

Unconditional cash transfer in Emergency

Lessons learned from Plan in Vietnam

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Plan
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Background

Central flooding 2010

Ha Tinh, Quang Binh province

49 deaths

75 injured and

17 people missing

249 communes flooded

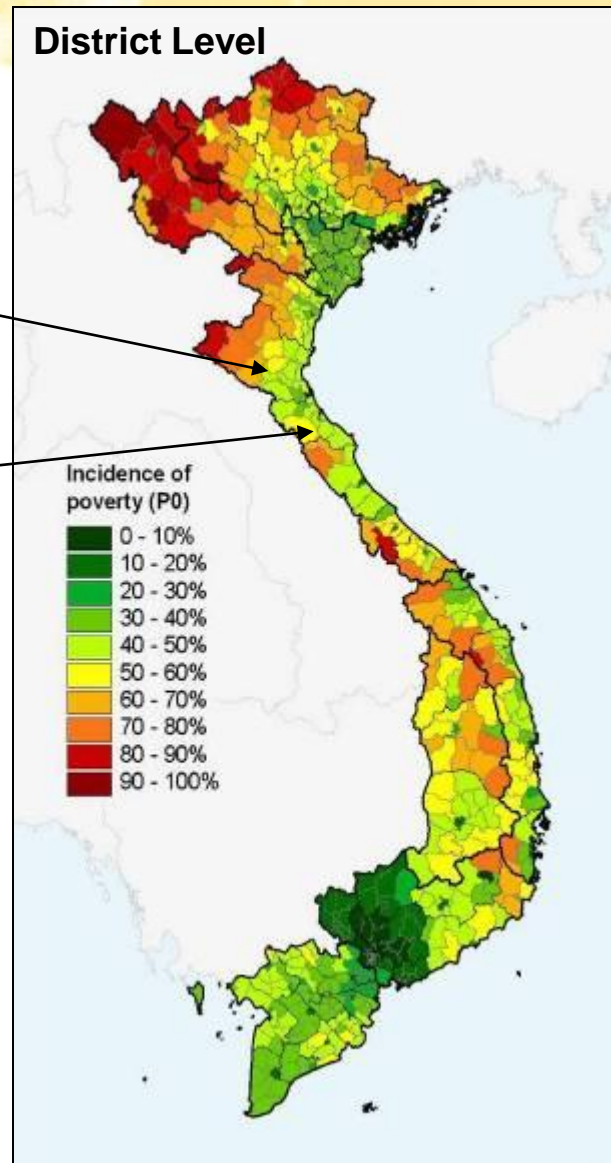
> 105,000 houses flooded

>2,000 houses collapsed

70,000 hectares of land have been affected by flooding

Plan's work in Quang Binh

- Unconditional cash transfer but strong link to livelihoods recovery
- Funded by Irish Aid
- Support provision to 1,501 families (6,215 beneficiaries) with 02 rate:
 - Family with 1-3 members: USD 65



Implementation process

- Rapid assessment
- Technical assessment
- Program design
 - Identification of targeted location
 - Beneficiary selection criteria
 - Level of support
 - Model of transfer, scenario development, identification of local banks
- Development of M&E forms and template
- Feedback mechanism set-up
- Training of local authorities and local volunteers
- Orientation and targeted villages selection
- Beneficiary selection; validation and feedback response
- Finalization of beneficiary list and public post
- Distribution of cash in targeted areas
- Household survey and evaluation

Findings after intervention

- Over 70% of beneficiaries using cash for livelihood recovery, in line with project objective:
 - Livestock
 - Seedlings
 - Fertilizer
 - Agricultural inputs
- Cash used for variety of purposes, offered beneficiaries the chance to decide on expenditures according to needs
- Cash used to meet immediate needs as well as to rebuild or stabilize livelihoods, in line with local seasonal calendar. Helped reduce household need to take on further debt or sell assets
- >60% of beneficiaries spent within 2 weeks, hence providing some stimulation to the local economy

Strengths

- Applied best-practices (i.e. ICRC guidelines), addressing major risks in program design and implementation
- Applied lessons learned from others (i.e. correct chosen of amount support for livelihood recovery)
- Guideline from donor (Irish Aid)
- Transparency throughout process (public awareness, feedback mechanism)
 - Relied on community-based targeting and beneficiary selection – high levels of participation and meetings conducted in minority languages as appropriate
 - Secure and transparent distributions with close supervision and monitoring (simple monitoring forms)
- Capacity and confidence building through training for Plan staff and local partners/authorities
- Revealed typical benefits of unconditional cash transfers (i.e. meeting basic needs, stabilizing/rebuilding livelihoods, beneficiary choice and empowerment, stimulation of local economies, lower transaction costs)
- Availability of local bank service (district level)
- Learning

Weaknesses/Constrains

- More involvement of higher authority (i.e provincial level) should be facilitated to ensure the strong commitment of local partners
- Challenge of organizing village leveled assessment
- Collective actions versus conflicts of interest among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, especially in areas where common practice of relief imbedded by local authorities (i.e equal distribution, influence on beneficiary selection)
- Possibility of overlapping with other aid in kind support from Government

Lessons learned

- Cash transfers have the potential to play an important role in emergency relief operations in Viet Nam, but not all – Context defines appropriateness of different relief activities (i.e location, relief versus early recovery stage, collective actions at community level)
- Cash grants are perceived as an efficient and highly relevant support in a recovery situation
- Cash grants are a “safer” mode to recovery assistance in Vietnam
- Lower cost of distributing cash (90% of project budget was direct cash to beneficiaries compared to around 65-70% of direct value aid)
- Role of local authorities is important to gain commitment
- Beneficiary selection process and criteria need to be strongly participatory
- Close monitoring is required (need a good system & procedures in place)
- Grants could be made conditional (if local context implies high risk of misuse) – requires clear and early set up control mechanisms