

COVID-19 & SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION

System strengthening service portfolio in support Caribbean governments' responses to COVID-19



The COVID-19 global outbreak and its wide-ranging social and economic impacts in the Caribbean are anticipated to erode development gains and threaten the livelihoods and well-being of hundreds of thousands of people, with disproportionate impacts foreseen on vulnerable individuals, people living in poverty and those without access to safety nets. Several governments in the region are introducing, adapting or expanding social protection programmes in response to COVID-19. Others are planning similar measures. In anticipation of what may become a sustained crisis and the resulting needs, urgent action is required to ensure that social protection can effectively, efficiently and sustainably respond.

As part of our mission to strengthen Caribbean governments' emergency preparedness and response capacities, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides a wide-ranging portfolio of services to strengthen social protection and its responsiveness to shocks, delivered through operational support and technical assistance. These range from supporting governments with analysis on how programmes may be adapted or put in place to meet emerging needs resulting from a shock, targeting of those who should receive assistance, determining how much support to provide and appropriate channels to reach recipients. WFP also supports vulnerability analysis, assessments and monitoring, including through remote surveying. Services will be tailored and prioritized based on governments' plans and response actions, resourcing availability and operational requirements.

In order to provide more information on these critical issues, CARICOM has launched a [survey](#) on the impact of COVID-19 on food security, livelihoods and access to markets. The mobile survey was prepared by WFP, with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and will provide valuable information on how the global pandemic is affecting people throughout the Caribbean. An interactive dashboard presenting real-time findings from the survey is available for both [smartphones](#) and [desktop computers](#).





WFP reaches 86.7 million people a year around the world as a global leader in emergency response, relief and rehabilitation and development. In 2017 alone, WFP distributed US\$1.76 billion in cash-transfers in 61 countries. WFP Caribbean has been able to apply this global operational expertise in cash transfers in the Caribbean.

For example, in the 2017 response to Hurricane Maria in Dominica and the 2019 response to Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas, WFP's operational response capacities were called upon to bring additional financial and technical resources to support government-led responses to shocks. When resources are available, WFP can further support government efforts by financing top-up transfers to existing beneficiaries and/or to expand assistance to additional households affected by the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. WFP support through the provision of transfers can help governments to access additional funds not normally made available directly to governments and bring an additional layer of accountability to programmes. WFP Caribbean is able to leverage its operational capacities, particularly in emergencies, to support governments and other partners to expedite responses to COVID-19 through social protection programmes while more significant resources are made available through budget reallocations and international financial institutions.

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
<p>Shock-Responsive Social Protection Evidence, Analysis and Support</p> 	<p>Provide technical assistance and support for adapting and/or expanding social protection to assist impacted populations.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ WFP has already spearheaded an evidence generation agenda on shock-responsive social protection in the Caribbean including a comprehensive literature review¹ and country case studies² ❖ Technical assistance to support governments to develop and strengthen COVID-19 response actions through social protection by topping up assistance to existing beneficiaries and/or expanding support to additional people, while ensuring they work effectively alongside other sectorial responses and services ❖ Develop COVID-19 specific guidelines, standard operating procedures and protocols to support shock-responsive social protection and linkages with disaster risk management strategies
<p>Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping</p> 	<p>Provide geospatial and socio-economic/food security and livelihoods analysis and needs assessments to inform response planning and targeting.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Design and implement online/mobile surveys to analyse the impact of COVID-19 on households ❖ Roll out data collection instruments and services including data cleaning, analysis, reporting and dissemination of findings ❖ Develop tailored dashboards and other data visualisation tools ❖ Analysis of existing data on poverty and disaster/risk and exposure to inform scenario planning ❖ Support the integration and cross-analysis of data sets from other sectors (e.g. DRM, health) ❖ Support identification of priority areas and target groups for support ❖ Strengthen national capacities to use quantitative and qualitative information through training and handover of tools
<p>Data and Information Management</p> 	<p>Support the strengthening of social protection information management systems, identify areas for leveraging existing data to inform COVID-19 responses and improve data and information management standards, protocols, capacities and systems.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Analyse eligibility tools/databases and the information they capture (e.g. socio-economic, disaster risk, vulnerability) ❖ Support the use of beneficiary databases and registries to identify people in need of assistance and the integration of new beneficiaries into existing or new databases ❖ Support the development of management information systems (MIS) through a multidimensional approach (hardware, software, data safety, standards, manuals, protocols and knowledge transfer/training) ❖ Support the establishment of data-sharing agreements with government institutions and NGOs

¹ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/2019-shock-responsive-social-protection-caribbean-literature-review>

² Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. A consultative multi-stakeholder session was conducted in British Virgin Islands in lieu of a case study.

<p>Targeting Systems</p> 	<p>Support the development and rollout of targeting processes and criteria to identify people and households most in need of assistance due to COVID-19 which could be covered through expanding the benefits and/or coverage as well as relaxation of conditionality of social protection programmes or developing new temporary programmes.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Review existing eligibility criteria and support the development of context-specific targeting criteria that capture socio-economic vulnerability and the impacts of COVID-19 ❖ Assist governments with the development of remote targeting and registration tools ❖ Support the registration of new recipients for temporary expansion of an existing or new programme ❖ Inform and develop guidance that can be leveraged/adapted in future
<p>Delivery Mechanisms</p> 	<p>Optimise processes and functions for the delivery of cash and in-kind assistance and strengthen delivery capabilities to respond to COVID-19.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Support the development of strategies for different cash/in-kind delivery options tailored to the pandemic context and evolving situation (e.g. cash transfers, school meals) ❖ Provide technical guidance on the delivery of in-kind assistance in the context of COVID-19 and social distancing requirements ❖ Conduct end-to-end supply chain assessment of key food and non-food supply chain players and market actors, to develop a strategy for supply chain optimisation
<p>Transfer Value</p> 	<p>Support the analysis and determination of cash transfer values and/or food assistance baskets to support people impacted by COVID-19.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Analyse data (e.g. needs, markets, impacts) to estimate transfer value options and the most appropriate types of assistance (e.g. cash/voucher, in-kind, mixed approaches) ❖ Support minimum expenditure basket calculation based on available data and assessments on poverty and population needs ❖ Identify composition of food basket for optimal support to impacted households ❖ Support cross-sectorial coordination to standardise tools and approaches and harmonise the transfer value
<p>Multi-Stakeholder Coordination</p> 	<p>In line with national social protection and disaster risk management coordination mechanisms, support the facilitation and strengthening of inter-institutional arrangements for shock-responsive social protection.</p> <p>Examples of key activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Support/strengthen coordination between disaster risk management, social protection and other sectors through linkages with national plans, cross-sectorial strategies, task forces and committees ❖ Identify and support strategies to integrate social protection systems (e.g. MIS), delivery mechanisms and approaches into disaster risk management preparedness and response strategies ❖ Develop protocols and SOPs mainstreaming the role of social protection within disaster risk management plans and mechanisms ❖ Support stocktaking exercises, lessons learned and training to strengthen awareness and knowledge-sharing, including related to COVID-19

As part of WFP's broader support to Caribbean countries, and in coordination with the World Bank the CCRIF-SPC and other partners, WFP supports the analysis of disaster risk financing instruments and develops options for financing responses to disasters through social protection.

Disaster Risk Financing



Examples of key activities:

- ❖ Review of national financial regulatory framework and risk financing instruments
- ❖ Identify key indicators which highlight the social impact in the aftermath of a shock
- ❖ Estimate impacts of selected hazards/shocks on population through a risk modelling approach (hazard, exposure and vulnerability analysis)
- ❖ Support establishment of disaster risk financing strategies linked to social protection systems, including protocols for direct pay-outs to impacted / vulnerable beneficiaries
- ❖ In collaboration with partners, support the development of tailored products for financing shock-responsive social protection and piloting their rollout.



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