The Complementarity Initiative

Bringing Hunger Solutions to Kenya's Safety Nets System

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KENYA VISION 2030

WFP registering cash transfer recipients in Makueni county
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Inside this update:

In focus: **The Single Registry, what, why, who and how**

Caught in the corridor with **Winnie Mwasiaji,** National Coordinator, Social Protection Secretariat

Last time:

- *Social Protection highlights from the UNDAF*
- *Testing WFP's revised Community Based Targeting Guide, including electronic registration*

Next time:

- *The continuing story of cash transfers*

In focus: The Single Registry

The Single Registry is a key output of the Complementarity Initiative and the Social Protection area of the UNDAF. The Complementarity Initiative is a 4 year project supported by WFP to ensure that Kenya's food assistance programmes in the arid and semi-arid lands are integrated into Kenya's safety nets system and aligned with the National Social Protection Policy.

The aim is to ensure that the whole portfolio of safety nets meets the needs of food insecure and vulnerable households efficiently and effectively, and coherently addresses the range of needs including chronic vulnerability, relief, and resilience.

Central to achieving effective coordination and collaboration of safety nets in Kenya, is avoiding duplication of assistance and ensuring that programmes complement each other. The initiative will support and accelerate government leadership and coordination of Kenya's safety nets.

In the next few pages you will learn more about how the Single Registry solves key challenges to managing and coordinating safety net programmes effectively through stronger data sharing and analysis.

What is the Single Registry?

The Single Registry is a web-based automated Management Information System that provides a single platform where common and essential information across five social assistance programmes is stored, analysed and reported.

The Single Registry acts as a single point of reference for telling us about who is receiving what type of assistance, where the assistance is received and when the assistance is transferred. This information can be accessed at the aggregate level or at an individual programme or household level.

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Quick Recap:

Under the Complementarity Initiative, WFP has committed to contributing technical assistance over the next 4 years to the National Social Protection Secretariat to:

1. Develop a ***Complementarity Strategy*** that describes how hunger solutions are (or will be) integrated into Kenya's safety nets system.
2. Enhance the National Social Protection ***Single Registry*** to ensure government has access to and can use data about who is receiving what, where, and under which programme.
3. Improve accountability by establishing a strong ***Complaints and Grievances Mechanism***, including a toll-free line that anyone can call for information about safety net programmes, or to report a problem or wrongdoing.
4. Establish a plan for a ***Productive Safety Net Programme*** for poor and food insecure households to work on projects that contribute to their own and their communities' resilience.
5. Roll-out ***National Guidelines for Food Assistance Programmes***, to guide programme designers and implementers at the national and county levels.

Currently the Single Registry houses information about the following social assistance programmes:

- CT-OVC (Cash transfers to orphans and vulnerable children)
- PWSDCT (People with severe disability cash transfer)
- OPCT (Older persons cash transfer)
- HSNP (Hunger Safety Net Programme)

Food Assistance Programmes, including cash for assets and unconditional cash transfers (WFP) will move onto the Single Registry next month.

Who benefits from the Single Registry?

The Kenyan Government, Humanitarian and Development actors:

A significant challenge facing safety net policymakers, humanitarian and development actors in Kenya is the fragmentation of programming, which has led to duplication and inconsistencies in the operation and implementation of social protection throughout the country. Indeed, Kenya's National Social Protection policy calls for harmonisation and de-fragmentation across safety net programmes. It recognises that in the past 'interventions have tended to be created in a piecemeal and uncoordinated manner'.

The Single Registry helps to streamline and coordinate safety net programming and to bring stakeholders together in an effective partnership to agree on the way forward for social protection at both the national and county levels. It also lays the foundation for linkages between programmes, that can improve efficiency and effectiveness, and coordination between national and county levels.

KENYA VISION 2030

Coordination of social protection programmes is a key activity under the social pillar of Vision 2030

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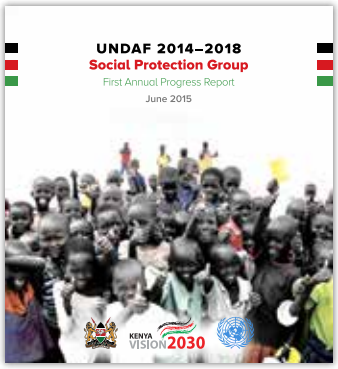

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At the moment it's the social assistance programmes that are on the Single Registry but future plans could include a broader set of social protection programmes such as National Social Security Fund (NSSF) and National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF).

Specifically, policy makers and programme coordinators can use the Single Registry to:

- Verify beneficiaries through a connection to Kenya's Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS). This reduces the chances of fraudulent beneficiaries being enrolled and caters for transparent reporting on who is receiving what.
- Decide if it is appropriate to enrol beneficiaries that already receive assistance from another programme
- Do informed budget planning, since it provides macro and micro overviews of which social assistance programmes are on-going, and the operational challenges and successes of each programme. For example, whether payments were made on time.
- Access information on complaints and grievances for each programme. This functionality provides a point of reference on the performance and success of social assistance programmes for policy makers and programme designers.
- Use the macro statistics from the Single Registry to contribute to measuring cost effectiveness.
- Eventually harmonise all cash transfer and other safety net programmes under one national safety net programme.

Kenyans:

- The Single Registry works towards the fulfilment of a constitutional requirement. Article 43 of the constitution affirms the right of every person to economic and social rights. The Single Registry helps identify genuinely poor and vulnerable people and can be used as a tool for programme designers to systematically increase coverage of programmes.
- When a programme enrols a household, the Single Registry can flag-up whether that household is already receiving under another programme. Since resources are scarce, a programme can decide whether or not the household is in need of assistance from more than one programme. Reducing overlap and eliminating duplication of assistance may free up funds for other poor and vulnerable Kenyans to receive assistance.
- A public dashboard is coming out soon where aggregated statistics will be displayed on a web portal for everyone to see!

What's the difference between "social protection" and "social assistance"?

Social Protection is the umbrella term and also includes Social Assistance. Social Assistance includes most non-contributory programmes specifically targeted toward extremely poor and vulnerable individuals and households, whereas Social Protection covers a broader spectrum of wealth levels and contributory programmes.

How does the Single Registry work?

The Single Registry is made up of Management Information Systems (MIS).

A Management Information System is a software application that enables the flow and management of information for key processes within social protection schemes including:

- Identification of applicants and beneficiaries through targeting and registration
- Compliance with conditions in conditional cash transfer and public works schemes
- Management of appeals and grievance processes
- Exit and graduation of beneficiaries
- Production of payment lists
- Reconciliation of payments

Each programme specific MIS has been designed or adapted to include key protocols that enable communication with the Single Registry. The programme specific databases are populated when a programme enrols beneficiaries into a programme. The programme's MIS then works to manage the steps listed above.

Currently, the Single Registry is fed with information from each social assistance programme's specific MIS. This could change in the future, if, for example, some programmes are consolidated.

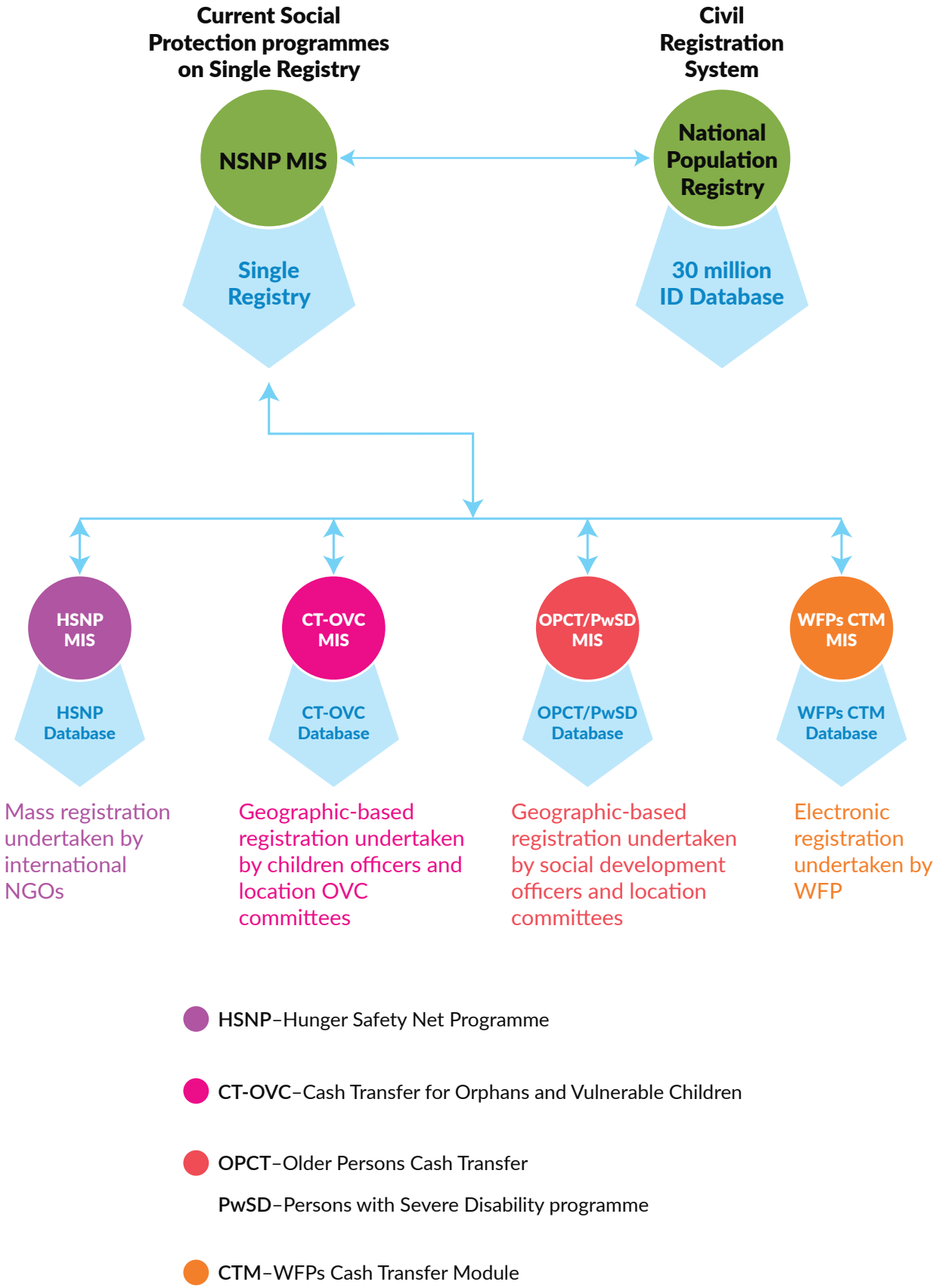
The Single Registry then communicates to the National Population Registry to validate each beneficiary's identity details. For example, if a programme is trying to register a beneficiary that doesn't have a valid ID card, the system will reject registration of that beneficiary.

The National Population Register (NPR) is managed by Integrated Population Registration Service (IPRS) and contains details of 30 million valid identity cards.

When the system is online, the analysis is real-time. Since a lot of registration for social assistance takes place in remote areas, the system works offline too, in which case the information is updated as and when a programme MIS goes online. In this scenario, the

Single Registry can aggregate the data, connect to the IPRS, and produce a list of beneficiaries that have invalid ID cards.

Below is a graphic showing how the Single Registry works in Kenya. The arrows show information flows, the circles represent MISs and the blue pentagons demonstrate where there are information databases.



Timeline:
How has this work taken shape?

2011

- Kenya's Social Protection Policy is approved.
- Management Information Systems working group is formed, with members from WFP, HSNP, CTOVC, PWSDCT, OPCT and USFP (Urban Food Subsidy Programme, now discontinued).
- An assessment carried out by the MIS working group identifies key recommendations for MIS systems, including the key fields that each programme is required to populate when registering beneficiaries.

This was the situation in 2011:

Some programmes didn't have an electronic database.

Some programme had an electronic database but no MIS.

None of the databases for each programme could speak to each other.

There weren't standard geographic locations across programmes (this needs to be defined to identify where beneficiaries are receiving assistance)

2012

- Guidelines for MISs issued by the MIS working group.

2013

- Government-run cash transfer MISs are harmonised.

2014

July

- The Social Protection Secretariat formally requests WFP for technical assistance on the Single Registry.
- CTOVC and HSNP link up to the Single Registry.

October

- OPCT and PWSD link up to the Single Registry. MISs are harmonised.

2015

March

- WFP and the Ministry of Labour Social Security and Services sign a memorandum of understanding for 4-years of technical assistance, including on the Single Registry. WFP contracts Development Pathways for the services, and launches the first year of enhancements.

May

- An automated link is established between the Single Registry and the IPRS.
- Decentralization of the Single Registry to 10 test counties is initiated.

Coming Up in 2015

- WFP links up permanently to the Single Registry.
- A public dashboard is available on the web.
- Training for programme MIS staff.
- Electronic registration module is available to all programmes.

What were the challenges?

The Single Registry has come a long way since 2011. Back when the policy was just approved, the Single Registry as it stands today was just a dream. Now it is a reality. To get to this point, the team overcame a number of challenges:

Conceptualisation.
At first, it was difficult to technically conceptualise how social assistance programmes could be coordinated. Now the model is clear and logical, but it took a lot of assessment and thinking to get there.

Coordination.
The Secretariat had to undertake a massive task to actually coordinate individual programmes to invest time and resources in an MIS. Now each social assistance programme owns its own MIS and is a core part of the Single Registry. It works for all the actors involved.

Resources.
In order to save time and money in the future, an upfront investment is needed. Over the years, various development partners have stepped in to support the Government in making this happen.

Caught in the corridor...

Winnie Mwasiaji

National Coordinator, National Social Protection Secretariat.
Ministry of Labour, Social Services and Security

Last month, you presented the Single Registry to the Ministry of Devolution & Planning as a public service delivery innovation. Why is the Single Registry an exciting innovation for Kenya?

We were very proud to present the Single Registry as an innovation. Indeed, it has changed the way we report and coordinate our safety net programmes. This is why it is an exciting innovation:

- The Kenyan model is unique, internationally. Many countries set up single registries to consolidate targeting. Ours is set up as a mechanism for planning, coordination and reporting within the National Safety Net programme. In addition, the model was also clearly envisioned as part of the National Social Protection Policy.
- It has led to cost-efficiency because of elimination of double dipping among National Safety Net Programme beneficiaries.
- It has increased time efficiency in verification of applicants' details. Instead of back and forth between national and district staff, it is now possible to automatically verify applicant details against the National Population Register managed by Integrated Population Registration Service (IPRS).
- The set-up of individual programme Management Information Systems and Single Registry has provided a tool for consolidated planning and increased responsiveness to the vulnerable and marginalised groups.

You have championed the Single Registry from the start. Are you proud of the achievements made?

Absolutely! It's the small steps that I have seen achieved over the years that I am proud of. For example, when the first two systems were able to communicate with each other, and when I actually entered my own ID card number into the Single Registry and it validated it against the IPRS.

Reporting used to be a very cumbersome process. It's my job to coordinate the Social Protection Secretariat and report in an accurate and timely fashion. The Single Registry makes me confident that our reporting can be done quickly, efficiently and we can respond to data requests meaningfully.

What has WFP contributed to the Single Registry?

WFP has been very forthcoming with sharing its data and this adds a lot of value to the Single Registry. WFP has been one of the development partners who have

been transparent and open about its programmes and the people it reaches. I hope this will encourage others to come on board. In addition, WFP have also been part of the MIS working group from the start of the Single Registry project. I am happy also that this year, they have come big with technical support to further improve single registry reporting to dashboards, develop data sharing protocols for all safety net programmes, pilot digital registration platform and train MIS officers.

In terms of social protection coordination systems, where does Kenya stand on the international scene?

We have a very unique model here. Of course, every country builds a model according to their context. We didn't take another model and replicate, instead we looked at our needs, resources and the foundations we had to work with and build it up from there. We opted for an integrated approach where programme MISs were first developed, and then built the Single Registry and populated it with data from the programmes.

We have had a number of African countries knocking at our door wanting to find out how we built our system and we are proud to show case it, especially to the rest of the developing world. Our model is easy to replicate, especially if you have to move in steps and upgrade gradually.

We have a model that is more cost effective than the Cadastro UNICO in Brazil for example, since it only deals with the data that is collected by programmes enrolling beneficiaries. We have learnt from other countries and the rest of Africa and we continue to learn as we improve.

Do you have a future vision for the Single Registry?

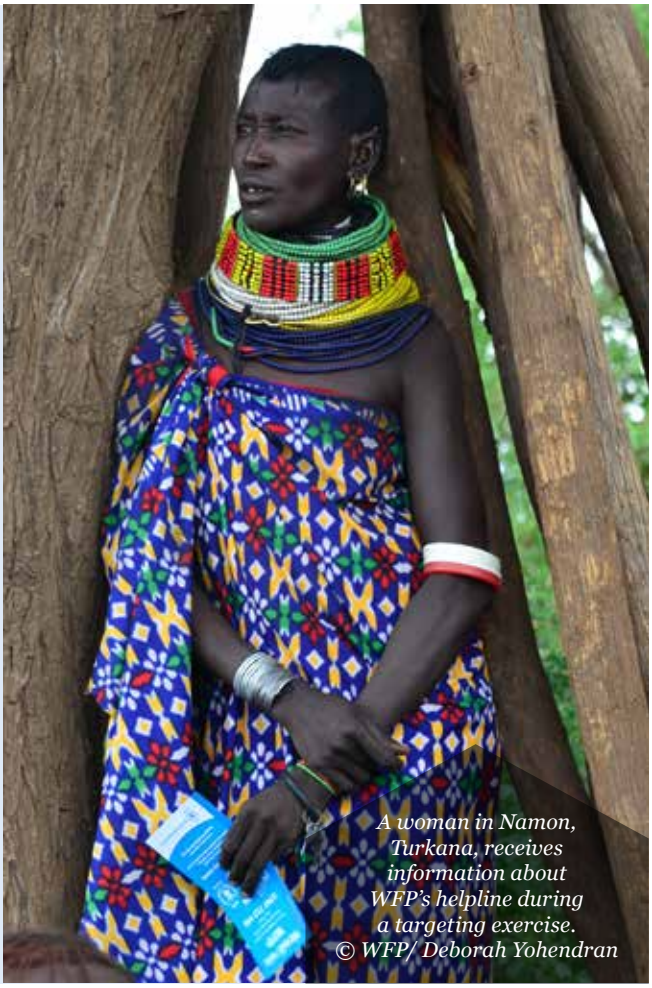
I envision a comprehensive system that will be useful across government. There are key components such as NSSF and NHIF that will be included in the future. At the moment we don't have a solution as to how exactly that link will look, but we are working on making it happen. If we truly desire graduation and full protection, we have to make sure people are getting comprehensive support – the answer lies in the Single Registry.

WFP and the Single Registry

WFP was a core member of the original MIS working group in 2011 and we already had our own MIS for cash transfer programmes all that time. The bulk of the work done on the Single Registry between 2011 and 2013 aimed to harmonise government-run programmes. In 2015 WFP stepped in with support, to bring food assistance programmes online, and support other important enhancements (like the link to the IPRS).

WFP has about 500,000 beneficiaries in its own MIS, and has used the Single Registry database to generate key statistics such as % of overlap with other programmes and % of verified IDs (some of this information was presented in the last update).

WFP is currently standardising geographical locations in our MIS in order to fully harmonise with the Single Registry. As soon as this is completed, WFP's programmes will be full and permanent members of the Single Registry, and will use the electronic registration application to bring all food assistance beneficiaries into the safety net view.



A woman in Namon, Turkana, receives information about WFP's helpline during a targeting exercise.
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Comments? Questions?
For more information, write to:
kenya.feedback@wfp.org