (see case of Mongolia in Box 6). The reasons why are discussed below.

Of course, CRVS and ID data could also be usefully to inform registration efforts, without automatically triggering registration or enrolment. Examples from Uganda, Argentina, Turkey and Chile are provided in Box 6. **An increasingly common application of CRVS data in LMICs with robust systems entails ensuring that beneficiaries exit the system in the event of death – via a data update.** Examples abound, including the ones in Box 6. Of course, CRVS data could similarly be used to update other information contained in existing registries (e.g. household composition in the case of migration or marriage, etc.).

²⁴ We are not focusing on verification, validation and authentication functions here, see World Bank (2018b) for more details on this.



BOX 6 INTEGRATION OF CRVS AND ID DATABASES

Triggering registration:

- Between 2012 and 2016, **Mongolia** implemented a universal child benefit programme called the Universal Child Money Programme, which initiated proactive benefits. All children were automatically enrolled in the programme as soon as they were recorded at the Civil Registration Department of State Registration, General Office, without any additional registration demands on the beneficiary. The integration also ensured that payments were discontinued once children reached 18 years of age. The Programme transferred a monthly allowance of Mongolian Tughrig 20,000 (around USD 10), and the proactive enrolment led to nearly 100% of children aged 0–17 years receiving this benefit in 2015. In addition to the monthly benefit, a range of once-off birth entitlements in some former CIS countries are triggered via civil registration.

Informing registration:

- In **Uganda**, the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) social pension for the elderly periodically requests data from the National Identification and Registration Authority, when there is fiscal space to incorporate new caseloads into the programme. National Identification and Registration Authority data is brought to the field and validated alongside communities (e.g. to remove those who have died). The clean data is then used to trigger payments to all those who qualify.

- In **Argentina**, data from the Administración Nacional de la Seguridad Social (ANSES) registry is used to create potential beneficiary lists for the Universal Child Insurance (Asignación Universal por Hijo – AUH), a semi-conditional cash transfer programme aimed at individuals under 18 years of age.
- In **Turkey** and **Chile**, CRVS and ID data are used to a lesser extent by extracting beneficiary information held in these databases to support the registration process. In fact, the ID is used as a unique identifier to integrate several other databases, drastically reducing the information needs at the time of registration (see the next section).

Triggering programme exit (via update):

- **Brazil's** Bolsa Familia cross-verifies beneficiaries against the national death registry. Similarly, in **South Africa**, death registrations maintained within the Home Affairs population database are cross-checked with the SASSA Legacy Information Management System (SOCPEN) data three times a month, to remove recipients who have passed away.
- In **Mexico**, the Pension for the Elderly programme cross-references its registry every bimester against civil registration records in the National Population Registry office to verify if any of the beneficiaries have been reported as deceased.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PREREQUISITES

When discussing the opportunities, challenges and pre-requisites of this approach it is worth distinguishing between the different functions discussed above:

- **Proactive registration** can be an effective mechanism to **reduce non-uptake of programmes and ensure inclusiveness**. However, a major qualification is that its **utility is restricted to universal individual entitlements**. The amount of information consolidated based on virtual integration is sufficient to determine eligibility for event- or age-specific universal social assistance programmes (e.g. universal child grants and social pensions), but not for poverty targeted programmes (Barca, 2017). A separate data collection mechanism is needed to meet the information needs of poverty-targeted programmes. Furthermore, this approach is not tenable in the case of household-level entitlements as most population registers do not uniquely identify households. Moreover, separate data collection may be needed anyway to finalise enrolment (e.g. bank account details, etc.).
- The use of **CRVS or ID data to inform registration can lower data collection costs and help to guarantee higher quality/accurate data**.
- The use of this data to **trigger updates to benefits/services and potential exit** (in case of death, migration, etc.) makes programmes **more responsive and can also significantly save costs**.

A crucial prerequisite to all of these functions is a robust civil registration system. For instance, SOCPEN's approach in South Africa to remove deceased beneficiaries from the system through virtual integration is effective because of ubiquitous death registration (96%+), mandated by law²⁵. Similarly, in Mongolia where the Child Money Programme is implemented, birth registration is 99% across income groups (UNICEF, n.d.).

However, many LMICs lack high levels of civil registration. For instance, the aggregate birth registration rates in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia were 43% and 60%, respectively (UNICEF, n.d.). The extent of death registration is even poorer; only 14 of 75 low- and middle-income countries report figures on death registration to the World Health Organization (World Bank & WHO, 2014), with median death registration rates ranging from 5% in Sudan to close to complete coverage (over 95%) in post-Soviet states such as Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine (Gelb & Diafosi, 2015).

Another prerequisite is a reliable national ID that is linked to the CRVS system and enables a unique identifier to link different data sources. This is not an onerous requirement in middle income countries that are closer to the goal of legal identity for all, but it is for least developed countries (LDCs) and low-income countries (LICs): e.g. 34% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa do not have a legal form of identification (World Bank, 2018b). The ID gap widens for marginalised groups such as women, the elderly and the poorest, who are usually the target recipients of social assistance (World Bank, 2018c). Furthermore, many countries do not issue ID at birth resulting in fragmented CRVS and ID systems, with implications for interoperability.

²⁵ People need to be registered in order to authorise burial.

OTHER GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE DATABASES

Many countries are increasingly experimenting with data sharing arrangements across other administrative databases beyond the civil registry. Typically seen in countries with centralised social registries at advanced stages of implementation, this includes interoperability and/or data sharing in relation to data on tax, land, social security, disability, education, health, etc. (Box 7 provides several examples).

This approach can:

- **Reduce data demands placed on potential beneficiaries, complementing other registration approaches:** Furthermore, as with CRVS data, it can be employed to cross-check beneficiary reported data at the point of registration (Thailand provides a good example, see Box 7).
- **Play a role in ensuring records are up-to-date and verified:** Depending on the degree of interoperability and memorandums of understanding across government agencies, cross-checks can be set up on a continuous or periodic basis (for verification), or through infrequent 'batch matches' (for data audits and quality control). **This would be particularly helpful to 'track' positive changes to household conditions for poverty-targeted programmes where these affect eligibility**, as these are least likely to be reported by beneficiaries (see Chapter 3).

In countries at advanced levels of implementation, this approach could also enhance the responsiveness of social protection to life cycle risks (e.g. health centre notifies when a woman is pregnant and registration for a maternal health programme is triggered while the child is in-utero, increasing impact). **However, there is no evidence of the direct triggering of benefits via such data integration**, i.e. additional data collection is always required. One exception could be posed by disability registries, which could be used to proactively register and enrol disabled populations for universal disability grants. However, we do not have any evidence in this regard.



BOX 7 DATA SHARING ACROSS GOVERNMENT DATABASES

- **Estonia** has designed a data exchange layer for a whole-of-government approach called X-Road. The objective is to allow citizens, businesses and government entities to securely exchange data and access information maintained in various agencies' databases over the Internet, based on the principle that the State shall not request from citizens and businesses any data that are already in its possession. These principles also govern registration for social assistance programmes.
- In **Thailand**, the Universal Coverage Scheme (UCS) provides universal health insurance to citizens not covered by the two existing insurance schemes, i.e. the Social Security Scheme for private sector employees, and the Civil Servant Medical Benefit Scheme (CSMBS) for government employees and government retirees. Once potential beneficiaries register/apply, data from the national population database maintained by the Ministry of Interior is cross-checked against the two health insurance registries – using the country's 13-digit national ID number as a unique ID – removing individuals who already benefit from other schemes.
- **Brazil's** Cadastro Unico runs periodic cross-checks with other information systems, such as the labour information system, the pension system, and the tax system.
- **Georgia's** Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) Social Registry has some interoperability with other administrative systems (tax revenue system, land cadastre, public property cadastre, utilities agency, vehicles registry in the Ministry of Internal Affairs), as well as with user programmes and municipalities.



- **North Macedonia's** Cash Benefits Information Management System (CBMIS) Social Registry has some interoperability via web-services with the Office of Management of Registries of Births, Marriages, Deaths; National Employment Agency; Agency for Real Estate Cadastre; Pension and Disability Insurance Fund and others.
- **Mauritius'** Social Registry Mauritius (SRM) has some interoperability and is linked with the Mauritius National Identity System (MNIS) for authentication, as well as with other systems run by Ministry of Social Security (MSS) National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, including the National Pensions Fund (NPF) for income verification and with the Benefits System.
- **Colombia's** SISBEN Social Registry is linked to the Integrated System of Health Insurance and the Integrated Contribution System of Social Security, among other things.
- **Montenegro's** Social Welfare Information System (SWIS) Social Registry has some automated and semi-automated interoperability with numerous administrative systems, including the population registry (for ID), tax system (public revenue office), pensions, health system, employment, Ministry of Interior (vehicles), real estate cadastre (property), etc.
- **Chile and Turkey** also offer considerable interoperability with other government databases, with data used for various purposes: (a) complementing data collection efforts at the registration phase, (b) verifying/validating/authenticating applications alongside home visits, and (c) updating data on an ongoing basis:
- **Turkey's** Integrated Social Assistance System (ISAS) and associated social registry is integrated with 24 institutions online via 111 web services. The national ID number and personal identification number (PIN) provide two-factor authentication and are key for linking across these systems. Examples of information systems that are linked to ISAS include the beneficiary registries of various programmes, population and citizenship registry, household registry, social security, revenues administration, vehicles, land registry, farmer registration, health control information, education (school attendance, grade transition, etc.), and employment agency. In practice, ISAS updates information every 45 days²⁶ through the web services procedure. Moreover, before calculating each payroll, data from all social assistance beneficiaries is updated.
- **Chile's** Registro Social de Hogares social registry is part of the Integrated Social Information System (SIIS), which includes the Registro Social de Hogares; an Integrated Beneficiary Registry (RIB); and monthly data exchange via national ID with numerous other information systems including 43 state institutions (for tax, social security, unemployment insurance, pensions, health insurance, educational status, property ownership, vehicles ownership, etc.), as well as with the country's geographic information system (GIS).

²⁶ This timing choice was made not to overburden linked systems.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PREREQUISITES

This approach provides significant opportunities to reduce data collection and updating costs for social protection programmes. For example, Turkey and Chile feed large amounts of existing data into their social registries, reducing costs and decreasing the burden on interviewees (shorter interviews), and reducing duplication of efforts (Box 7). **Yet the utility of this kind of updating is based on the premise that each individual database meets a certain quality threshold** (Bartholo, Mostafa & Guerreiro Osorio, 2018). With high-quality databases, this approach can improve data quality through cross-checks and de-duplication. On the other hand, unreliable data (or data collection processes) within individual databases can lead to sub-optimal outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial that countries following this approach provide clear management standards, as well as recourse to affected citizens to easily correct information and avoid negative impacts. **Another key limitation of this approach is that it tends to focus on people who are already known to the system because they are already in a database**, for example, on account of receiving another benefit, receiving social services, or being registered with the local employment office (Eurofound, 2015).

There are also important risks related to data privacy that need explicit mitigation. In other words, this approach needs legal frameworks that regulate data exchange between different institutions. Currently, this is a condition not easily met by LMICs: excluding Europe, less than 30% of all countries across all regions have adopted comprehensive data protection legislation (Web Foundation, 2017). The legal framework for data protection must evolve to meet certain minimum requirements to overcome this challenge (Sepúlveda Carmona, 2018). For example, virtual data integration should be expressly authorized by law and further regulated by a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between agencies; the type of information disclosed, conditions of disclosure, and circumstances of disclosure and participating agencies must be clearly prescribed; data sharing must be proportional to the end goals, be non-discriminatory and must be contingent upon informed consent; and the data-sharing process must be secure and have sufficient in-built accountability measures to monitor any adverse impacts.

Underlying this approach is the need for a harmonised understanding of information across agencies. This entails the building of common data dictionaries (with common definitions of variables, reference units, and time reference periods), metadata, thesaurus, taxonomies, ontologies, and service registers etc. Interoperability also requires that some sort of unique identifier(s) are included in all information systems, such that data on individuals can be properly matched across systems (Leite *et al.*, 2017).

HUMANITARIAN DATABASES

While this study does not explore this option in detail, there is the potential for existing humanitarian databases to feed into countries' social registries and programme databases, complementing social protection data (see Barca & Beazley, 2019 for details).

3

TACKLING THE MAIN CHALLENGES TO CONTINUOUS AND ON-DEMAND REGISTRATION



This chapter focuses on the main challenges to approaches that are purely ‘on-demand’ – that is approaches that enable continuous registration and updates – to demonstrate that, while these systems are ideal from several perspectives (most importantly because they guarantee dynamic inclusion), they also entail important trade-offs that need to be explicitly discussed and addressed by policymakers and practitioners.

LOW UPTAKE

Low uptake (e.g. the percentage of people who register versus those who are eligible) is the primary concern for countries choosing to adopt one or more on-demand approaches to registration, especially when there are no periodic census sweeps to complement this approach. This is a risk at the programme level and can become even more critical when the registration function is consolidated across programmes via an integrated social registry²⁷. The data is clear in this regard:

- Social registries supported by on-demand data collection tend to have **lower coverage of the national population**. For example, while census-survey based social registries in Pakistan and the Philippines cover over 75% of the population, coverage is only 50% in Turkey, 47% in Mexico, 40% in Brazil and 35% in Montenegro (Leite *et al.*, 2017; Barca, 2017).
- Registration via on-demand approaches leads to **lower coverage of eligible populations**. In a study across 16 European countries, the “most conservative estimates of non-take-up” for eligible populations were “above 40%” (Eurofound, 2015) and experiences elsewhere confirm these trends. The risk that a benefit misses its purpose is particularly high if a large proportion of the people who are entitled are not reached.

The reasons for these results are multiple and depend on the specific context in each country. On the one hand, on-demand registration involves some degree of self-selection, whereby richer households tend not to bother taking the time to register with a social registry, because they are unlikely to qualify for any programme. Of course, the more comprehensive the social protection system is – offering support across the lifecycle and not just to the ultra-poor – the more likely it is that a higher proportion of the population will register. An example comes from Chile, where Registro Social de Hogares covers 74% of the population (MDS & World Bank, 2018), despite offering only on-demand registration; this is primarily because the country offers a broad range of benefits that are not all poverty-targeted.

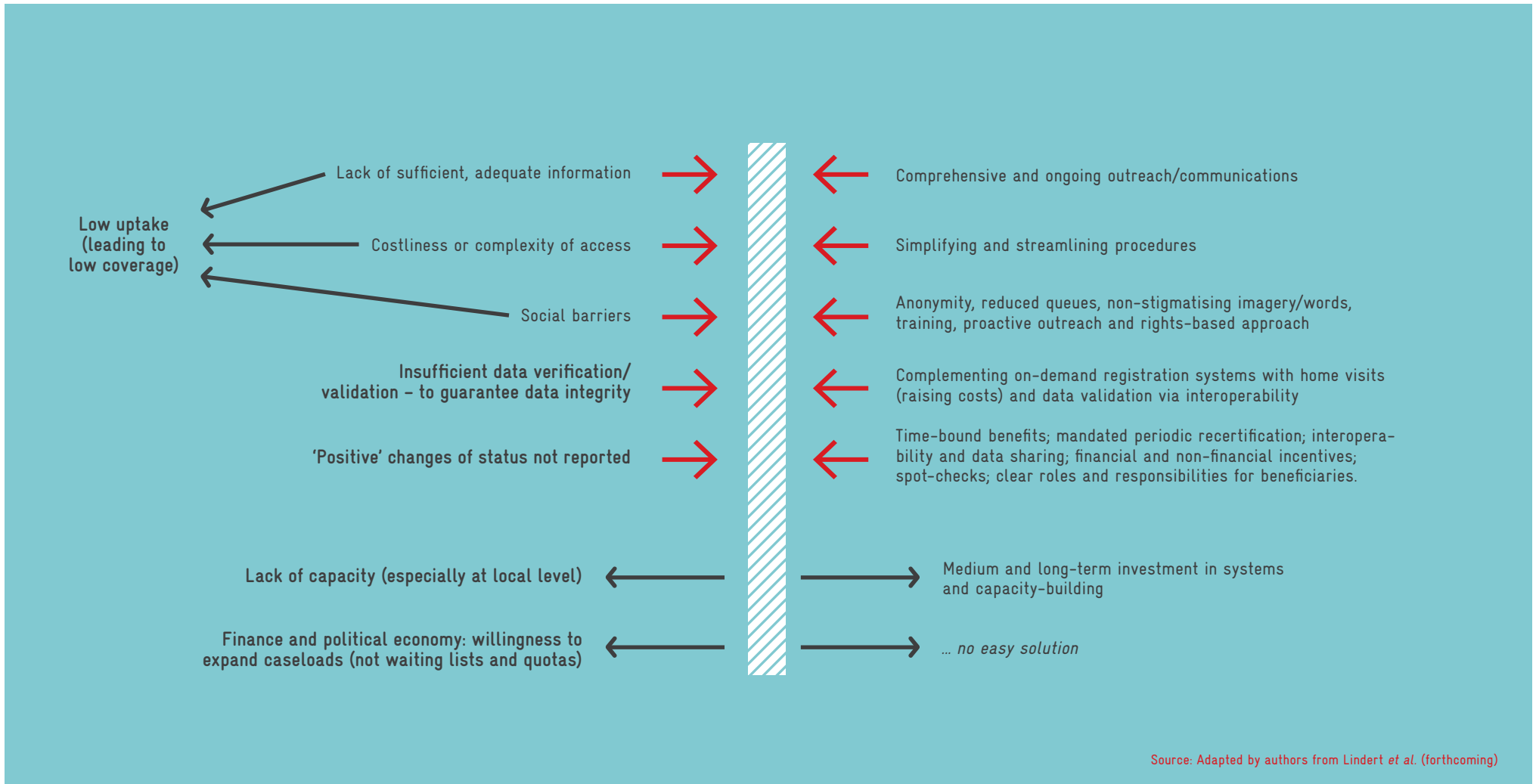
On the other hand, lack of uptake stems from the traditional challenges faced by households applying for social protection programmes, especially those already marginalised and vulnerable. The main reason for lack of uptake are (Eurofound, 2015; Scott *et al.*, 2017; Barca *et al.*, 2010; KIIs):

- **Lack of information:** Lack of awareness or misconceptions about entitlement, benefits or application procedures
- **Costliness or complexity of access:** Inhibitive complexity of the application procedure or lack of resources to apply (such as time, ability to find one’s way through the system, or ability to travel to the welfare or employment office)
- **Social barriers:** Stigma or perception of stigma – sometimes linked to the conditions tied to a benefit or to the application procedure, pride, or lack of trust in institutions

In the following sections, we briefly discuss strategies to address each key challenge to improve the uptake of on-demand systems.

²⁷ In a non-integrated system, where each programme runs its own information system and registration is not centralised via a social registry, those not eligible for one scheme may be eligible for another.

FIGURE 6
MAIN CHALLENGES TO CONTINUOUS AND ON-DEMAND REGISTRATION APPROACHES



Source: Adapted by authors from Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming)

LACK OF INFORMATION

Lack of sufficient and adequate information is a common challenge for on-demand systems, as consistently stressed in qualitative and quantitative research on the topic. For instance, in Mexico, 51% of eligible urban households did not register for the Progresa programme, with around half not having heard of the programme and another 28% not knowing where to register (Coady & Parker, 2005). In South Africa, only 4% of eligible white children access the Child Support Grant, largely as a result of misunderstandings about it being only for black children (Kidd, 2014). In Georgia, the majority of non-applicants did not know how to apply (76%) or were misinformed (10%) about the country's social protection programme (UNICEF & USAID, 2011). In Kazakhstan, only 24% of respondents had heard of the country's Targeted Social Assistance programme and 64% of those who had heard about it, but did not apply, said that it was because of lack of sufficient/adequate information (Scott *et al.*, 2017). Moldova's case is discussed in Box 8.

Most countries tackle low awareness using comprehensive and ongoing outreach efforts, adopting several of the following strategies²⁸ (Lindert, 2014; Eurofound, 2015; TRANSFORM, 2017; Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming; see also Box 5):

- **Budgeting for communications/outreach** from the outset so as to design, implement and improve outreach mechanisms continuously
- **Targeting communications strategy by audience**, focusing on the different information needs of programme beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries; literate versus illiterate; village officials versus normal citizens; urban versus rural; men versus women, etc., and making special efforts for minority groups (e.g. ethnic or religious minorities), remote locations and different language needs (e.g. via dedicated translators), keeping in mind the following:
 - › Every communication channel is appropriate for a different population segment, e.g. poor or remote households may not have televisions or radios.
 - › Marginalised households often trust only 'local' sources, so ensuring community-level information is important, e.g. through training of local leaders; leaving leaflets in strategic places, such as places of culture, schools, hospitals, post offices, markets or waiting rooms, use of informal face-to-face meetings in local communities, among other things.

- **Adopting a range of approaches to spreading information**, such as television, radio, a tailored website, toll-free call centres, posters and leaflets, social media, ad-hoc communication events in programme locations, letters to households, information on pay slips or utility bills, and relevant manuals, etc.
- **Ensuring that all communication is an ongoing and iterative effort**, rather than a one-time launch, including updating and adjusting messages and channels over time
- **Creating a 'brand name'/image and a unique identity** for the programme/registry, where possible, including a tagline and associated messaging (Figure 7)
- **Ensuring that social assistants and other staff are adequately trained** to interact with the community proactively and accurately, without bias

FIGURE 7
BRANDING OF SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES



Philippines tagline:
List of households in need



Brazil tagline:
Know them to include them

²⁸ Noting that in different countries different outreach efforts (or combinations) work best according to sociocultural context.



BOX 8 THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS IN ADDRESSING LOW UPTAKE OF ON-DEMAND REGISTRATION SYSTEMS

In **Moldova**, a year after the launch of a new targeted benefit in 2008, analysis of Household Budget Survey data showed that 33% of households were not aware of the benefits. This was even higher among eligible (i.e. poor) households, with 46% not aware. There were also misunderstandings around the eligibility rules: 26% of eligible households did not apply because they thought they were ineligible.

To overcome this, qualitative research was undertaken to uncover the main barriers to access and a series of changes suggested to the official communication strategy (Barca *et al.*, 2010). Posters were designed so as to contain the one image that all beneficiaries associated with the new benefit – the application form – while avoiding images of large families and disabled people that would distort the idea of who beneficiaries should be. The wording was chosen carefully so as to avoid stigmatising those who it was addressed to, while clearly communicating key eligibility criteria and who to contact in order to apply for the benefit. Leaflets with more detailed information (written in simple language, translated in Romanian and Russian, and clearly formatted) were also printed and widely distributed in public places (schools, hospitals, employment centres etc.).

In parallel, social assistants were re-trained to avoid misinterpretations and enhance their pro-active role in informing people in the community. They were encouraged to coordinate with other local authorities/figures (doctors, tax agents, mail-delivery persons, teachers) to identify vulnerable households and approach them directly. Moreover, the letters sent out to applicants of social support were re-formatted and re-written to make key concepts more intelligible. Television ads were also significantly modified to communicate information more clearly and re-broadcasted in April-May 2010.

As simple as this strategy may be, its impact was surprisingly effective. Applications soared and the number of beneficiaries receiving the benefit shot up as of February 2010, when the strategy was implemented.

In **Brazil**, Bolsa Família's (and Cadastro Unico's) communication efforts have evolved over time and encompass a wide range of complementary activities aimed at enhancing social control (scrutiny of government activities), social participation (dialogue between civil society and government) and access to information. The main channels through which this is achieved are discussed below, stressing that programme communications only received a specific budget in 2012 (Social protection.org, 2016):

- Promotion on the main website of the Ministry of Social Development and through local *radio campaigns, pamphlets and posters*, which are circulated in poor neighbourhoods and public offices (to reach extremely disadvantaged groups; the programme provides information materials in local dialects and uses appropriate graphic design to address different target groups)
- *Face-to-face* promotion through social workers and professionals from the Municipal Secretariats of Social Assistance and the country's social assistance centres
- *Letters* to registered households (8 million letters in 2016)
- *Payment receipts* used to communicate with families (as of 2007)
- *Twitter and Facebook profiles* (active as of 2013)
- *National Forum of Users* (beneficiaries) of social programmes (activated in 2015)
- *Applications for smartphones* distributed in 2015 (1.38 million downloads in first 8 months)
- *Digital television converters* with information on the programme now being distributed
- *Call Centre* for the programme dealing with an extensive amount of calls focused on acquiring information (48 million calls and 740,000 e-mails from 2003 to 2015)
- *Federal Transparency Website* divulges the names of all beneficiaries and value of the benefits received (<http://www.portaltransparencia.gov.br/>)
- *Weekly newsletter* 'Bolsa Família Informa' sent to all local workers (as of 2005)

Source: Barca & Carraro (2013); TRANSFORM (2017)

COSTLINESS OR COMPLEXITY OF ACCESS

Procedures that demand high literacy or time and cost investment tend to exclude those most in need of support. For example, in Kazakhstan, 10–13% of those who did not apply for social assistance, but were believed to be eligible for it, were put off applying because they could not collect the necessary documentation (Scott, Sturge & Babajanian, 2017). **Simplify-ing and streamlining procedures can, therefore, encourage uptake**, via the following measures (Eurofound, 2015; Barca *et al.*, 2010; UNDESA, 2018; Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming):

- Letting potential beneficiaries know not only that they may qualify, but also **how they can apply/receive benefits**, including providing in-depth and practical information on: eligibility criteria for all social grants; what the application/registration process consists of (timing, etc.); where to apply; what documentation is needed; where/how to submit complaints, appeals and feedback; circumstances in which benefits may be suspended, restored or lapsed; and where/how to obtain further information, etc.
- **Simple, transparent, stable and readily available eligibility criteria** – to the extent possible
- **Ensuring simple procedures for application, through multiple channels** (different individuals and households have very different constraints and needs)
- **Streamlining documentation requirements**, as these impose significant direct, indirect and opportunity costs
- **Avoiding repeatedly asking for information** that is already available elsewhere
- **Reducing complexity of language and ensuring translation** into all relevant languages (for face-to-face communications, translation services and sign-language specialists may be required in certain contexts, to ensure disability inclusiveness)
- **Leveraging a well-established network** of community organisations²⁹
- In countries with advanced information systems, there is the option to **automatically initiate benefits based on integration of existing data** (Chapter 2).

SOCIAL BARRIERS

One of the key drivers inhibiting uptake is the stigma associated with the on-demand process, or exacerbation of existing social marginalisation (Kidd, 2014; UNDESA, 2018; Roelen, 2019). For example, in Moldova, qualitative interviews with eligible non-applicants clearly showed that fear of social stigma was an important element in pushing some households not to apply – this was particularly relevant for Roma minority households. In Kazakhstan, a relatively low percentage cited stigma as a barrier to access, primarily linked to the stigma and ‘embarrassment’ associated with having a disabled household member.

Measures to address social barriers include (Eurofound, 2015; Barca *et al.*, 2010; Scott *et al.*, 2017):

- **Ensuring increased anonymity** (via online applications or registration via municipal, rather than social welfare, offices)
- **Reducing queues** (being ‘visible’ to external eyes)
- **Adopting non-stigmatising imagery/words** (e.g. Jamaica’s television advertisements depicting the pregnant spouse of a cabinet minister registering for a social transfer; see Samson, Van Niekerk & Quene, 2010)
- **Training and continuously informing frontline staff** (e.g. addressing negative attitudes towards disabled people, the ‘undeserving poor’, etc.) **as well as the broader community** (behavioural change communication, public education programmes)
- **Proactively approaching potential applicants and pointing them towards their entitlements**, especially commonly excluded categories (e.g. through active outreach mechanisms, see Chapter 2; in Chile, this includes: nomads, street dwellers, detained individuals, institutionalised children, and foreigners with no ID, etc., see MDS & World Bank, 2018; across Latin America, explicit efforts have been made to reach remote indigenous communities via ‘active outreach’ efforts, see Chapter 2).

²⁹ For example, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, a local NGO, plays an instrumental role in the uptake of the public works programme in Rajasthan, India.

DATA VERIFICATION/VALIDATION

All the on-demand and continuous approaches discussed in this paper do not intrinsically require a visit to people's homes. The information is either self-declared by applicants or collected indirectly via existing data sources. This poses challenges in terms of guaranteeing data integrity, especially for programmes targeting poverty that adopt proxy means tests to verifying eligibility (requiring information on household assets). As a side-effect, it also means that GIS data on a household's geo-location cannot be captured. This is the reason why several countries complement on-demand registration systems with home visits, often mandated within a certain number of days from initial data collection. Such approaches, implemented, for example, in Turkey, raise the cost of on-demand registration systems dramatically. Of course, data integration (e.g. validation across databases) also helps improve its integrity – but this is not possible in many countries and also poses other risks discussed above.

CHANGES IN STATUS

Where on-demand systems are not complemented by other approaches³⁰, there is a risk of households/individuals only reporting changes to their conditions that trigger their eligibility or sustain or increase their entitlements (value of transfer), rather than changes that may trigger exit from a programme or reduction of entitlements. The most obvious example is the death of a beneficiary household member, whereby it is not uncommon for relatives to continue to access benefits as if the person is still alive (especially if they are official 'alternate recipient'), as illustrated in Box 9 for social pensions.

BOX 9 DEREGISTRATION OF DECEASED RECIPIENTS

Lesotho has paid non-contributory pensions to older people since November 2004. All people aged 70 or older, apart from those receiving a civil service pension, are eligible. The Old Age Pension is managed by the Ministry of Finance and the transfer is paid physically in cash each month at a pay point selected by the recipient. Pay officers or local authorities are meant to report the death of beneficiaries to the Ministry to enable removal of the name of the deceased from the list. However, this is often not done owing to either collusion or error: mechanisms for verification are not in place and households are permitted to designate a proxy recipient on behalf of individuals who are too ill to attend the pay point. Therefore, it may not be evident that a recipient has died. A recent study suggested that registered recipients of the Old Age Pension exceeded the total number of people over the age of 70 in the country by the 80,000 (Dietrich *et al.*, 2016).



³⁰ Such as census surveys, spot-checks and home visits, etc.



We illustrate several strategies employed by countries to overcome this challenge (Leite *et al.*, 2017; Barca *et al.*, unpublished; Paes-Sousa, Regalia & Stampini, 2013; KIIs):

- Some programmes offer **time-bound benefits so that recertification is not necessary** by design.
- Many targeted programmes mandate **periodic recertification to incorporate any changes in beneficiary status**, with the timing for these depending on several factors, such as: type/objective of the programme³¹; characteristics of the household; and administrative capacity (Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming). Of course, such an approach can create issues of retention, as asking applicants to recertify relatively frequently can pose a large burden³². Therefore, it is key that recertification frequency is carefully designed, particularly in targeted programmes aimed at long-term human development rather than addressing transitory shocks (see e.g. Mexico).

BOX 10 MANDATED PERIODIC RECERTIFICATION

- For example, in **Brazil's** Cadastro Unico and **Chile's** Registro Social de Hogares social registries, the requirement is a maximum of two years before the validity of registrant information expires. Some guaranteed minimum income (GMI) programmes have very frequent reassessment requirements, such as every three months in **Latvia** and **Lithuania** and every six months in **Moldova**.
- **Mexico's** Prospera mandated a two-year recertification period until 2012. However, some studies raised concerns about the relevance of this high frequency for a programme that targets only the extreme poor. One study showed that 70% of beneficiaries who had exited the programme actually faced a very high probability of falling back into poverty in the near future, pushing administrators to raise the time limit to eight years.

Sources: Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming); Barca *et al.* (2010); Barca (2017); IADB (2015)

- **A linkage between existing databases – where this is feasible – can effectively ensure automatic updating of information** (see Chapter 2).
- **Inducing reporting of changes through financial incentives is another measure seen in some countries.** For example, 'death benefits' paid to family members of the deceased to cover funeral and other extraordinary expenses could improve death reporting. Chile's Asignacion por Muerte and Bolivia's insurance for family members of deceased recipients of the social pension seek to create this incentive.
- **Clearly the defining roles and responsibilities of beneficiaries and staff, including a focus on data updates, is also an important strategy** (for an example, see Box 11).
- **Applying penalties for lack of reporting can also deter benefit fraud, but at a high risk³³.** This approach can be found mainly in high-income countries, such as the US or Australia, where any changes to information must be reported within a short period of time (usually 10 business days) to avoid penalties. These penalties could also take a non-financial form: the UK has recently run (highly stigmatising and problematic) naming and shaming campaigns for benefit 'shirkers'.
- **Data validation through home visits, either periodically for all households or via occasional spot checks, can complement the above strategies.** For example, in Turkey's ISAS, data are updated and verified through an annual in-person evaluation performed by the local inspection officer, supported by a pre-printed form containing all the information within the ISAS system on that household. Some middle-income countries, for example Ukraine, also employ a cadre of social inspectors – with partial success – to verify the validity of data in a more regularised manner (Van Stolk & Tesliuc, 2010). The cost implications of such an approach can, of course, be high.

³¹ For example, the "periodicity of reassessments for disability benefits and services usually relates to the expected severity duration of the disability established at the time of the initial assessment", while employment benefits often require monthly or quarterly touchpoints (Lindert *et al.*, forthcoming).

³² This was the case in Moldova, for example; see Barca *et al.*, 2010 and Box 8.

³³ These strategies come at the expense of catering to those who are most vulnerable, with significant negative impacts in the medium term (as extensively denounced by the former United Nations Rapporteur on Human Rights, Philip Alston; see <http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/21999189/sr-extreme-poverty-ga-3rd-cttee-statement-f.pdf>).



BOX 11 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DATA UPDATING IN THE PHILIPPINES

In the **Philippines'** Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), during on-boarding, all eligible applicants who wish to join the programme receive an orientation on their rights and obligations and are required to sign an 'Oath of Commitment'. In the Operation Manual, the obligation related to updating states: "Other duties and responsibilities of a household head: Attend the meetings and group sessions and coordinate with 4Ps mother-leader on [...] changes on household information [...]".

The programme's Beneficiary Updating System uses 12 types of updates, each complete with business process, responsibilities and criteria. The system has two types of updates that may affect permanence in the programme (moving to an area not served by the programme and death of the beneficiary/family member); nine updates that may change delivery logistics (e.g. change in address, change in servicing health unit or school, etc.); and eight updates that may imply changes in the service package (e.g. subsequent pregnancy, change to household composition, etc.). Requests for updates are typically collected by the 'parent leader', received and data entered by the municipal/city link, collated by the provincial cluster and recommended to the regional director for final approval.

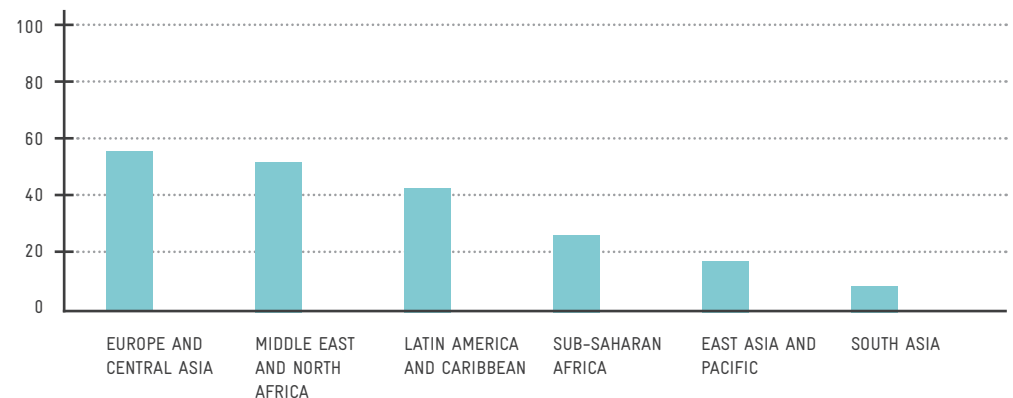
Source: Lindert *et al.* (forthcoming)

LACK OF CAPACITY

The human capacity required by staff involved in on-demand approaches at local levels can be an important factor in decisions for or against their adoption³⁴. By definition, on-demand approaches require trained staff available as close as possible to the citizens who are in need of applying. This can be very difficult to guarantee for countries that lack a formal cadre of social workers operating at the local level and a developed network of deconcentrated welfare offices across the country. Other barriers include lack of capacity and traction to develop agreements with local governments and to train staff able to perform on-demand functions on the ground. Of course, these preconditions are rarely given in countries where social programmes are relatively new and responsible lead ministries are still institutionally weak.

Regional trends are quite clear in this sense. The ratio of programmes where participants have access to social workers – which can be seen as a (partial) indicator of human capacity at the local level – ranges from 56% in Europe and Central Asia to 27% in Sub-Saharan Africa and only 10% in South Asia (see Figure 8).

FIGURE 8
PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS WITH ACCESS TO A SOCIAL WORKER IN 2015 (%)



34 With the exception of digital windows (Chapter 2), although these face other significant barriers to access.

Source: Data for 2015, University of Manchester (n.d.)

Key informants interviewed for this study, as well as the literature, stress the challenges of developing on-demand registration systems, especially for many African countries, because of human capacity constraints. A systematic shortage of staff, especially at local levels of implementation like the village/community, is a common challenge in the region (UNDP, 2019, Chapter 5; Doyle & Kardan, 2017). Even those countries that have a cadre of statutory staff at the local level face challenges with technical weakness among staff and high turnover, partly as units are often “staffed not by specialists but by political supporters” (World Bank, 2017). For pilot programmes and recently established national flagship programmes this has meant that census sweep approaches are often prioritised – or at least used as a first step towards building required capacity and systems. Two examples are discussed in Box 12.



BOX 12 CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS AT LOCAL LEVELS OF ADMINISTRATION, EXAMPLES FROM KENYA AND ZAMBIA

In **Kenya**, a capacity assessment in 2014 showed significant staff shortages at county and sub-county levels, with high levels of vacancy for established positions. Many sub-counties had no Social Development Officer or Children’s Officer in place, and overall there was a shortfall of 221 professional staff (or around 33%³⁵) at the county and sub-county levels across the two departments. Despite this shortfall there was little prospect of recruitment of new staff due to a recruitment freeze enforced by the Public Service Commission. As a consequence, much support was provided by volunteer groups and temporary staff.

In **Zambia**, similar constraints were faced in relation to staffing capacity at the District Social Welfare offices. While urban districts were typically better endowed, most rural districts had only one Social Welfare Officer. This situation changed somewhat with the expansion of the Social Cash Transfer programme, which was accompanied by the assignment of an Assistant Social Welfare Officer to each new district enrolled in the programme. Below the district level, the social welfare sector in Zambia relies on volunteer structures.

Capacity assessments in **Kenya** also revealed that the expansion of flagship cash transfers has taken a large toll on staff’s capacity to perform their core functions, as a large amount of their time (e.g. 66%) is spent on cash transfer tasks, despite the lack of an on-demand registration system, which could risk significantly straining capacity further.

Source: Doyle & Kardan (2017)

³⁵ A comparable review by Oxford Policy Management of the Department of Social Services in Zimbabwe in 2010 found that 39% of professional posts in the district offices responsible for frontline service delivery were vacant.

Figures 8 and 9 and Table 1 show the different levels of capacity across countries. The number of social workers per 100,000 inhabitants varies drastically, from 32 in Moldova to 1 in Nepal (and less than 1 or zero in many other countries not included in Figure 8). Existing studies on the social worker workforce also discuss the overburdening of existing capacity. For example, social assistance registration and payment functions detract from core social work and case management functions (Doyle & Kardan, 2017). There are also extremely large variations across countries in terms of the number of local offices performing social welfare functions versus populations served. Where these ratios are too high, there is no real option of using permanent capacity for on-demand registration.

Tackling this situation requires medium and long-term investment in systems and capacity-building, potentially starting from pilot projects and leveraging existing local level capacity and committees where possible. This is too complex a topic to be tackled here and requires further evidence and analysis.

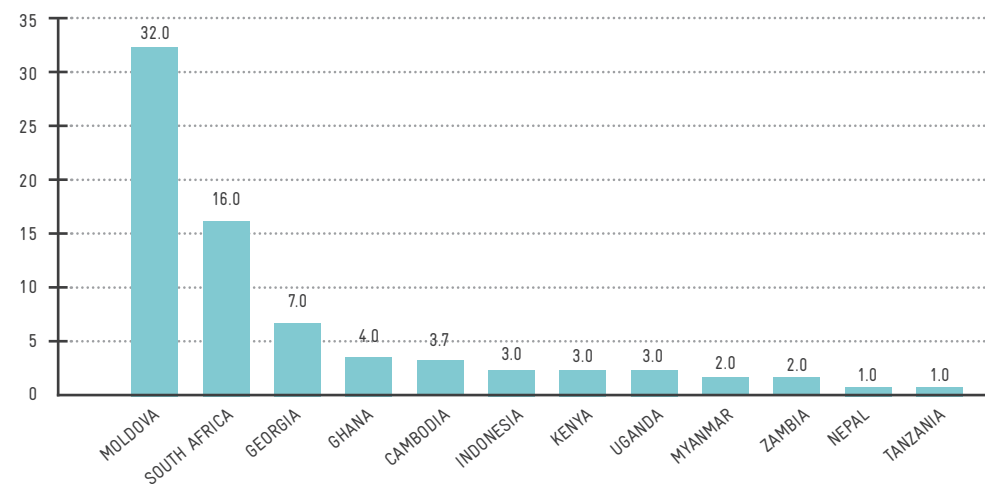
Moreover, while staffing and offices are an important dimension (enabling ‘front-office’ physical touchpoints), so is the back-office infrastructure (e.g. access to the Internet, computers, power, easy-to-use software) to enable continuous sharing of data as new registrations or data updates are collected. This is all but obvious in many LMICs (Chirchir & Barca, 2020).

36 Number of Reference Centres for Social Assistance (CRAS) in 2010 (Paes-Sousa, Dantas de Teixeira Soares & Klieman, 2010).

37 These are only regional Territorial Social Assistance Offices (TSAS). Moldova also has a system of social assistants, embedded in municipal offices.

38 These are only the permanent local offices. In addition SASSA runs 1,163 service points (mobile or fixed infrastructure, where services are rendered on a rotating basis according to a schedule) throughout the country, as well as the ICROP programme, which takes services to communities on a pre-arranged schedule.

FIGURE 9
NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORKERS PER 100,000 PEOPLE



Note: Comparisons are not straight forward as this is primarily based on self-reporting and different definitions of ‘social worker’ in different countries; hence, the trend should be viewed as indicative. Source: Building on UNDP (2019, Chapter 5) and KIIs.

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF LOCAL OFFICES PERFORMING SOCIAL WELFARE FUNCTIONS

COUNTRY	OFFICES PERFORMING SOCIAL WELFARE FUNCTIONS	POPULATION (MILLIONS)	RATIO OF OFFICES TO POPULATION
MONTENEGRO	22	0.62	1 : 28,181
MAURITIUS	34	1.26	1 : 37,058
BRAZIL	3,919 ³⁶	209.3	1 : 53,406
NORTH MACEDONIA	30	2.06	1 : 68,667
MOLDOVA	41 ³⁷	3.00	1 : 73,170
SOUTH AFRICA	389 ³⁸	56.72	1 : 145,809
MOZAMBIQUE*	30	29.67	1 : 989,000

Note: Comparisons are not straight forward; hence, the data should be seen as indicative. *Countries not offering on-demand registration

Source: Evidence consolidated from existing sources and KIIs

FINANCE AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

Creating an on-demand approach to registration is the only real choice compatible with an inclusive system based on a right to social protection, embedded in legislation, with laws that define entitlements. Yet this is often not the case in countries that have recently built or expanded their social protection system. And there are political economy reasons why many governments are not comfortable with such a system.

Financially, truly on-demand systems require the financial flexibility to expand coverage at times of heightened need. Fixed-list systems based on periodic census sweeps, on the other hand, enable the artificial ‘containment’ of the budget envelope over a defined period of time. **In other words, on-demand registration only really makes sense if there are enough financial resources (i.e. no fixed quota) to enrol new beneficiaries on a continuous basis** (or periodically via a waiting list with a ranking based on transparent criteria). However, in many countries, there are simply not enough resources – or political will – for this.

A common feature of safety nets in LMICs – including ones running on-demand systems – is the use of quotas and waiting lists to meet budget constraints, which is incompatible with a truly inclusive approach. For example, Brazil’s Bolsa Familia allocates beneficiary quotas³⁹ to municipalities according to estimates of municipal-level poverty (Lindert *et al.*, 2007). Similarly, in Bangladesh, the government allocates a fixed number of 20 social pensions to each ward, to be allocated by a community committee (World Bank, 2018b). According to some estimates, India’s old age pension applications – which are accepted on-demand by district social welfare offices – have a waiting period of 3–4 years, as quotas are full (HelpAge India, 2018).

In Uganda, proactive registration of new beneficiaries for the universal old age pension is only activated when a new budget envelope becomes available. **In addition, the on-demand up-take of programmes may not be aligned with political actors’ electoral interests.** For instance, bureaucratic reforms to improve the uptake of the subsidised rural housing programme in India met with political resistance, as saturation of the demand weakened its potential as an electoral promise (Centre for Policy Research, n.d.).

Overall, there is still insufficient research and understanding of the overall cost-effectiveness of on-demand systems and the financing implications of different approaches. This would be a welcome area of analysis going forward.



³⁹ Note that quotas are not applied for registration in the Cadastro Unico.

4

CONCLUSION



Several concluding considerations emerge from this paper, many of which would be worth exploring via further research and country-specific evidence building aimed at informing policy decisions where this topic is currently being debated.

Overall, strengthening on-demand systems – or complementing census survey registrations with approaches for continuous registration and updates – is the only way to ensure social assistance programmes truly address people’s changing needs: dynamic inclusion, dynamic management of changing conditions and needs, dynamic exit where relevant. **Yet lumping ‘on-demand’ approaches into one category is not helpful,** as there are many differences in terms of opportunities, challenges and where/when each may be best suited (see Chapter 2 and Annex 2 for a summary). These need careful assessment in light of the country context, e.g. available infrastructure, capacity, budget and policy commitment above all. The main approaches that can be leveraged, and used complementarily, include: permanent local offices, either deconcentrated social welfare/programme offices or municipal/local government offices; digital windows; ongoing or periodic ‘active’ outreach; and the integration of existing databases.

The outcomes of these different approaches not only depend on their design, but also – and critically – on how they are implemented in practice. This paper shows that there are several dimensions affecting inclusiveness, data currency and the overall feasibility and sustainability of any approach. For example:

- **Ease of access:** e.g. number of offices and distance from users, simplicity of process for online digital windows, etc.
- **De-facto frequency:** e.g. there are countries with permanent office capacity that only accept applications at certain intervals; periodic ‘active’ outreach could continuously rotate across all communities or only occasionally travel etc.

- **Level of institutional integration:** e.g. whether all/most social assistance programmes can be accessed via one application in one place (single window service) or not, etc.
- **Underlying back-end systems:** e.g. linked to what type of registry and information system, with what levels of data sharing for validation, data sourcing, potential triggering of categorical benefits, etc.
- **Underlying capacity:** e.g. working via a cadre of highly-trained social workers/ministry staff, via local institutions that require ad-hoc training, or via volunteer structures and community groups, etc.
- **Approach to data verification/validation:** e.g. via data exchange with other systems, via home-visits, etc. (affecting costliness)
- **Approach to sensitisation/communications:** e.g. for on-demand systems, tailored strategies to reach and inform the most vulnerable are critical to uptake, etc.
- **Approach to grievance redress:** e.g. it is essential to have well-designed redress channels to address barriers to access and other issues

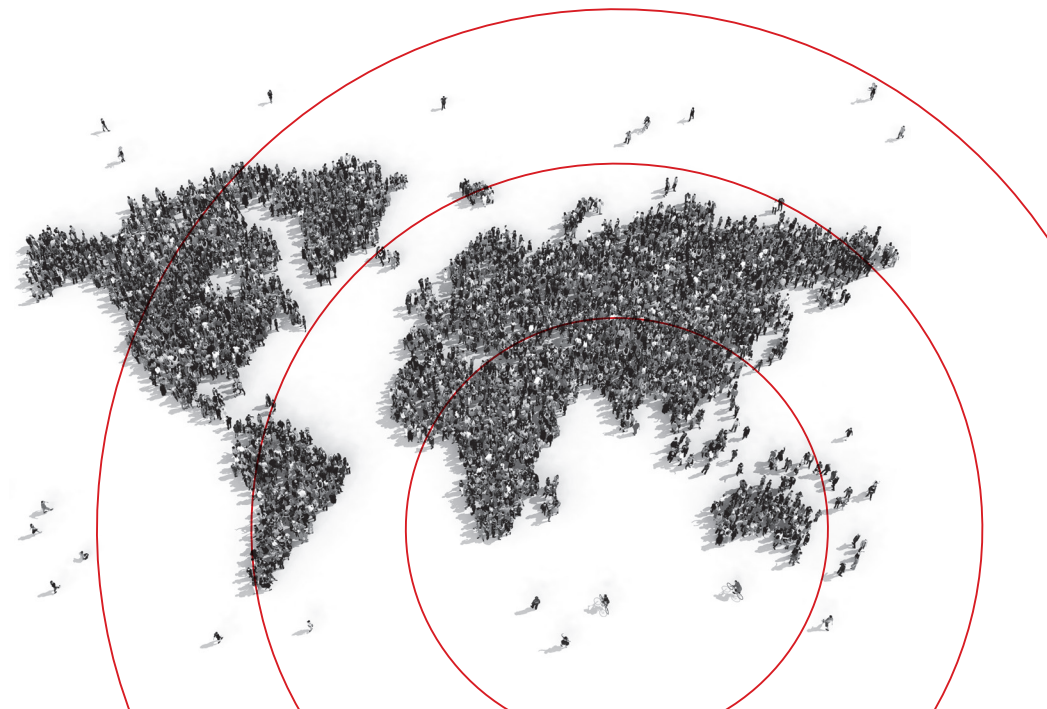
All-in-all, each and every approach discussed in the paper has limitations in terms of truly guaranteeing continuous registration in social assistance programmes and sufficient ‘uptake’ among eligible categories (Chapter 3). To address this, approaches could be combined to leverage the strengths of each and counteract weaknesses, including with periodic census sweeps. This is the case in a few middle and high-income countries.

In fact, countries that only operate purely on-demand approaches via local capacity and/or digital windows – with no use of census sweeps or data integration – also face other challenges that need explicit consideration and addressing, for the following reasons:

- On-demand approaches do not give the opportunity for **data validation via household visits**, and do not enable collection of **GIS data** – unless a visit is then scheduled for eligible households as in Turkey and other countries, which has capacity and financial implications (Chapter 3).
- They offer few incentives for people to **update their information** when this may lead to their exclusion or the lowering of benefit values. There are ways to address this (discussed in Chapter 3), each with their caveats.
- They can **overburden capacity** at lower levels of implementation, often meaning that staff have little time to perform other fundamental social assistance functions (Chapter 3).
- They give **less control over budgets**, which could lead to surges in demand that may exceed allocated budgets. On-demand systems, by definition, should not be compatible with ‘fixed lists’, as is the case for census-sweep registrations. Yet many countries rely on quotas to address the challenge (Chapter 3).

This last point is critical. On-demand registration does not make much sense in contexts where there is no (or very little room) to enrol people on a continuous basis in social assistance programmes. In these cases it might even be counterproductive: people might have expectations towards the system and if they do not receive any benefit (especially, if they have invested personal and financial resources to register), they might lose trust in the system and government.

Where does this leave countries that are looking to ensure some level of dynamic inclusion and data-updating within their systems? It is often the case that countries developing new social assistance programmes and systems start with a once-off census survey to build the foundation for further action. There are usually good reasons for this: initial census survey registration is often donor financed, e.g. by the World Bank, and quite simply there may be no permanent capacity at local levels of implementation or underlying digital infrastructure to experiment with other approaches. But things change fast and capacity can be built over time – especially when backed by a vision. Accordingly, **this paper offers a framing to help build a vision – considering the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches in light of contextual pre-requisites, and offering some ideas on how other countries have overcome some of the common challenges.** It is a starting point, which we hope will lead to further, important, work on this.



REFERENCES

- Barca, V., *Integrating data and information management for social protection: Social registries and integrated beneficiary registries*, Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, 2017.
- Barca, V., *Integrated social protection systems: Country case study: North Macedonia*. Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, 2020.
- Barca, V. & Beazley, R., *Building on government systems for shock preparedness and response: The role of social assistance data and information systems*, Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, 2019.
- Barca, V. & Carraro, L., *Monitoring implementation and evaluating performance: Experiences from cash social assistance in Moldova*, Oxford Policy Management Working Paper, Oxford, 2013.
- Barca, V., Carraro, L., & Sinchetru, A., *Study into the reasons for low take-up and retention*, Project Report, Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, 2010.
- Barca, V., Makin, P., & Bamezai, A., *Integrating digital identity into social protection: An analysis of potential benefits and risks*, Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, unpublished.
- Bartholo, L., Mostafa, J., & Guerreiro Osorio, R., *Integration of administrative records for social protection policies: Contributions from the Brazilian experience*, Working Paper No. 169, International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG), Brazilia, 2018.
- Bergthaller, M., *South-South learning event on beneficiary identification and social registries: Challenges and lessons-learned*, 26–28 November, Jakarta, Indonesia, 2018.
- Castaneda, T., Lindert, K., De la Briere, B., Fernandez, L., Hubert, C., Larranaya, O., Orozco, M., & Viquez, R., *Designing and implementing household targeting systems: Lessons from Latin American and the United States*, Social Protection Discussion Paper No. 0526, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2005, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/566041468770480720/Designing-and-implementing-household-targeting-systems-lessons-from-Latin-American-and-The-United-States> (accessed 6 May 2020).
- Centre for Policy Research, ‘Accountability Initiative’, n.d., <https://www.cprindia.org/projects/accountability-initiative> (accessed 6 May 2020).
- Chirchir, R. & Barca, V., *Building an integrated and digital social protection information system*, GIZ, Bonn & Eschborn, 2020.
- Coady, D. & Parker, S., *Program participation under means-testing and self-selection targeting methods*, FCND Discussion Paper 191, Food Consumption and Nutrition Division, International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington, DC, 2005.
- Department of Social Development, SASSA, & UNICEF, *Removing barriers to accessing child grants: Progress in reducing exclusion from South Africa’s Child Support Grant*, UNICEF South Africa, Pretoria, 2016, <https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/reports/removing-barriers-accessing-child-grants> (accessed 6 May 2020).
- Devereux, S. & Sabates-Wheeler, R., *Transformative social protection*, IDS Working Paper No. 232, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, 2004.
- Dietrich, S., Gassmann, F., Röth, H., & Tirivayi, N., *Estimation of rates of return (ROR) on social protection investments in Lesotho*, Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, Maastricht University, the Netherlands, 2016, <http://www.merit.unu.edu/publications/uploads/1461167192.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).
- Doyle, A. & Kardan, A., *Rapid assessment of the pull registration system in Zambia*, Oxford Policy Management, Oxford, 2017.
- Eurofound, *Access to social benefits: Reducing non-take-up*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.2806/7077>.

Gelb, A. & Diafosi, A., *Preliminary discussion paper on the future of identification and development*, Centre for Global Development, Washington, DC, 2015.

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/40bb/ddeb351c62b3b286db29c296e70e972eaf5c.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

GIZ, *Single window service centres*, GIZ India, Indo-German Social Security Programme Karnataka, Bangalore, 2016.

Hanvoravongchai, P., *Thailand – Health financing reform in Thailand: Toward universal coverage under fiscal constraints*, Universal Health Coverage Study Series (UNICO) Study Series No. 20, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2013. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/476621468132279566/Thailand-Health-financing-reform-in-Thailand-toward-universal-coverage-under-fiscal-constraints> (accessed 6 May 2020).

HelpAge India, *State of pensions in India report 2018*, HelpAge India, New Delhi, 2018, <https://www.helpageindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/State-of-Pensions-in-India-by-Pension-Parishad.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

HelpAge International & Development Pathways, *Good practice in the development of management information systems for social protection*, Pension Watch: Briefings on Social Protection in Older Age No. 5., HelpAge International, London, 2011.

Hossain, N., *Extreme poor Adivasis and the problem of accessing social safety nets*, Stimulating Household Improvements Resulting in Economic Empowerment (SHIRRE) Working Paper No. 4, Dhaka, 2011.

Huseynov, F., *New Automation concept of targeted social assistance program to families in Azerbaijan*, n.d., <https://slideplayer.com/slide/13895365/> (accessed 6 May 2020).

IADB, *Moving ahead: Recertification and exit strategies in conditional cash transfer programs*, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC, 2015, <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/Moving-Ahead-Recertification-and-Exit-Strategies-in-Conditional-Cash-Transfer-Programs.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

ILO, *A national health insurance beneficiary registry based on national identification numbers: Thailand*, Social Protection in Action: Building Social Protection Floors, ILO, Geneva, 2015a, <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=53144> (accessed 6 May 2020).

ILO, *ICROP: Reaching out to rural poor through mobile service units: South Africa*, Social Protection in Action: Building Social Protection Floors, ILO, Geneva, 2015b, <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=51861> (accessed 6 May 2020).

ILO, *SISBEN: A unified vulnerability assessment and identification system for social assistance: Colombia*, Social Protection in Action: Building Social Protection Floors, ILO, Geneva, 2015c, <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=51857> (accessed 6 May 2020).

ILO, *World social protection report 2017–19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*, ILO, Geneva, 2017.

ILO, *Social protection centres: A comparative study on integrated mechanisms to deliver social protection to people*, ILO, Geneva, forthcoming.

ILO & World Bank, *Universal social protection: The Universal Child Money Programme in Mongolia*, ILO, Geneva, 2016, <https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=53942> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Kidd, S., *Social exclusion and access to social protection schemes*, Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra, 2014.

Kuhn, L., Brosig, S., & Zhang, L., 'The brink of poverty: Implementation of a social assistance programme in rural China', *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, 45(1): 75–108, 2016.

Leite, P., George, T., Sun, C., Jones, T., & Lindert, K., *Social registries for social assistance and beyond: A guidance note & assessment tool*, Social Protection & Labor, Discussion Paper No. 1704, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2017. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/698441502095248081/Social-registries-for-social-assistance-and-beyond-a-guidance-note-and-assessment-tool> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Lindert, K., *Communication and outreach in social safety nets core course*, PowerPoint presentation, World Bank, 2014, https://olc.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/Kathy%20Lindert%20-%20Communications%20SSN%20PPT-KLindert-Dec%202014-SENT-FINAL_0.pdf (accessed 6 May 2020).

Lindert, K., Karippacheril, T. G., Caillava, I. R. & Chavez, K. N., *Sourcebook on the foundations of social protection delivery systems*, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, forthcoming.

Lindert, K., Linder, A., Hobbs, J., & De la Brière, B., *The nuts and bolts of Brazil's Bolsa Família Program: Implementing conditional cash transfers in a decentralized context*, Social Protection Discussion Paper No. 0709, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2007.

MDS & World Bank, *Registro Social de Hogares de Chile*, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social [Ministry of Social Development], Subsecretaría de Evaluación Social, Santiago de Chile, Chile, 2018.

National Planning Department, *Territorial responsibilities*, PowerPoint presentation, National Planning Department (Columbia), n.d., <http://www.cmimarseille.org/sites/default/files/newsite/library/files/en/territorial%20responsibilities.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Paes-Sousa, R., Dantas de Teixeira Soares, A. R., & Klieman, F., *Broadening social protection and integrating social policies*, 2010, <file:///C:/Users/Susan/AppData/Local/Temp/24362.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Paes-Sousa, R., Regalia, F., & Stampini, M., *Conditions for success in implementing CCT programs: Lessons for Asia from Latin America and the Caribbean*, Inter-American Development Bank, Social Protection and Health Division, Policy Brief No. IDB-PB-192, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC, 2013, <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=37839386> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Rawlings, L., Murthy, S., & Winder, S., *Common ground: UNICEF and World Bank approaches to building social protection systems*, Social Protection and Labor Policy Note No. 15, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2013, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/936751468330871036/Common-ground-UNICEF-and-World-Bank-approaches-to-building-social-protection-systems> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Roelen, K., 'Receiving social assistance in low- and middle-income countries: Negating shame or producing stigma?', *Journal of Social Policy*, 1–19, 2019.

Samson, M., Van Niekerk, I., & Quene, K. M., *Designing and implementing social cash transfer programmes (second edition)*, Economic Policy Research Institute, Cape Town, 2010, <http://epri.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Designing-and-Implementing-Social-Transfer-Programmes-EPRI.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Scott L., Sturge G., & Babajanian, B., *Barriers to access social assistance and special social services in Kazakhstan*, UNICEF in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Astana, 2017, <https://www.unicef.org/kazakhstan/en/reports/barriers-access-social-assistance-and-special-social-services-kazakhstan> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Sepúlveda Carmona, M., *Is biometric technology in social protection programmes illegal or arbitrary? An analysis of privacy and data protection*, ILO Extension of Social Security (ESS) Working Paper No. 59, ILO, Geneva, 2018, <http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?id=55133> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Smith, G., *Responding to shocks: Considerations along the delivery chain*, OPM Background Paper for the World Bank, forthcoming.

Social protection.org, 'The Bolsa Família Program: Access to and dissemination of information', Webinar, 12 July 2016, <https://socialprotection.org/bolsa-familia-program-access-and-dissemination-information> (accessed 6 May 2020).

Stojanov, Z., *Overall social welfare system in Macedonia*, Child Protection Hub for South East Europe, n.d., https://childhub.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/macedonia_paper_final_1.pdf?file=1&type=node&cid=21689 (accessed 6 May 2020).

TRANSFORM, *Administration of non-contributory social protection: Delivery systems – Manual for a leadership and transformation curriculum on building and managing social protection floors in Africa*, Technical Report, TRANSFORM, 2017, <http://socialprotection.org/institutions/transform> (accessed 5 May 2020).

UNDESA, *Promoting inclusion through social protection: Report on the world social situation 2018*, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), New York, 2018, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2018/07/1-1.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

UNDP, *The state of social assistance in Africa*, UNDP, New York, 2019, <http://social-assistance.africa.undp.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/The%20State%20of%20Social%20Assistance%20in%20Africa%20Report.pdf>

(accessed 6 May 2020).

UNDP & United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), *Strengthening the governance of social protection: The role of local government*, A Working Paper prepared for the Regional Dialogue for Social Protection and Local Governance, organized on 30 September – 1 October 2013, in Bangkok, 2013, http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/dam/rbap/docs/Research%20&%20Publications/democratic_governance/RBAP-DG-2014-Strengthening-Governance-of-Social-Protection.pdf (accessed 6 May 2020).

UNICEF, 'Mongolia', UNICEF Data, n.d., <https://data.unicef.org/country/mng/> (accessed 19 November 2018).

UNICEF, 'Birth registration', UNICEF Data, n.d., <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/birth-registration/> (accessed 14 November 2018).

UNICEF & United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Survey of barriers to access to social services Georgia 2010: Why not all poor families get social benefits and services*, UNICEF Georgia, Tbilisi, 2011.

University of Manchester, 'Social assistance explorer', Data for 2015, n.d., <http://www.social-assistance.manchester.ac.uk/> (accessed 9 November 2018).

Van Stolk, C. & Tesliuc, E. D., *Toolkit on tackling error, fraud and corruption in social protection programs*, Social Protection Discussion Paper No. 1002, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2010.

Wang, R. Y. & Strong, D. M., 'Beyond accuracy: What data quality means to data consumers', *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 12(4), 5–33, 1996.

Web Foundation, *Personal data: An overview of low and middle-income countries*, Web Foundation, Washington, DC, 2017, http://webfoundation.org/docs/2017/07/PersonalData_Report_WF.pdf (accessed 6 May 2020).

World Bank, *Broadband in Azerbaijan: Accelerating the growth of high-speed Internet services in Azerbaijan*, 2014, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/azerbaijan/publication/broadband-in-azerbaijan> (accessed 4 May 2020).

World Bank, *World development report 2017: Governance and the law*, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2017, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25880> (accessed 6 May 2020).

World Bank, *Turkey's Integrated Social Assistance System*, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2018a, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/515231530005107572/Turkey-s-integrated-social-assistance-system> (accessed 6 May 2020).

World Bank, *The state of social safety nets 2018*, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2018b, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/29115> (accessed 6 May 2020).

World Bank, *Global ID coverage, barriers, and use by the numbers: Insights from the ID4D-Findex Survey*, World Bank Group's Identification for Development (ID4D) Initiative, 2018c, <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/953621531854471275/ID4D-FINDEX-Note-Release2018.pdf> (accessed 6 May 2020).

World Bank, 'Individuals using the Internet (% of population)', 2019, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS> (accessed 14 May 2020).

World Bank & WHO, *Global civil registration and vital statistics: A scaling up investment plan 2015–2024*, World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2014, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/18962> (accessed 6 May 2020).

ANNEX 1 COMPARING 'ON-DEMAND' AND 'CENSUS-SWEEP'

	'PURE' ON-DEMAND APPROACHES	ADMINISTRATOR DRIVEN (e.g. CENSUS SWEEP) ⁴⁰ APPROACHES
KEY DISTINGUISHING FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Initiative</i>: people > the state • <i>People</i>: specific individuals, families, or households • <i>Timetable</i>: applicant's own timing – anyone can apply when in need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Initiative</i>: the state > the people • <i>People</i>: groups of people registered on mass • <i>Timetable</i>: administrative factors such as capacity & financing; registration conducted every 2–8 years, depending on choices
DELIVERY CAPACITY AND FINANCING REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires permanent and extensive network for client interface (physical, mobile, or digital) • Requires continuous administrative budget • Requires flexibility in design and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporarily (for short periods) requires large numbers of mobile teams, vehicles, other inputs for mass registration waves • Requires large and lumpy administrative budget for registration waves
RELATIVE ADVANTAGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic, ongoing entry and easy to update (including changes linked to lifecycle events) • More democratic nationally – everyone has the right to be interviewed at any time • Lower total costs due to self-selection of non-eligible out of registry process (interviewing fewer non-eligible households) • Permanent process helps build and maintain administrative and logistical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better chance of reaching the poorest and other vulnerable groups, who are less informed and more stigmatised (less likely to apply) • Lower marginal registry costs (per household interviewed) due to economies of scale with travel • If conducted often enough, there is a high chance of capturing positive changes to household conditions (less likely to be reported) • House check conducted during survey process (no misreporting assets, collection of GIS, etc.)

⁴⁰ Note that the term 'census sweep' refers to mass door-to-door registrations, but does not imply that every household is interviewed/registered: in some countries a percentage of households are pre-selected using methods ranging from community-based targeting to leveraging of existing data (e.g. Indonesia).

	'PURE' ON-DEMAND APPROACHES	ADMINISTRATOR DRIVEN (e.g. CENSUS SWEEP) ⁴⁰ APPROACHES
RELATIVE DISADVANTAGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor may not participate because they lack information, fear stigma and face other barriers to access (illiteracy, distance, disability etc.) • Costs can be higher if social workers must verify (via home visits) information provided • Can be a slow process, involving long queues and bureaucracy • Requires large network of trained staff at local level • Unlikely for people to report positive changes to household conditions • Does not allow for easy collection of household's GIS geo-referenced data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic surveys can lead to static/inflexible registries – especially if target population is linked to life-course events (pregnancy, children 0–3, old age, etc.) • Members of eligible households may not be home or respond when the survey is conducted • Costly in areas with many non-eligible households or where households are very dispersed • Re-registration very costly and often postponed beyond recommended 2 years
BEST SUITED FOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with low or moderate poverty/potential eligibility • (Heterogeneous) areas with high variability of needs and conditions across people and over time • When registry/system is well known or well publicised (and outreach campaigns encourage applications in poor areas) • When people have higher education levels • Where a network of social protection offices is available at local level or municipal staff are well trained to perform the registration function (to minimise travel for applicants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with high poverty rates (more than 70%) and high poverty density or high eligibility rates • (Homogeneous) areas with low variability of needs and conditions and with relatively stable poverty dynamics • When registry/system is not well known or well publicised and where different barriers of access are present • With new registries (programmes), particularly when a large programme needs to start quickly • For registries that also seek to keep a record of near-poor and non-poor households (e.g. to be targeted in case of an emergency or linked to social insurance schemes)

Source: Adapted from Lindert *et al.* forthcoming; Barca, 2017; Eurofound, 2015; Castaneda *et al.* 2005

⁴⁰ Note that the term 'census sweep' refers to mass door-to-door registrations, but does not imply that every household is interviewed/registered: in some countries a percentage of households are pre-selected using methods ranging from community-based targeting to leveraging of existing data (e.g. Indonesia).

ANNEX 2

SUMMARY OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PRE-REQUISITES

APPROACH	EXAMPLES (in italics have less info available) ⁴¹	OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES AND RISKS	PRE-REQUISITES/BEST SUITED (flexible financing is always an issue)
PERMANENT LOCAL OFFICES				
Deconcentrated/local welfare offices or programme offices	<i>Georgia, Mauritius, Montenegro, Turkey, South Africa via SASSA offices, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Mexico, North Macedonia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be accessed any time (when in need) – truly on-demand and inclusive (unless there are quotas or time limits) • Human contact/support – opportunity for case management, updates, etc. • Trained staff with sectoral knowledge • Permanent process helps build and maintain administrative structures • Lower total costs due to self-selection of non-eligible out of registration process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of offices across country and average distance from citizens greatly affect inclusiveness of outcomes • High risk of low uptake (lack of info, costliness/ complexity, access, social barriers) • Potential for stigma and other barriers (queues, etc.) • May not be appropriate for disabled/chronically ill etc. • Unlikely for people to report positive changes to household conditions • Less cost-effective if also requires household visit (to verify, capture GIS, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient number of offices across country and low average distance from citizens • Highly trained/capacitated staff • Used in combination with other methods • Alongside significant outreach efforts • In areas with low or moderate poverty/eligibility • In heterogeneous areas
Municipal/ local government offices	<i>Brazil, Chile, China, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Indonesia, North Macedonia forthcoming</i>	<p><i>Mostly as above, with following differences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost saving/effective in contexts where no capacity to provide deconcentrated offices • Potentially less stigmatising, as offered alongside other municipal/government services • Potentially higher local presence/ratio of offices to population 	<p><i>Mostly as above, with following differences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires institutionalisation via MoUs etc. • Requires explicit training of municipal staff (not necessarily sectoral experts) 	<p><i>Mostly as above, with following differences:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoUs and clear agreements and incentives for municipal/local government offices • System for ongoing training

⁴¹ Note some countries offer more than one approach.

APPROACH	EXAMPLES (in italics have less info available) ⁴¹	OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES AND RISKS	PRE-REQUISITES/BEST SUITED (flexible financing is always an issue)
DIGITAL 'WINDOW'				
Online	Turkey, Chile, Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be accessed any time (when in need) – truly on-demand and inclusive (unless there are quotas or time limits) • Potentially accessible from anywhere with Internet connection • Privacy of application process (no public queueing, etc.) • Very low cost to administer Reduced potential for bribes and corruption (not face-to-face) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk of low uptake • Not appropriate for illiterate, those with no access to Internet, those who are less comfortable with technology (e.g. the elderly), those with certain forms of disability • Lack of human contact/support – no opportunity for case management etc. • Unlikely for people to report positive changes to household conditions • May be hindered by legislation (e.g. authentication) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High proportion of population who are literate and familiar with technology • High coverage of Internet/mobile phones with data connection • Supporting legislation • Alongside significant outreach efforts • Used in combination with other methods
ONGOING/PERIODIC OUTREACH				
Rotating 'desks' and 'active' outreach	<i>Pakistan National Socio-Economic Registry pilot</i> , South Africa, Lesotho, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Chile, Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses last mile of service delivery problem on an ad-hoc basis • Can be targeted towards specific population groups and hard-to-reach/underserved areas • Cost saving/effective in contexts where no capacity to provide deconcentrated offices (can spread costs over time) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic and not continuous access: not truly 'on-demand' and inclusive • Requires frequent and predictable rotation to ensure inclusiveness • Potential for stigma and other barriers (queues, etc.) • Requires outreach strategy within communities (may suffer from low uptake) • Unlikely for people to report positive changes to household conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very useful when used in combination with other methods • Sufficient capacity for frequent and regular rotation • Capacity to prioritise areas with high poverty/eligibility and low uptake • In homogenous areas

⁴¹ Note some countries offer more than one approach.

APPROACH	EXAMPLES (in italics have less info available) ⁴¹	OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES AND RISKS	PRE-REQUISITES/BEST SUITED (flexible financing is always an issue)
DATABASE INTEGRATION CRVS and ID	<i>To trigger registration:</i> Mongolia Child Money Programme; some ex-CIS once-off child grants <i>To complement registration:</i> Turkey, Chile, Argentina <i>To update:</i> All that have established links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to proactively initiate assistance on selected programmes (e.g. child benefits, old age pensions) • Potential to exit beneficiaries (e.g. deceased) • Potential to complement other methods (lowering data requirements, validating, updating) • Can support estimation of potential caseloads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only truly universal and individual (not household) programmes can fully initiate assistance via CRVS and ID data (i.e. without requiring additional information, home visits, etc.) • Birth, death and ID registration low in most L/MICs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High coverage of CRVS and/or national ID • Interoperability/data sharing possible via unique identifiers • E-governance context • Legislation safeguarding data privacy/security • When used in combination with other methods
Other government administrative databases (tax, land, disability, health insurance, etc.)	Turkey, Chile, Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very small potential to proactively initiate assistance in selected programmes (e.g. disability benefit with disability registry) • Potential to complement other methods (e.g. reducing data requirements and acting as validation of data provided) • Can enable proactive updates and 'tracking' of positive (and negative) changes to household conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy/security concerns • In many L/MICS low coverage/quality of existing databases (e.g. because of large informal sector) • Impossible/difficult in contexts with no unique identifier • Complex if no cross-sectoral coordination, whole of government focus etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation safeguarding data privacy/security • High coverage and quality of relevant databases (e.g. high levels of formality for tax data) • Interoperability/data sharing between key databases via unique identifiers • E-governance and whole of government focus • Clear MoUs, coordination, trust
Humanitarian databases	Mali (being developed), Niger (being developed) Somalia (envisaged), Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to complement other methods (e.g. reducing data requirements, increasing types of variables available, increasing data currency) 	<i>Mostly as above</i> , noting types of variables collected/retained/ used often differ broadly across sectors	<i>Mostly as above</i> , noting long term/trusting relationship with humanitarian actors needed

41 Note some countries offer more than one approach.

IMPRINT

Published by:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices:

Bonn and Eschborn

Address:

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36	Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
53113 Bonn / Germany	65760 Eschborn / Germany
T +49 228 44 60 - 0	T +49 61 96 79 - 0
F +49 228 44 60 - 17 66	F +49 61 96 79 - 11 15

E info@giz.de

I www.giz.de

Programme/project description:

On-demand and up-to-date? Dynamic inclusion
and data updating for social assistance

Authors:

Valentina Barca and Madhumitha Hebbar

Coordination:

Dominique Leska, Christina Betting and Fabian Klinge

Editing:

Susan Sellars

Layout / Illustrations:

Kommunikationsagentur GmbH
Scheufele Hesse Eigler
Frankfurt am Main

URL links:

Responsibility for the content of external websites linked in
this publication always lies with their respective publishers.
GIZ expressly dissociates itself from such content.

On behalf of



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Responsible for the content:

Ralf Radermacher (GIZ)
Bonn, August 2020



Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices:
Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32+36
53113 Bonn / Germany
T +49 228 44 60-0
F +49 228 44 60-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1-5
65760 Eschborn / Germany
T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 61 96 79-11 15

E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de

f www.facebook.de/gizprofile
t twitter.com/giz_gmbh

On behalf of



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development