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# RCWG

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ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL  
CASH WORKING GROUP

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Activities 2018-19

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This snapshot is compiled by Barbara Leseni, CashCap deployee to the Asia-Pacific RCWG as the Inter-Agency Cash Coordinator. Design by OCHA

# Summary of Regional Cash Working Group Activities 2018-19

## Prelude

The Regional Cash Working Group (RCWG) summary of activities is a snapshot that provides information of 2018 activities and achievements, and 2019 priority areas at both regional and country level. The purpose of this snapshot is therefore, to showcase the relevance and profile of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in the region, types of responses where CVA has been used and the critical work of the CWGs despite the prevailing limitations.

This snapshot will be shared to a range of stakeholders including; Donors, Regional and Country level actors, at regional fora to inform on the benefits of cash assistance programming and to other external actors interested in the understanding of CVA in the region.

A special appreciation goes to the RCWG co-chairs (WFP, OCHA, IFRC) for offering both strategic and advisory roles in the coordination of the RCWG, to steering committee actors including; FAO, UNICEF, UNHCR, ECHO, The Border Consortium (TBC), UNFPA, UNWOMEN, CRS and ActAlliance for their support in the initiatives of the working group and to CashCap, for the support and deployment of the inter-agency Cash Coordinators for the Cox Bazaar Refugee operations and at the Regional level in the past two plus years.

## Background

The Asia-Pacific Regional Cash Working Group (RCWG) started in 2013, and was chaired by CaLP, to support the development of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) capacity and expertise through the delivery of trainings across countries and, contribute to building evidence and learning on best practice through a number of studies. In 2017, the leadership structure of the RCWG shifted to a tripartite arrangement co-chaired by WFP, OCHA and IFRC. This collaboration of agencies ensured interests on CVA agenda was maintained and information shared amongst members. However, there still remained a gap on having a dedicated resource who could provide both strategic and technical support and follow up to the National/Sub-National Cash Working Groups (CWGs) and with regional agencies, and ensure the cash agenda is well received in various fora including the IASC Regional Directors meetings. In 2018, through the support of CashCap, a Cash and Markets expert was deployed to coordinate the RCWG as an inter-agency Cash Coordinator.

## Achievements and Objectives

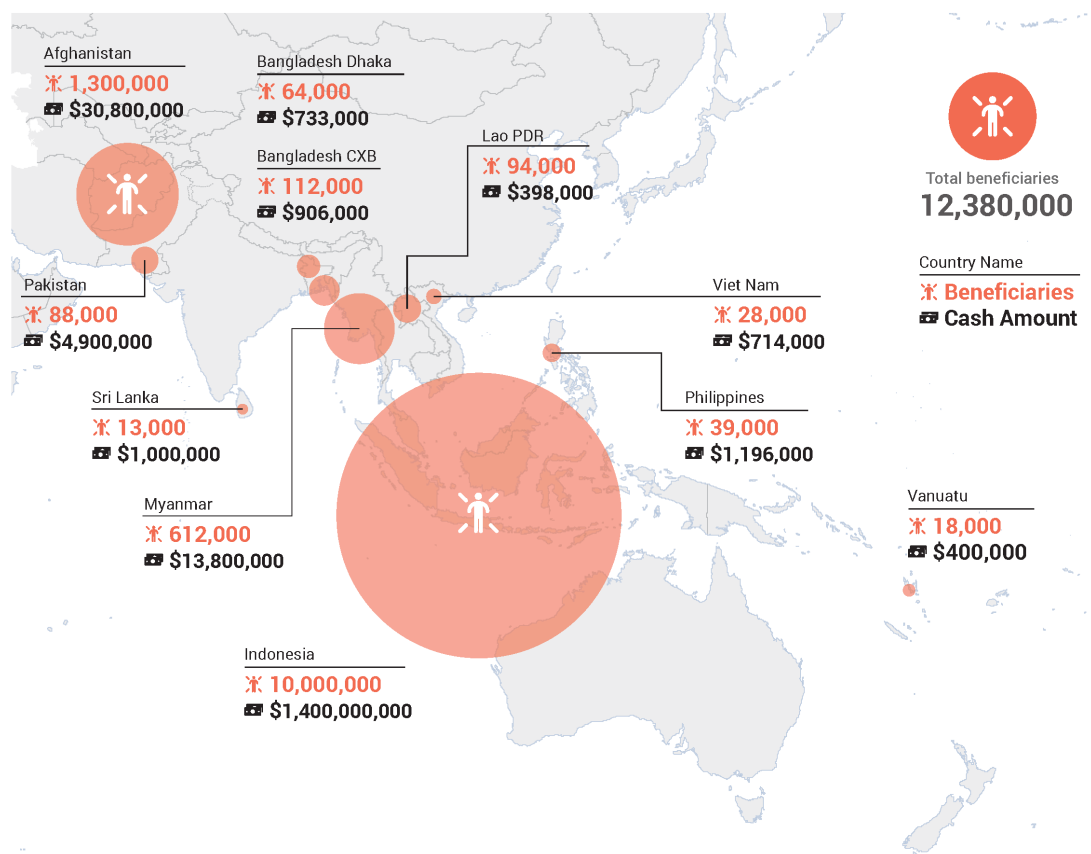
The presence of a neutral and dedicated resource in the region therefore, fostered bilateral discussions with CWG co-chairs in Asia and the Pacific, RCWG Steering Committee members and Donors that culminated to the 2018 workplan that was all encompassing and ensured the interest of members were well captured (see Annex 1). In addition, the workplan also formed as a foundational basis in key achievements:

- Identification of CVA capacity gaps through roll out of a survey exercise to stakeholders (see Annex 2);
- Roll out of the Asia-Pacific launch of the State of World's Cash event, convening key stakeholders from across the region on the critical cash discussions;
- Support advocacy initiatives on implementation of multipurpose cash at scale using technological solutions for the Rohingya Refugees (see Annex 3);
- Support the Indonesia and Philippines CWGs on developing policies and national frameworks for use of CVA in emergencies, and coordination structures (see Annex 4);

1. Major examples include 2015 Philippines Typhoon Haiyan Cash Coordination Review; 2016 CTP and Persons of Concern Briefing Note; and 2016 Pacific CTP Feasibility Scoping Study (the latter two which were supported by Australian DFAT).

2. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/regional-cash-working-group>

## 2018 Beneficiaries Coverage and Cash Amount



- Insertion of CVA indicators in simulation exercises in the region;
- Mapping of CVA activities (operations response, delivery mechanisms and populations reached) in the region.

In 2019, through consultations with RCWG, and building on 2018 workplan and requests from both individual agencies and National CWGs, it was agreed to slightly revise the 2018 workplan to 3 objectives and adjust the activities under each objective to not only inform on the prevailing needs which focused on capacity building but also ensure that accountability at the regional level is well defined and separated from the regional support to the CWGs (see Annex 5).

The 2019 objectives are:

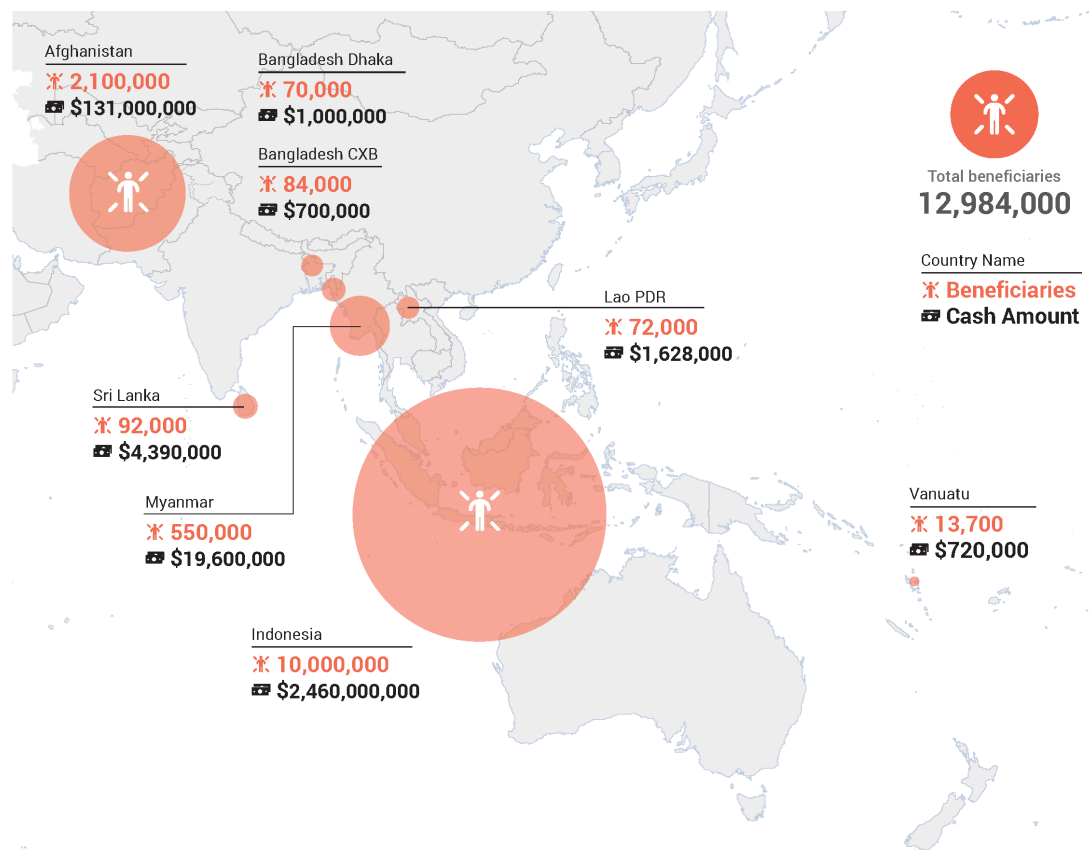
- Objective 1: Strengthen coordination of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in ongoing operations and emergency preparedness and response;
- Objective 2: Provide technical support to ongoing operations and emergency preparedness and response;
- Objective 3: Provide a platform for CVA key information sharing and advocacy.

### Priority Areas

In collaboration with the RCWG steering committee, key priorities for 2019 include:

- Advocacy on linking humanitarian CVA to government led social protection stemming from the ASEAN SRSP guidelines;

## 2019 Projections



- Strengthening National CWG activities and support in set-up of CWGs in nascent countries that are planning to implement CVA;
- Foster CVA discussions and information sharing in various fora at both regional and national level;

In addition, 2019 has seen a strengthening in collaborations and partnership with CaLP and Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) through;

- Training of the Pacific RCWG members on CaLP CVA core course for programme staff;
- Hosting of the CaLP - Asia-Pacific RCWG data protection webinar held earlier in the year;

- Hosting of the CaLP- Asia-Pacific RCWG learning event that brings together the majority of the CWG co-chairs and regional actors to share experiences on coordination and key CWG identified thematic areas on: shock responsive social protection and CVA, preparedness and CVA, minimum expenditure basket (MEB) processes/approaches and, gender and CVA.

## Afghanistan Cash Working Group

The Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG) is an inter-cluster technical working group set up to ensure cash and voucher assistance (CVAs) in Afghanistan are coordinated, follow a common rationale, are context specific and are undertaken in a manner that does not inflict harm or exacerbate vulnerabilities of the affected population. The working group (WG) was initially established in 2012 under the FSAC but since 2014, it evolved to an inter-cluster working group which is overseen by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT), and co-chaired by NRC and WFP.

The humanitarian response in Afghanistan is a multi-year plan that runs from 2018-2021. Currently, the CVWG provides support to ESNFI, FSAC clusters and to agencies providing multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) under the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM) consortium. The objectives of the CVWG are:

1. Operational coordination of CVAs amongst partners – including implementation standards and processes, common reporting platform, harmonized assessment and monitoring tools.
2. Evidence-based advocacy and creating a community of practice on CVAs – including through joint advocacy around national or private sector regulations impairing effective cash-based assistance; and information sharing on post-distribution monitoring (PDM) data and data on various CVA projects being implemented across sectors and partners.
3. Mainstreaming of protection and accountability to affected population concerns in CVAs.
4. Capacity building of partners in CVAs.

CVA also known as market based responses have been implemented in Afghanistan since 2009, and its value is widely acknowledged by the Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCT) in terms of cost-efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes together with the dignity, flexibility and choice it offers to the affected people. In 2018, close to USD 26M was disbursed through CVAs to over 1.1 million people, through both sector-specific cash grants (e.g. Cash for food, cash for NFIs, etc.) and multipurpose cash grants (primarily based on the Survival Minimum

Expenditure Basket (SMEB)). While the largest cash beneficiary group in 2017 were conflict-induced IDPs (who received emergency MPCA), the largest group in 2018 were drought IDPs (who mostly received cash for food). However, in terms of volume of cash disbursed, conflict IDPs remained the largest recipients of CVA, due to the much larger size of MPC grants relative to cash-for-food grants.

Although markets in the country are generally functional even in insecure environments, quickly bounce-back from shocks and are accessible to affected populations who tend to concentrate in urban or peri-urban areas, decisions to use CVA would need to consider a number of other factors. These include, financial service providers' operational reach, their effectiveness (in ensuring the intended humanitarian outcome) and protection risks/opportunities. In addition, further assessments on do-no-harm require to be undertaken to ensure that cash does not play as a pull factor or further exacerbate tensions between local authorities, IDPs and host communities, as observed during the drought response in Hirat and Badghis.

In 2019, the CVWG will lead discussions with the humanitarian community on pre-conditions for CVA that require considerations when deciding on cash-versus-in-kind assistance. In addition, explore possibilities for using cash-for-livelihoods as part of drought-related recovery efforts, and further streamline timely and accurate reporting of programmes as well as capture trends in cash programming across sectors and regions.

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## Bangladesh - Dhaka Cash Working Group

The Bangladesh Cash Working Group (CWG) was established in March 2014 with the view to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) across sectors and clusters in disaster preparedness and response in Bangladesh. During emergency, the CWG coordinates CVA through harmonization of cash transfers within geographical locations, ensure quality programming and together with members conduct market price monitoring.

With growing interests in quality cash assistance, the CWG membership has grown to accommodate UN agencies, I/NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Donors, Government departments and the private sector (the Financial Service Providers). This led to the adoption of the CWG to the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) through representation by the co-chair. Meetings in the CWG are held monthly with exceptions of ad-hoc meetings depending on need. In addition, and through minimum resources by Oxfam (volunteered to chair the CWG), a series of meetings; trainings/workshops and surveys have been conducted to inform further on the operating environment with the view to build knowledge of the member organizations and influence CVA programming in-country.

The CWG determined the Multi-purpose Cash Grant (MPCG) package through a National Level Workshop jointly with MoDMR, UN OCHA ROAP & UN RC Office, Dhaka, reviewed the daily wage rate for Cash for Work (CFW) and developed Operational Guidelines for MPCG & CFW. Conducted study on CVA situation analysis, study on Cash Transfer Payment Mechanisms and CVA Payment mechanisms Pros & Cons. Standardized tools and delivery mechanisms, harmonized payment rates & targeting criteria and shared information and lessons learned from member agencies. In spite these achievements, further capacity building is still needed on market-based analysis, programme design, and cash preparedness to foster timely responses.

The main objective of the WG is to offer a technical platform for collaboration, harmonization for appropriate and efficient CVA programming and dissemination of learning related to multiple sectors' in emergency preparedness and response activities in Bangladesh. And the specific objectives are:

- Coordination and sharing of lessons learnt;
- Advocacy;
- Capacity building;
- Action research to define the best practices and evaluate the impact of cash intervention.

In 2019, the priority areas will be:

- To build practitioner capacity to improve the scope and quality of CBA program through increased knowledge and skills;
- Development of different tools;
- Provide evidence-based research to various stakeholders in order to influence increased use of CVA;
- Capture knowledge, and experience at field to inform policy;
- Support and advocate for joint emergency preparedness activities and/or assessment exercises;
- Develop, where possible, common approaches and standard procedures as well as minimum requirements including, MEB and transfer value.

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# Bangladesh - Cox's Bazaar Cash and Markets Working Group

Since August 2017, under the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh, rapid and effective humanitarian action has saved many lives, met critical needs and protected nearly one million Rohingya refugees while also responding to impacts on affected host communities. While much has been achieved, the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh has not fully stabilized and remains on edge. Priorities for the coming year include supporting strengthened government leadership and accountability, including in the camps, and the effective participation of the refugee community in decisions affecting their lives. In 2019, the GoB and UNHCR will accelerate the ongoing joint verification exercise that will register the Rohingya and provide them with individual documentation, in many cases for the first time. More accurate data, disaggregated by age, sex, gender and other diversity factors, will facilitate planning and targeting of assistance and services, while biometric enrolment will strengthen the integrity of delivery. The issuing of biometric identification cards that is a key part of this process will possibly also pave the way to alternative modalities of assistance delivery. Source: 2019 Joint Response Plan<sup>1</sup>.

The wealth of evidence collected by various actors acknowledges that cash transfers can be an appropriate modality of response where markets will support it, and in surveys, many Rohingya people have indicated the need and desire for cash in meeting families' multiple needs, including, for example, rent payments in some cases<sup>2</sup>.

The policy environment for refugee cash assistance is complex, and in some ways restrictive. Direct, blanket, multi-purpose cash transfer is the most problematic intervention for refugees from a Government policy point of view: a coordinated, blanket, seasonal multi-purpose cash injection, planned for winter 2018, was vetoed at the national Government level in December 2018, for example. In addition, current Government policies further constrain the response, including restrictions on movement and work for Rohingya refugees, which impacts access to services and markets and increases

dependency on aid; official restrictions on Rohingya refugees owning Bangladeshi sim-cards; and strict regulation of market activity within the camps.

However, there are massive voucher programmes ongoing, including WFP's e-voucher for a diversified diet, which is currently rolling out and will cover the entire refugee population. Goods are supplied by selected local traders. The multi-wallet SCOPE card upon which it is based is also being used by other agencies to supply different types of goods through the same outlets, including at present hygiene items. The diversification of goods available on the SCOPE card is set to expand, with wallets still available. The potential for voucher and market-based programmes may provide the greatest opportunity in the current policy environment, and has not yet been fully explored.

In terms of financial services and transactions, the Central Bank of Bangladesh is the main regulator within Bangladesh. There are clear requirements for Know Your Customer (KYC) outlined by the Central Bank, including a mandatory KYC form for all individuals to open a Mobile Account. The Bank gave indications in 2018 that it may be ready to relax KYC for the refugee population, but adequate, verifiable identification documents would be a requisite. The ongoing registration exercise provides a verifiable biometric identification document, and may pave the way in future, but the registration process is ongoing will take months to complete. In the meantime, small scale innovations are being developed, including partnership with the local Shimanto Bank. Targeted multi-purpose cash transfers are also taking place in several Sectors, for example a monthly transfer for families that are fostering unaccompanied children in the Child Protection Sub-Sector and IFRC cash transfer through Post Office.

A Cash Working Group was formed in 2017 very early in the August 2017 influx response, under the ISCG Secretariat - the coordination office for the Rohingya response, led by a Cash Working Group Coordinator



(initially deployed by CashCap) with the following objectives:

1. Establish and strengthen cash coordination within the existing humanitarian coordination architecture in Cox's Bazar, including information management;
2. Provide evidence on cash intervention feasibility and scalability across the whole operation;
3. Provide technical guidance and support appropriate harmonization of approaches, accountability and quality of cash and market programming in the Rohingya Crisis Response;
4. Advocate for cash and market interventions where appropriate, suitable to cover needs and feasible;
5. Capacity building and learning;
6. Monitoring and evaluation.

The CWG links with the coordination structure in place in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh: Sector Coordinators, the Heads of Sub-Offices Group in Cox's Bazar, the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) and national Cash Working Group (focused mainly on natural disaster preparedness and response within Bangladesh) at the National level, and with the Regional CWG at the IASC Regional Network for Asia-Pacific.

Further development of strategic direction, advocacy positions and subsequent lobbying is needed, given the ongoing policy restrictions on multi-purpose cash transfers, and weak existing analysis on markets in the area to provide clear evidence base and justifications. The CWG has therefore re-grouped and shifted to a Cash and Markets Working Group, with a wider member involvement that comprises donors and humanitarian agencies. The CMWG is co-chaired on a rotational basis, currently by WFP. The group members meet together twice a month at ISCG and make an introductory

discussions, sharing lessons learned, challenges and find out way forward actions for a harmonize programme implementation.

The CMWG aims to develop clear analysis on markets in collaboration with all stakeholders including the Livelihoods Working Group; to further explore possibilities in voucher and market-based programming; to improve coordination of cash and markets related activities in host communities, including linkages with established national Government social protection programmes; and to focus on capacity building of senior government influencers and organizational representatives on modalities that will put focus on the needs and interests of the Rohingya people and their host communities.

#### **Contact Details**

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1. [www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/2019\\_jrp\\_for\\_rohingya\\_humanitarian\\_crisis\\_compressed.pdf](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/2019_jrp_for_rohingya_humanitarian_crisis_compressed.pdf)  
2. <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/bangladesh-unhcr-camp-settlement-and-protection-profiling-round-4-november>

## Indonesia Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) Working Group

The Indonesia CVA working group was formed in 2016 by the Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) consortium, and in 2017, 14 other organisations joined the group and confirmed to provide assistance to affected populations through the use of CVA. The WG is co-chaired by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) with a membership from I/NGOs, UN agencies, private sector and the Government.

The use of cash programming is extensively used in the national social protection system but not widely used for emergency response. In the recent past, the President of Indonesia passed a directive to have all assistance provided in a cashless form which means, the traditional in-kind form of assistance will gradually shift to align with the government priorities and financial platforms. Basing on this, the CVA WG aims to reach nation-wide acceptance on the use of CVA in responding to humanitarian and development operations by 2024. The Group's vision is that CVA will be a preferred modality of choice alongside in-kind where markets are not functioning. This they hope to achieve through:

- Advocacy to the Government to revise and appropriate amend the legal, regulatory and procedural rules governing CVA;
- Development and implementation of standard approaches for CVA programmes together with joint assessment exercises by all humanitarian actors;
- Advocacy, sensitization and communication to Government ministries, I/NGOs, civil-society organisations (CSOs), the private sector and affected populations on the benefits of CVA;
- Cash readiness of organisations in terms of trained Human Resource, framework agreements with FSPs, ready to use tools for registration, distributions, monitoring, etc. In addition, advocate for consideration of CVA throughout the disaster management cycle: from preparedness and resilience to response and recovery, across sectors where applicable and feasible.

As a first step, and in the absence of a national framework, the CVA WG put together a draft CVA common approach which acts as a guideline to humanitarian actors using cash transfers. In addition, and basing on the recent response to the Central Sulawesi operation, the WG used part of the market assessments findings to inform on the government 5 years plan with subsequent findings, from both cash for work and inter-agency evaluation study of the multipurpose cash assistance, to be used to inform further on the draft common approach framework.

In 2019, the WG will focus its efforts on conducting advocacy with government ministries/institutions on the benefits of using CVA during emergency response and the importance to link it with social protection system in the country, and disseminating lessons learnt and best practices from the implementation of CVA in the Central Sulawesi emergency response.

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## Lao PDR Cash Working Group

In Lao PDR, there are no institutionalized cash transfer schemes, but a few donor-supported activities are in operation. Scalability of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) activities in Lao PDR is challenging given limited capacities of financial service providers, local partners as well as limited policy environment on social transfers. However, there is significant interest and attention being shown from Government and donors to increase the use of CVA for both humanitarian and development interventions.

The Lao PDR - Cash Working Group (CWG) is established as a working group for local and regional stakeholders dedicated to CVA programming in Lao PDR. The overarching aim of the CWG is to improve the quality and coordination, increase the scale (where relevant/appropriate) and broaden the scope of and use of CVA through shared learnings/lessons learnt in Lao PDR and across the region, leveraging common approaches that are relevant and built on best practice. The Lao PDR – CWG is currently co-chaired by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund.

The objectives of the CWG are to:

1. Strengthen coordination of CVA in ongoing operations, preparedness and response.
2. Standardize and harmonize CVA standards and common approaches in ongoing operations, as well as in specific context of emergency response and preparedness.
3. Share organizational and regional experiences and discuss specific themes and challenges emerging out of CVA design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
4. Identify appropriate advocacy methods to promote quality and appropriate CVA programmes to agencies, donors, government, private sector and beneficiaries, and propose key ways forward regarding partnerships

In 2018, Lao PDR succeeded in securing a grant from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund to support the emergency response and humanitarian efforts in the aftermath of the 2018 floods that occurred across the country. The US\$ 3.5 million grant was used to target six hardest-hit districts of Khammouane Province. CVA activities were carried out under the leadership of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture with WFP implementing unconditional cash distributions, FAO distributing vouchers and UNDP implementing conditional cash distributions (cash-for-work).

During 2019, the Lao-PDR CWG will focus on identifying and sharing lessons from the emergency response activity and look to identify and develop potential partnerships with financial service providers and local/international partners that have capacity to deliver CTP at scale in Lao PDR.

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# Myanmar Cash Working Group

## Background

Myanmar is exposed to a wide range of natural hazards, triggering different types of small scale to large-scale disasters across the country's territory. A total of 27 natural disasters have been recorded between 1980 and 2010, causing the death of approximately 140,000 people, and affecting the lives and livelihoods of 3.9 million people; an average of 125,000 people a year<sup>1</sup>. Since its independence in 1948, Myanmar has also been home to some of the longest-running insurgencies in the world. Years of civil conflict and unresolved ethnic grievances have contributed to mass displacement and an influx of refugees in neighboring countries. Myanmar's vulnerability to hazards is compounded by socio-economic factors; widespread poverty and poor infrastructures are at the heart of the country's relatively low capability to recover from significant shocks and have put a strain on the development gains of a country that is naturally well endowed in natural resources.

The nature and type of response provided to address both humanitarian and development needs have significantly evolved in recent years, leading to an increased interest in cash and voucher assistance (CVA) programming. This include cash for work in use since cyclone Nargis (2008), unconditional cash transfers, and the use of cash assistance in the national social protection system. In addition, unprecedented political and economic changes since the 2010 election have also increased the scope and relevance of CVA, and forged new partnerships with Government and the private sector (telecommunications and financial service providers). Given the increased interest, coordination on cash in Myanmar still remains limited. Initiatives such as CALP trainings have taken place but information on existing CVA experiences, good practices and lessons learned is not widely available. This coordination gap represents a risk on overlapping and non-harmonization of projects/programmes leading to unmet needs etc., and undermines the effectiveness and impact of CVA in Myanmar.

The Cash Working Group was established in September 2013 in recognition of the need to increase coordination and learning on CVA. The CWG is chaired by United Nation World Food Programme and composed of a group of development and humanitarian professionals from a diverse pool of agencies who have a commitment to promote CTP within their own organizations and beyond. Currently, there are 32 members in total including UN agencies, INGOs, LNGOs and donors with a key objective on coordinating cash in humanitarian and development programs and across sectors. The specific objectives are:

- Provide overall coordination for CTP interventions in Myanmar;
- Foster information sharing and learning on CTP amongst members and with other key stakeholders (Government, donors, private sector, etc.);
- Provide a framework for advocacy and the promotion of CTP in Myanmar;
- Work towards harmonization and standardization of CTP practices;
- Respond to technical and operational issues of members;
- Identify training needs and support capacity-building initiatives on CTP for members and other key stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> *PreventionWeb (2011), "Myanmar – Disaster Statistics", [www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/statistics/?cid=118&utm\\_source=pw\\_search&utm\\_medium=search&utm\\_campaign=search](http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/statistics/?cid=118&utm_source=pw_search&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=search)*

# Nepal Cash Coordination Group

The use of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in Nepal as an emergency response tool and in disaster preparedness have been tested and piloted and deemed as appropriate response modalities by both humanitarian and development actors. Humanitarian agencies are increasingly incorporating cash transfers within their disaster response tool-box to deliver multi-sector objectives and respond to different types of emergencies including: seasonal disasters, protracted crises, rapid-onset disasters and slow-onset chronic disasters. Also, CVA is enshrined in the Government DRM policies, and in the well-established social security system.

The Nepal Cash Coordination Group (CCG) was formed to strengthen collaboration on CVA programming both for disaster preparedness and response, and ensure better coordination across actors. The members of the group comprise of I/NGOs, UN-RC Office representative, UN Agencies, relevant private sectors (money transfer agency), multi sector/clusters, Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, donors and agencies implementing/ planning CVA programmes. In early 2019, the group was streamlined to the Central Government in the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration and, also sits as the chair to the group with the support of Nepal Red Cross Society (working on 6 months rotational basis with member organisations).

The CCG main objective is to support the Government of Nepal (GoN), the UN, donors, NGO partners and clusters in the preparation, coordination, design and implementation of CVA activities in a timely and systematic manner in response to the needs of disaster affected people. And, the specific objectives are:

- Build practitioner capacity to improve the scope and quality of CVA program through increased knowledge, skills and confidence;
- Ensure the evolution of accountable, relevant and innovative CVA program through evidence based research in order to influence key stakeholders;
- Capturing knowledge, and experience at field and feed it into policy level;

- Support investments in collaborative emergency preparedness activities;
- Develop, where possible, common approaches and standard procedures as well as minimum requirements;
- Encourage and support to agencies for Mapping FSP's and preparing pre-agreement model;
- Collaborate on market assessment, targeting and monitoring.

In 2019, the CCG through the UN Humanitarian Cash Team (HCT) developed the Nepal Monsoon contingency plan which incorporated the use of CVA in addressing the needs of those affected where feasible. Other key priority activities are:

- Coordinate assessments required to inform decisions on using unconditional cash transfers prior and during a disaster;
- Provide technical support to partners and clusters in planning, design and implementation of CVA interventions;
- Advocacy and mainstreaming of CVA including social protection system for disaster response;
- Coordination and production of lessons learnt;
- Develop a CVA guiding tool for the government and linking with existing provisions under the constitution and DRR/M Acts.

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## Pakistan Cash Working Group

Pakistan is prone to natural disasters including floods, earthquake and tsunamis. Since the mega-floods in 2010 both the Government of Pakistan (GoP) and the humanitarian community (UN and I/NGOs) have responded by progressively increasing the use of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) to complement various types of in-kind assistance. Cash assistance is used for provision of shelter and food and livelihood needs of the affected populations, whilst the GoP, has used CVA in social protection and safety net programmes, including; The BISP (Benazir Income Support Programme, CDCP (Citizens Damage Compensation programme), and the FATA IDPs which incorporates the latest technology in its programming through partnerships with the private sector.

In 2011, the CWG was formed as a sub-group to the Food Security cluster (FSC), and evolved to a multi-sectoral group after recommendations from NDMA and OCHA in 2015 – with a direct reporting line to the humanitarian country team (HCT). The WG is co-led by FAO and WFP, and co-chaired by ACTED (at a rotational basis with other I/NGOs implementing CVA), and meets in Islamabad with plans to open sub-national WGs in Sindh and Baluchistan given the level of operations and response currently taking place in these areas. The Overall objective of the CWG is to provide a platform for better coordination and learning to organizations implementing CVA in the context of humanitarian, disaster preparedness and recovery programmes in Pakistan.

CWG Mandates are:

- Provide overall CVA strategy and policy guidelines for different operations and contexts.
- Develop standard guidelines for delivery procedures, CFW daily rates and working hours, and transfer value for cash assistance for different sectors
- Develop basic beneficiary selection guidelines for all sectors, highlighting the appropriate process of selection and basic criteria based on best practices from CWG member organizations.
- Develop and implement a workplan for CWG joint activities focusing on capacity building, action research and dissemination of lessons learnt and other materials to CWG members.
- Update and maintain the 4Ws data, CWG contact list of NGOs with experience of CTP in Pakistan adding more members from UN, I/NGOs, government institutions and private sector, as well as financial service providers (banks and telecommunication companies) as part of the contingency planning process.
- Advocate and emphasize on gender mainstreaming in cash programming, as well as inclusion of the most vulnerable segments (men, women, members of the transgender community, children, elderly, minority groups, disabled, and chronically sick)
- Negotiate, if required, with financial service providers to harmonize the cost of transaction when partnering with humanitarian organizations in cash-based programming.
- Activate any other necessary task teams or sub national working groups when needed.

### Way forward

- Activation of the CWG in Balochistan;
- Harmonization of wage rates in Sindh and Balochistan especially for the drought response;
- Mapping of stockholders jointly with PRCS and GRSM;
- Capacity building of the cash practitioners in Sindh and Balochistan;
- Setting of MEB for MPC;
- Strategy of the CWG for next 5 years.

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# Philippines Cash Working Group

## Background

The Philippines is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. It experiences 20 typhoons every year, have 21 active volcanos and host the second oldest internal conflict in the world. In 2012, the first CWG was organized by humanitarian organizations implementing cash and voucher assistance (CVA) in response to Typhoon Bopha, and was later institutionalized in 2014 as a thematic group to the humanitarian coordination team (HCT) following lessons learned from Typhoon Haiyan.

The Philippines, is uniquely conducive to CVA given existing systems in the government and private sector, and the enabling environment these provides to both humanitarian and development contexts.

## Operational Structure

The CWG structure is two tiered with the Steering Committee (CWG SC) which serves as the core group that ensure CTP is fit for purpose and context in design and delivery; timely, effective, and accountable in meeting the needs of vulnerable people and protection of their rights. Its key roles and responsibilities are: (1) ensure sustainability by institutionalizing an inclusive platform for coordination and learning; (2) establish linkages with official in-country coordination systems (national and international) and other key stakeholders; (3) provide overall leadership, guidance and support to the CWG; and (4) promote and facilitate information and knowledge-sharing, including innovations.

Two, the CWG technical group which has a general membership and open to multi-sectors, cross-sectors and organizations that have interest in implementing CVA in humanitarian response. Its primary objective is to provide a technical platform for collaboration and learning related to the multiple sectors of CVA in emergency preparedness and response activities in the Philippines.

Both groups have its own Terms of Reference and an annual workplan adopted by the HCT.

## Leadership and Action Procedures

The CWG SC meets bi-monthly while the technical group is convened once in every term of leadership rotation. The position of the chair rotates every four months amongst the core group members except for UNOCHA who are the permanent secretariat to the group, and also provides the coordination oversight.

The action procedures are classified under emergency and non-emergency operations which consists of three sub-groups under the CWG SC that support work relative to their sectors including, research and development of SOPs and reference of materials. These are : (1) Beneficiary Targeting sub-group led by Save the Children; (2) Social Protection sub-group led by UNICEF; and (3) MoU sub-group led by OXFAM.

## Humanitarian and Preparedness Actions

- Technical support to HCT, ICCG, other thematic areas, government and other stakeholders on actions like contingency planning, humanitarian response overview, needs assessments, response plans, etc.;
- Capacity building for all partners local and international to include the government;
- Participate in humanitarian needs assessments and analysis;
- Mapping and data management;
- Pre-Crisis Market Mapping Assessment and Analysis;
- Develop SoP, Protocols and Guidelines .

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## Viet Nam Cash Working Group

The last three years has seen exponential use of Cash & Vouchers Assistance (CVA) in humanitarian response in Viet Nam. The latest response to typhoon Damrey in 2017 has reached over 26,000 affected households through CVA. . More stakeholders are engaged in CVA including UNDP, FAO, IOM, UN Women, IFRC, VNRC, CRS, World Vision, Plan International and Save the Children. Cash transfers (unconditional and conditional cash grant), vouchers and cash for work have been used to address sectoral needs including food, non food, water and sanitation, livelihood and shelter. The grant have been delivered to beneficiaries mainly through direct cash (cash in envelop) and paper voucher.

While progress in CVA is observed in terms of scale and capacity to reach beneficiaries in a more timely manner, better coordination and harmonization between various approaches to CVA in terms of transfer value and targeting process remains a need. Acknowledging this gap, the in-country Cash Working Group (CWG) was initiated in 2017 with the aim to move towards coherent and coordinated approaches, and optimize on resources and the benefits of CVA. This platform also aims to provide organizations active in the implementation of CVA opportunities to exchange experiences and knowledge, communicate best practices and lesson learned. The CWG is voluntarily chaired by FAO and IFRC country offices, and the objectives are:

1. Provide peer-to-peer and technical support to key decision-makers;
2. Ensure that all participants are aware of relevant national and international policy guidelines, technical standards as well as relevant commitments that the government has set/established (and ensure responses are in line with them);
3. Develop, where possible, common approaches and standard procedures as well as minimum requirements;
4. Ensure beneficiary accountability and transparency in CTP;
5. Support investments in collaborative emergency preparedness activities;
6. Collaborate on market assessment, targeting and monitoring;

7. Capture and document lessons of previous, ongoing and future responses;
8. Activate necessary task teams or sub national working groups when needed, in cases of emergencies;
9. Advocate with government agencies and other partners to advance CTP implementation.

Several CWG meetings have been organized to update each other on on-going Cash initiatives in the country. It has also resulted in the mapping of Cash tools and guidelines being used among stakeholders in Viet Nam as well as needs for capacity building in CVA Programming. Two key areas for capacity building identified have included harmonization of i) transfer value and ii) guidelines and tools. As a first effort, a training workshop on minimum expenditure basket (MEB), coupled with field market assessment, was organized in Ha Noi between 24 and 26 April with participation of 17 participants from UNDP, UNICEF, FAO, IFRC, VNRC, Swiss Red Cross, CRS, Plan International and World Vision. The training was facilitated by a team from the Regional CWG, FAO, IFRC and CRS. The training was successful in setting the scene on common understanding on MEB, what MEB constituted and the methodology and tools for data collection. It also highlighted the importance of engaging with sector focal points/experts including food, WASH, shelter and the government in developing an MEB for the country. Other priority areas for 2019 include:

- Develop a common MEB for multi purpose grant in consultation with wide-range of stakeholders, including Government, UN agencies, NGOs, etc.;
- Explore possibility of further developing MEB for key sectors (livelihood, shelter, WASH);
- Harmonize the CTP implementation guidelines and tools;
- Provide technical support to Government, particularly to MoLISA, to strengthen CTP in social protection.

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# RCWG

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ANNEXES

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**2018 Asia-Pacific RCWG Annual Work Plan**

Objectives	Activities	Indicators	Responsible	2017 Timeframe				Status/Achievements
				QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	
<b>Objective 1: Strengthen coordination of Cash Transfer Programming (CTP) in ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response</b>								
Geographical mapping of CTP in the region	Tap on the existing mapping formats (Myanmar, Philippines and Nepal). Basing on the country focus, share standard 3/4/5 W formats.	Formats tailored to a country-specific focus and in use by the CWGs in the region	RCWG Coord., OCHA, CWGs	March/April				To form a thematic group on inclusion of preparedness in the matrix
		A regional map developed and populated on CaLP and HR info site on a quarterly basis	RCWG Coord., OCHA, CWGs		June/July			
	Provide country specific support on: CWG set-up & linkage to the existing coordination structures, Multisectoral assessments, and Information Management sharing	Clear and approved country missions and TORs	RCWG Coord. & Co-chairs	March - June				Ongoing remote support with planned missions to Indonesia and Cox's Bazaar
		End of mission feedback & report to the CWGs & the in-country coordination structures	RCWG Coord	March - June				
Linking the RCWG with global CWGs	Provide updates for Asia and the Pacific	# of global CWG meetings attended and feedback to the RCWG	RCWG Coord	March - June				Presence of GCCG in the RCWG Q2 to inform on CTP global discussions
Establish/Reinforce partnerships with regional working groups	Form synergies with regional working groups i.e., EPR, Social protection	Inclusion of cash component in the regional WG workplans	RCWG SC	March - June				Ongoing
<b>Objective 2: Provide technical support to ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response</b>								
Build on global best practices to consolidate and/or develop tools for Asia-Pacific Region	Work together with EPR WG on developing minimum cash preparedness standards	Inclusion of cash preparedness min. stds at the regional and country CWG level	RCWG SC		April - June			Form part of the regional SoWC post-follow up actions
Provision of CTP support at Regional and Country level	Gap-filling surge support for emergencies CTP training	Documented deliverables specified in surge ToRs	RCWG Coord	March - June				Survey conducted and brief shared with the CWGs. Follow ups on priority areas is ongoing
		Training needs analysis mapping	CWGs, CaLP & RCWG Coord.	March				Asia - scheduled for Q3. Pacific CWG is directly planning with CaLP
		ToT conducted (1) Asia and (1) the Pacific	RCWG Coord & CaLP		May or July/ August			3 requests made-Indonesia, Philippines and Cox's Bazaar
		Trainings/Workshops provided based on requests ( Regional & Country level)	RCWG Coord		April & May			Ongoing. Participated in the inception discussion with the team
	Provide technical input to regional (ASEAN) guidelines on risk informed and shock responsive social protection	Inclusion of CTP in the guidelines, and dissemination to the CWG	UNICEF, FAO, WFP & RCWG Coord		Jan - October			
<b>Objective 3: Provide a platform for CTP key information sharing and advocacy</b>								
Foster cash learning discussions and information sharing	Re-invigorate the CaLP RCWG webpage and post quarterly bulletin for the region	Quarterly meeting minutes and regional updates	RCWG Coord	ongoing				Minutes posted in the HR infor and linked to the CaLP website
		List Key themes in the region and post relevant data e.g., Social Protection systems - post regional experiences on linking CTP to the national systems on: targeting, registration, payment, redress mechanisms etc.	RCWG Coord , SC & CWGs		April - June			
		Organise the State of the World Cash regional dialogue	A regional event (organised & documented) tailored to address the needs at the region	RCWG Coord , SC & CWGs		February - May		
Advocate for mainstreaming CTP approaches in multi-government platforms ASEAN, SPC, ADB, Worldbank, SAARC	Develop a two pager on appropriateness and feasibility of CTP in the region	Two pager developed and shared with various stakeholders	RCWG SC		June			



## Asia Pacific Regional Cash Working Group

### Capacity gap analysis findings

#### Introduction

In February 2018, the Asia Pacific Regional Cash Working Group (RCWG) held its first meeting in the year to discuss and validate the 2018 workplan – informed through bilateral discussions with regional members and the National CWGs in the region. The workplan<sup>1</sup>, is structured around three objectives (see below) with key indicators and activities to guide in the dispensation of the roles and responsibilities of the RCWG.

A key indicator in the workplan, and which had precedence is the training needs/capacity gap analysis mapping which falls under Objective 2 – Provide technical support to ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness and Response. The mapping of the needs was deemed necessary to inform the community of practice in the region on training needs and therefore, areas of focus to ensure key themes such as quality programming in Preparedness and Emergency Response are well understood and put in place.

- Objective 1: Strengthen coordination of CTP in ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Objective 2: Provide technical support to ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Objective 3: Provide a platform for CTP key information sharing and advocacy

The RCWG in collaboration with CaLP Capacity Building Officer, put together a set of questions and uploaded on the survey monkey tool – a webpage designed to collect data online and analyse; and shared with the members at the regional and the country(s) level. Members were also encouraged to share widely with other cash implementing agencies including; the operational staff – Supply Chain, Finance and IT; CTP focal points in the government and cluster coordinators.

#### Findings of the survey

The exercise took 2 weeks with an overall of 65 respondents from 10 countries. See Table 1;

Table 1: Number of Countries and Respondents

Countries	Nos. Respondents
Afghanistan	23
Bangladesh	01
Malaysia	01
Myanmar	07
Nepal	05
Pakistan	08

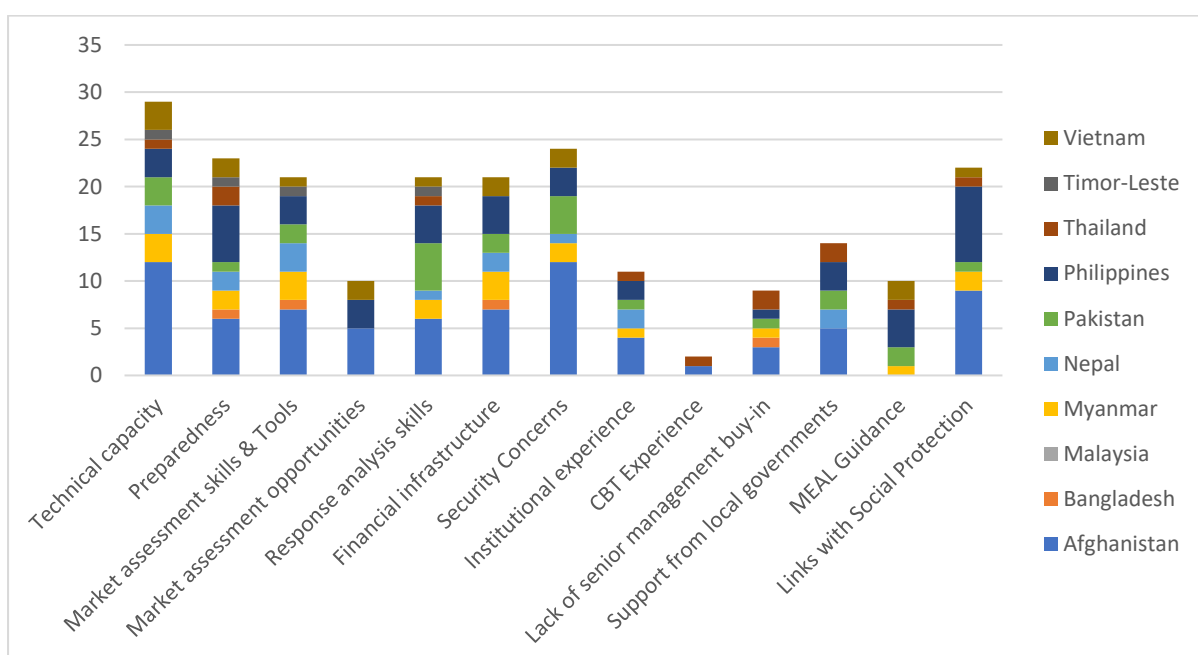
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/document/2018-rcwg-work-plan>

Philippines	11
Thailand	03
Timor-Leste	01
Vietnam	05
<b>Total : 10</b>	<b>65</b>

The survey monkey provided very comprehensive and summarised analysis by question<sup>2</sup> however, it lacked the functionality to allow for further correlation of data to inform on questions such as; capacity needs by country, skills and knowledge gaps, and functions with highest needs amongst other questions. This therefore necessitated for more granular analysis, and provided recommendations based on data interpretations.

### What are the biggest challenges in implementing quality cash programming?

Figure 1: Capacity Needs in the Asia Region



- The findings in Figure 1 is illustrative of the capacity needs across themes. Low participation by some countries does not translate to a lack of capacity need but rather, a bolstering in these areas.
- The lack of CTP experience in some sectors such as disaster risk reduction and livelihoods; insufficient technical capacity in CTP; inadequate cash preparedness in contingency plans, processes and procedures; lack of senior management buy-in, lack

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/asia/document/asia-capacity-gap-survey-summary-findings>

of support from government and therefore lack of ‘know-how’ on linking cash assistance with social protection – are areas that go beyond the purview of the CWGs. This, does reflect the Grand Bargain commitments for international actors to make humanitarian action as local as possible.

- The humanitarian coordination team at country levels would therefore need to advocate for partnerships with governments in mainstreaming of preparedness and linking with national social protection systems where feasible.

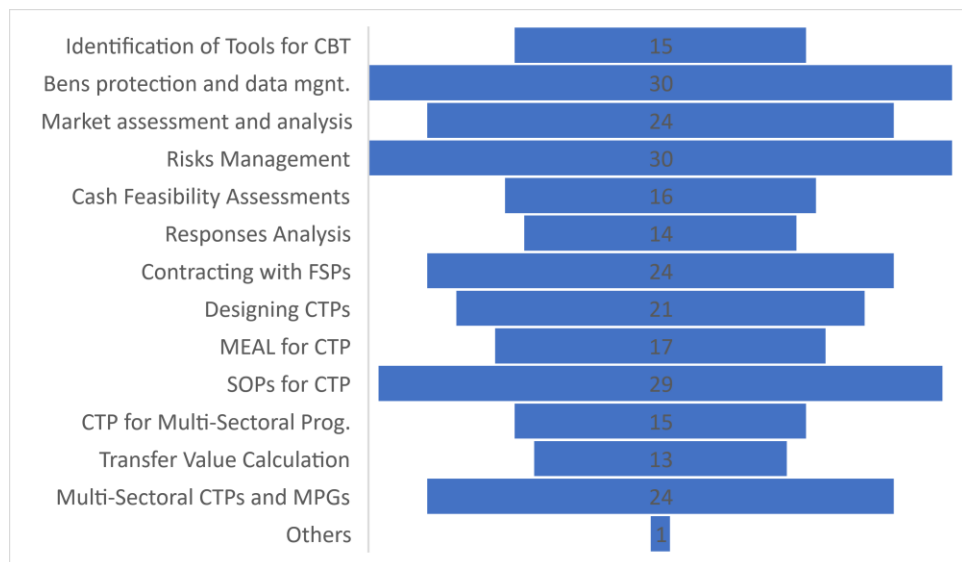
### What skills and knowledge are lacking in CTP?

Further analysis was conducted to inform on skills and knowledge sets lacking in the thematic areas mentioned in *Figure 1* above, and hinder quality programming.

**Figure 2: Skills and knowledge lacking in CTP**

- , reflects core CTP skills required to inform on the appropriate modality but also in programming cash-based transfers in programme and operations.

- the community of practise at the national and regional levels would need to foster more harmonized ways of sharing capacity-building materials and working across organisations through joint capacity-building approaches.



Through the humanitarian info, the RCWG and National CWGs have uploaded very useful material and acts as a repository hub requiring frequent uploading of materials by themes.

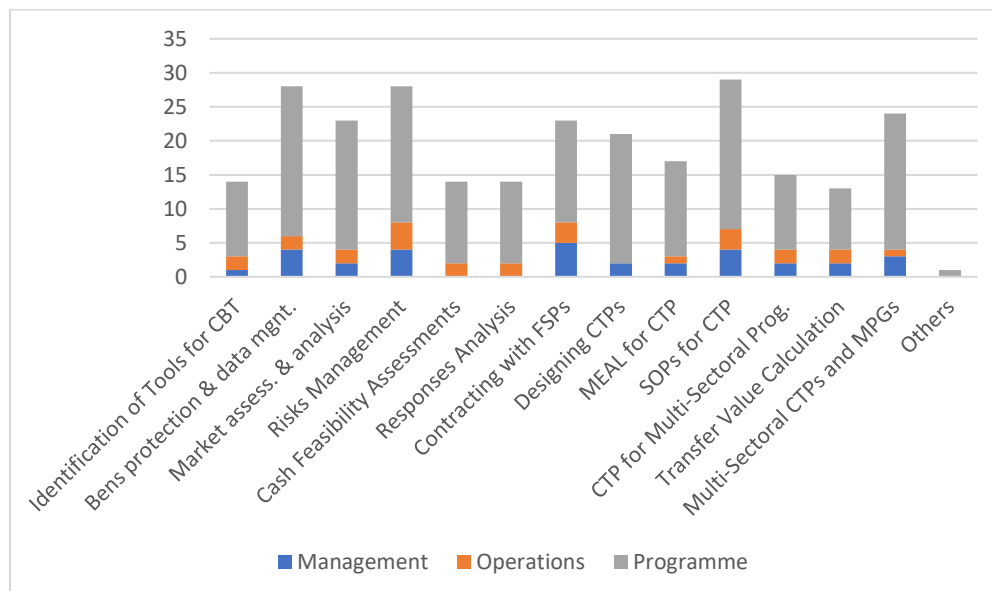
- At the regional level, a learning exercise of data protection and management is imperative and would require the identification of experts to help unpack the ‘dos and don’ts’ in collecting and storing sensitive data.

### Which functions have the highest capacity needs?

- 72% of respondents were programme staff and were naturally observed with the highest capacity need. However, cash transfers cut-across functionalities and skills such as contracting; market assessments; standard operating procedures; beneficiary data protection etc., would require joint approaches across programme and operational staff.

- Management participation therefore plays the overarching role in ensuring joint capacity-building approaches across sectors and organisations; but also use the platform as a two-pronged approach to build-capacity and foster localisation of assistance to governments.

**Figure 3: Capacity Needs by Function**



### Summary of Recommendations

RCWG recommendations for fostering quality cash based programming across the region.

- Support and engage with CWGs to identify capacity-building pathways in partnership with sectors and government actors
- Strengthen common platforms for building, sharing and using knowledge about CTP – through mobilisation of in-region expertise any thematic areas of data protection and management, preparedness and mapping, mainstreaming GBV amongst etc
- Work collaboratively by integrating CTP in organizational policies and identify entry points in linking with national systems/ programmes such i.e., social protection systems and preparedness programmes.

## Advocacy note on use Unrestricted Cash for the Rohingya Refugee Response in Cox's Bazar

Several humanitarian actors raised high concerns on the stringent Government regulations in using digital payment for provision of assistance to the Rohingya refugees. Evidence built and discussions with Rohingya shows the need for cash in prioritising of needs, and the absence thereof, has led to protection concerns including; sale of food assistance, reduction in number of meals and exploitation in labour markets through low wage rates amongst others. Conversely, the need of cash to address preparedness activities in preparation for the monsoon resonates with a majority of the refugees. Latest situational reports show that around 16,000 HHs have been relocated and mitigation measures on the effects of the heavy rains are ongoing by both the GoB and humanitarian actors. Although critical, there is a need for a further rethink on the micro benefits these responses have on the refugee households in light of the vulnerabilities posed by lack of cash and the potential upcoming climate related shocks.

At the global level, the use of technology in provision of assistance has proven to be an efficient and effective mechanism – as observed in the Syrian and Lebanon crisis, and one that puts the interest of the affected population at the centre. The regulations on 'Know Your Customer' which requires the use of appropriate identification and restrictions on refugees owning a mobile simcards does negate the efficiencies and scalability of unrestricted cash assistance in the backdrop of an extremely low funded corporate emergency operation.

This is an outline of the current situation, related issues, and specific recommendations. Dispositions of advocacy messaging in cash working groups (CWG), inter-sector coordination groups (ISCG) and the strategic executive group (SEG) at the national level are outlined here. However, since discussions have been ongoing and inter-agency evidence based findings collated on markets, delivery mechanisms and benefits of unrestricted cash (MPA/MPG); donors have sought the support of the Regional CWG to bring these issues to the attention of the Agencies Regional Directors – in finding a solution consistent with the interests of the affected population – the Rohingya refugees.

### 1.0 Government Regulations

Bangladesh is an enabling environment for testing and piloting technological innovations for use in cash transfer programming (CTP). For the host population in Cox's Bazar, this includes; mobile money, cash-in-hand delivery, bank transfers, and other Over the Counter (OTC) transactions that could be used to provide cash assistance for a range of purposes (e.g. unrestricted, conditional/unconditional), in addition to e-vouchers for restricted transfers<sup>1</sup>. However, GoB does not acknowledge the refugee status for the Rohingya community, and as such, refugee movement is limited to within the camp and restrictions are imposed on accessing a mobile sim card due to concerns on terrorism financing and crime. In addition, the Central bank regulations on the use of appropriate identification for KYC have

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<sup>1</sup> Cox Bazaar CWG, 2017 – Delivery mechanisms mapping for cash based interventions in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh. Available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/cash-working-group>

blocked the use of digital payment solutions as a safe, efficient and effective response mechanism by humanitarian actors in meeting the needs of the refugees.

### Ongoing Undertakings and further follow Ups

- **Financial Infrastructure** - despite the government policy and framework, the financial service providers (FSPs) have demonstrated their ability to design potential solutions to enable Rohingya to access specific delivery options, e.g. pre-paid cards and smart cards, that would not require the application of the established regulations from the CBB related to mobile banking and bank accounts. **Further follow ups by humanitarian actors** is needed to get clarity on acceptable and specific KYC for the Rohingya and general confirmation that FSPs can provide these services to the Rohingya.
- **Humanitarian Response Mechanisms** – in the immediate term, humanitarian actors opted for the use of e-vouchers – a WFP multi-wallet providing food and partial NFIs to targeted refugees, and cash in envelope pilots by UNHCR, Bangladesh Red Cross society- Shelter Sector and Action Against Hunger – Food Security Sector. These, provided a feasible option to deliver assistance to the refugees and requiring no clarification on the regulatory environment of the CBB and with demonstrated experience of obtaining government approvals. However, the latter option is restricted in terms of its scalability and ability to provide MPA. In the medium-term, **humanitarian actors** are following up on the promising solutions such as pre-paid cards, smart cards, and potentially other financial services if the regulatory environment and KYC restrictions could either be: 1) clarified specifically for the Rohingya population and/or amended to enable access of the Rohingya to financial services generally in Bangladesh. This, would offer the humanitarian community the opportunity to deliver MPA at scale as part of the response
- **Identification documents** – the humanitarian actors need to prioritize the agreement of a unique identifier to enable effective coordination and scale-up of MPA, meanwhile inform the above discussions and negotiations with FSPs and regulatory authorities.

## 2.0 Markets

A majority of the refugees are settled South of Court Bazar where some 20 markets of varying sizes can be found<sup>2</sup>. These markets are infiltrated by smaller traders who have fostered competition and availability of main commodities in near proximity to the settlements. However, the location of these markets are farther from the large markets that are long-established with larger wholesale-to-retail ratio and considered as major activity and distribution nodes. As such, commodities pass through ‘transit markets’ to the smaller markets forming a well-established supply chain network.

- **Prices** –price commodities at the smaller markets are within expected ranges given their integration to the large markets except for shelter materials ‘bamboo sticks’.
- **Access to markets** – refugees have no access to the large markets and traders confirm having challenges on road congestions leading to delayed deliveries, cost of hiring transport and lack of financial capital disproportionately mentioned by small traders.

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<sup>2</sup> VAM, WFP 2017 – Market Assessments in Cox’s Bazaar. Implications of market-based interventions targeted to Rohingya refugees and host communities



- **Capacity of markets** – although capacity of the small markets is questionable, they are linked to medium-sized or ‘transit’ markets that are accessible to refugees and can absorb the additional demand.
- **Availability** – focus group discussions with refugee families confirm availability of main commodities except for insufficient supply of firewood.

#### **Measures to be undertaken**

- **Evidence base findings** – humanitarian actors to present market findings at an organised forum specifically targeted to relevant government offices/officers who can influence or make decisions on government policies and/or frameworks.
- **Collaboration by agencies** – senior level staff of agencies should collectively voice their standpoint on the use of unrestricted cash transfers based on the evidence built .

### **3.0 Refugee Situational Analysis**

Since 25 August 2017, extreme violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar, has driven an estimated 693,000 Rohingya refugees across the border into Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. The humanitarian community stepped up its support to help mitigate a critical humanitarian emergency and resultant impacts on the Bangladeshi communities most directly affected by the influx. Months later, refugees remain forced to rely upon humanitarian assistance for their basic needs. They live in congested sites that are ill-equipped to handle the early rains, monsoon and cyclone seasons<sup>3</sup>.

Markets are the lifeline of the camps<sup>4</sup>. It is reported that 50% of the Rohingya families sold humanitarian assistance at cheaper prices directly for cash to buy vegetables, dry fish, medication, firewood and bamboo at much higher prices eroding their purchasing power. Income sources for a few families are petty trade and domestic labour although, restrictions on work rights compels them to accept employment opportunities at lower rates to the host community. In addition, preference for cash is attributed to in-kind pipeline breaks, need for diet diversity and flexibility/choice to plan for future emergencies.

According to the inter-agency calculation of the minimum expenditure basket, the average household requirement is Taka 7,290 per month (PCMA, 2018). Additionally, data on food consumption suggests that nutrient intake is correlated with the transfer modality and partially with higher value of assistance. Food voucher assistance has a positive impact on increasing refugees’ dietary diversity and nutrient intake by providing them with diverse food options<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Measures to be undertaken**

- **Government engagement** – senior management to reinforce with the country counterparts on the importance of common advocacy position

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<sup>3</sup> Strategic Executive Group (SEG), 2018 – Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh>

<sup>4</sup> Cox’s Bazar CWG, 2018 – Pre-Crisis Market and Needs Analysis. Available at <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/cash-working-group>

<sup>5</sup> WFP, 2017 – Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA) -summary report



## ANNEX 4

# Options for strengthening coordination in linking Cash assistance to Social Protection

### Background

The use of cash in Indonesia is not new. In 2007, the government led social protection system – Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) started using cash based assistance (CBA) in delivery of assistance to the chronic poor. And in 2014, the President instructed the cabinet to have all social assistance in the form of non-cash transfers through financial institutions, that led to the signing of an MOU between the Bank of Indonesia and government ministries together with regional and provincial governments. In 2017, PKH and international/national NGOs are reported to have reached around 10 million beneficiaries using cash transfers. The injection of cash through the PKH delivery systems is part of a drive from the government of a more integrated and comprehensive social protection system that increases effectiveness and reduces the impact of disasters to investments in human development, and ultimately mitigate chronic poverty.

Following the President's directives, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) in collaboration with the humanitarian actors held a cash transfer programming (CTP) workshop in 2017 with the aim to share experiences and contribute to a draft policy framework. The framework, is intended to enable alignment of strategic discussions to the government initiatives and foster coordination amongst humanitarian and development actors. This also led to further discussions in the CBA working group to develop guidelines for harmonisation of operations for national NGOs and development of standard operating procedures.

After the recent earthquake and tsunami that hit Central Sulawesi in September 2018, the government and humanitarian actors agreed to channel assistance to the affected population using cash through the PKH delivery system. The use of a common approach allows for the CBA WG to test and further refine the ongoing initiatives and together with lessons learnt from the Lombok response (a 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit Lombok, an island in West Nusa Tenggara province in August, 2018) inform on future programming. In addition, it will inform on the localisation and transcend to humanitarian-development nexus.

### Options for strengthening the cash coordination

At the regional level, ECHO funded 5 UN agencies to jointly develop a shock responsive social protection (SRSP) guidelines for the ASEAN Member States (AMS) which aims to provide common understanding of when and why building disaster risk considerations into social protection programmes and systems is important, and to provide strategic guidance for policy makers on when and how to take forward the disaster responsive social protection. At the global level, discussions on the humanitarian link to social protection is increasingly prominent. A scoping study is underway to map agencies' interest and involvement in social protection and define the ideal coordination structure which would potentially convene the different actors in promoting a more inclusive and strategic discussions for SRSP.

The Indonesian discourse however, has evolved to a rethink on designing a common logical framework that would ensure processes are well captured and documented, monitoring tools are developed, data collection is done in a systematic fashion, and an after-action review is held to inform on best practices and lessons learnt. To achieve this, the WG would need to act immediately and would require a facilitator with sound expertise in emergency cash and shock responsive social protection. So far, both humanitarian and development actors have shown interest in pushing forward these initiatives including; UNICEF, ADB and WB that are looking at shock responsive social protection and supporting governments in the shift to more adaptive social protection. The coordination options therefore include;

- i) Identification of expertise in-country from agencies with experience in cash transfers and social protection. A few examples are UNICEF and WVI who have a focus on SRSP using cash transfers
- ii) Request for deployment from a standby partner (e.g., CashCap) for a minimum period of 1 year. It is recommended that the senior adviser will be hosted by UNICEF but under the supervisory role of both UNICEF, OCHA, and possibly WVI. This is to ensure a focus on both operational and coordination roles/responsibilities, and deliverables benefit a broad audience.

### **Next step of actions**

#### Develop a common logical framework

The CBA WG will develop a set of common objectives that would inform the logical framework. It is discussed that this tool will look at the processes, indicators and agency-developed monitoring tools that would potentially feed in to the overall objective on SRSP. Attention will also be paid to the policy framework to ensure that the processes inform advocacy efforts.

#### The joint market assessment (JMA)

A technical working group for the JMA was formed, and methodology agreed on. The assessments will start mid-November with the draft report expected by early December. The CBA WG in Palu requests for support in the analysis and reporting of the findings. The findings are to inform the design of future CTP, determine the amount of assistance, and feed to the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) – a government budget tool for use in the recovery phase.

#### After action review (AAR)

The AAR exercise should take place at the end of the response. This is intended to report on the best practices and lessons learnt by systematically following the steps as captured in the common logical framework. The findings of the AAR will provide feedback to the outcome of the 2017 CBA workshop, inform and strengthen existing systems, and form a basis for future programming.

2019 Asia-Pacific RCWG Annual Work Plan										
Objectives	Activities	Indicators	Responsible	2019 Timeframe				Status/Achievements	Comments	
				QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4			
<b>Objective 1: Strengthen coordination of Cash and Voucher assistance (CVA) in ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response</b>										
Geographical mapping of CVA in the region	send excel file to National and Sub-National CWGs to share population data for assistance provided through cash and voucher programming	National and Sub-National CWGs to share data on population reached and amount distributed beginning and end of year	RCWG Coord, OCHA, CWGs					Done	CWGs requested to share this information end of March every year although yet to receive from all. To share with OCHA for population to the map.	
		Populate the data to the regional map twice a year on HR infor	RCWG Coord., OCHA IM					Done		
Linking the RCWG with global CWG, CaLP technical advisory group, social protection task force team etc.,	Remotely attend meetings and update on CVA in Asia and the Pacific Align CVA regional activities to the global discussions	Continuous feedback to the RCWG members and country level CWGs	RCWG Coord					Drop	Depends on if CaLP will open shop in the region	
		Host webinar on gender mainstreaming in CVA at the regional level together with gender experts	RCWG SC					Drop	the UN Women GIHA brochure on good practices in CVA can be used as a starting point on information sharing on gender & cash assistance This same item also be advocated for at the CaLP - Asia-Pacific Regional CWG learning event which brings together CWG co-chairs from the region. Webinar held in March, which focused on the basic areas of consideration for agencies. Future plan is to have one webinar on data protection policies.	
Advocate for participation of gender experts at the country level CWGs						Ongoing				
Host a webinar with CaLP on data protection and its implications							Done			
Host discussions on migration and cash transfers							Drop	To follow up with IFRC		
<b>Objective 2: Provide technical support to ongoing operations and Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response</b>										
Develop a booklet for CWGs in the region	Consolidate CVA status and activities by CWG at country level	Develop a booklet for CWGs in the region	RCWG Coord	Jan-Feb				Done		
Provision of CVA support at Regional and Country level	Gap-filling surge support for emergencies	Documented deliverables specified in surge ToRs	RCWG Coord					Drop	Working together with the Regional CWG co-chairs and providing remote support i.e., providing support to Afghanistan on the shift in coordination approach - to include strategic advisory role and extend support to all clusters planning/implementing CVA.	
		CVA training	Number of trainings/webinars organised to CWGs	CWGs, CaLP & RCWG Coord.	Jan-Dec			Completed	together with CaLP, trained the Pacific CWG on CVA training for Programme staff. In Feb, delivered the Data Protection webinar. Planning for the CWGs learning event in May	
		Advocate for use of technological solutions in delivery of cash transfers in the region	RCWG Coord & Co-Chairs					Drop	Held a CWG MEB workshop in Vietnam	
	Advocate the country level CWGs to align activities on linking humanitarian cash assistance to government-led social protection with the ASEAN guidelines	Inclusion of CVA in the guidelines, and dissemination to the CWG	UNICEF, FAO, WFP & RCWG Coord					Done	Guidelines are done. Bilateral discussions with CWGs ongoing & will be discussed as a thematic topic in the learning	
	Provide country specific support on: CWG set-up & linkage to the existing coordination structures, Multisectoral assessments, and Information Management sharing and development of core standards	Clear and approved country missions and TORs	RCWG Coord. & Co-chairs					Drop	Trained the Pacific CWG on CVA for programme staff, and facilitated an MEB workshop for Vietnam CWG.	
		End of mission feedback & report to the CWGs & the in-country coordination structures	RCWG Coord					Drop		
		support CWGs in development of minimum expenditure basket and other core standards						Drop		
<b>Objective 3: Provide a platform for CVA key information sharing and advocacy</b>										
Foster cash learning discussions and information sharing	Maintain the HR RCWG webpage and post quarterly bulletin for the region	Quarterly meeting minutes and regional updates	RCWG Coord	every quarter				ongoing		
	Organise an event on the new way of working	A regional event (organised & documented) tailored to address the needs at the region including the CaLP-Asia-Pacific learning event	RCWG Coord, SC & CWGs					Partially Done		
	Develop CVA policy documents and briefing documents in the region		RCWG SC					Drop		