SUMMARY:

COVID-19 AND CVA: IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE CRISIS AND RESPONSE

CVA SCALE-UP, NEEDS, AND FUNDING

CVA is being scaled up significantly in response to COVID-19, but the gap between needs and funding is growing rapidly.

There is no evidence that the scale up of CVA to date has impacted the quality of programming. However, within a context of tightening budgets, it is possible that investments in quality and accountability to affected populations will be compromised.

OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD BACK BETTER

The COVID-19 pandemic is having an extraordinary human cost, but also presents an opportunity to redefine the humanitarian system to better serve the needs of crisis-affected people and build back better:

- The COVID-19 response and recovery can accelerate efforts for new and innovative partnerships between international actors and local civil society. International organisations will need to learn how to be better intermediaries.

- The COVID-19 response may provide the momentum to address long-standing cash coordination challenges. Cash Working Groups have responded quickly, providing critical analysis and guidance, but structural barriers remain, e.g. resourcing and weak links to the formal response architecture.

- The COVID-19 response has accelerated collaboration between social protection and humanitarian CVA practitioners at the global level. But, in many cases, in-country responses are being impeded by “waiting games”, silos and competitiveness.

- The COVID-19 response is driving a rapid shift to remote and digital channels for registration, delivery and monitoring of CVA. These shifts may become the ‘new normal’, bringing opportunities and requiring careful consideration of risks around safe programming and data management.

- The COVID-19 response has highlighted the need for better market analysis and understanding of how humanitarian response can strengthen market systems. Market recovery strategies should be integrated into programme design and efforts to connect humanitarian and development actors in market-based programming should be increased.

‘NO-REGRETS’ ACTIONS IN THE COVID-19 CONTEXT

- Look for opportunities to link with social protection systems where appropriate. There are many simple entry points along the delivery chain that can make a big difference, and there is need to fill coverage gaps and functions which may not be prioritised by governments.

- Work with others to build capacities to create a win-win situation where cash actors throughout the CVA ecosystem are cash-ready.

- When moving quickly to digital and remote programming, consider complementary interventions and alliance building to address potential exclusionary effects, digital literacy and to get participation and feedback processes right.

- Act short term but think long term. Always have building back better in mind.