



GUIDANCE NOTES: CASH TRANSFERS IN LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMMING

CaLP Learning Workshop
Dakar, October 21st and 22nd 2015

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I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

A growing acceptance of cash transfers as an inter-sectoral tool is accompanied by a better understanding of this approach and its potential to break the cycle of poverty, after much discussion on the role cash transfers have to play in building resilience.

In the Sahel, food security experts have become very skilled in the handling of cash transfers. Their use in the region has progressively been extended to other sectors, such as nutrition and livelihoods. Humanitarian actors involved in contexts of chronic crisis are, bit by bit, rethinking their approaches, working more and more closely with development actors to increase the impact of their work in the long term and deal with the causes of poverty.

Moreover, efforts to protect and strengthen livelihoods are focusing more and more on the use of cash transfers as an implementation modality. In order to enable knowledge and best practice regarding the use of cash transfers to be shared, a learning workshop on cash transfers and livelihoods was organised in Dakar (Senegal), thanks to ERC¹ funding from ECHO. This learning workshop aimed to gather and share good practice and information regarding the implementation of cash transfers in the area of livelihoods, and to serve as a basis for drafting these guidance notes on using cash transfers within the framework of a livelihoods project.

TARGET AUDIENCE

These guidance notes are primarily intended for those involved in designing and implementing programmes that include cash transfer components within a livelihood support framework.

In particular, they are aimed at:

1. humanitarian workers who have some expertise in cash transfers but limited knowledge of the livelihoods sector,
2. and technical workers and livelihoods experts with limited skills in matters concerning cash transfers.

These notes are not intended to cover every component and detail related to cash transfer support for livelihoods; first and foremost, they take into account the particular expectations of those who took part in the workshop, as well as specifically identified needs.

THE SITUATION IN WEST AFRICA

West Africa, a region where a majority of inhabitants endure chronic poverty, is also subject to numerous destabilising factors with regards to livelihoods. These factors include:

- recurrent crises in the Sahel due to a lack of rainfall;
- chronic food insecurity which prevents households from protecting and/or strengthening their livelihoods;
- conflicts and population displacement (Nigeria, Northern Mali...) accompanied by the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries;
- institutional crises (Burkina Faso in 2014-2015, Mali in 2012, Ivory Coast between 2002-2007 and 2010-2011, among the most recent).

¹ Enhanced Response Capacity

In this context, much of the efforts by state, society and international partners to protect livelihoods are focused on hunger gaps, without always having the possibility of investing in longer-term programmes that bolster livelihoods.

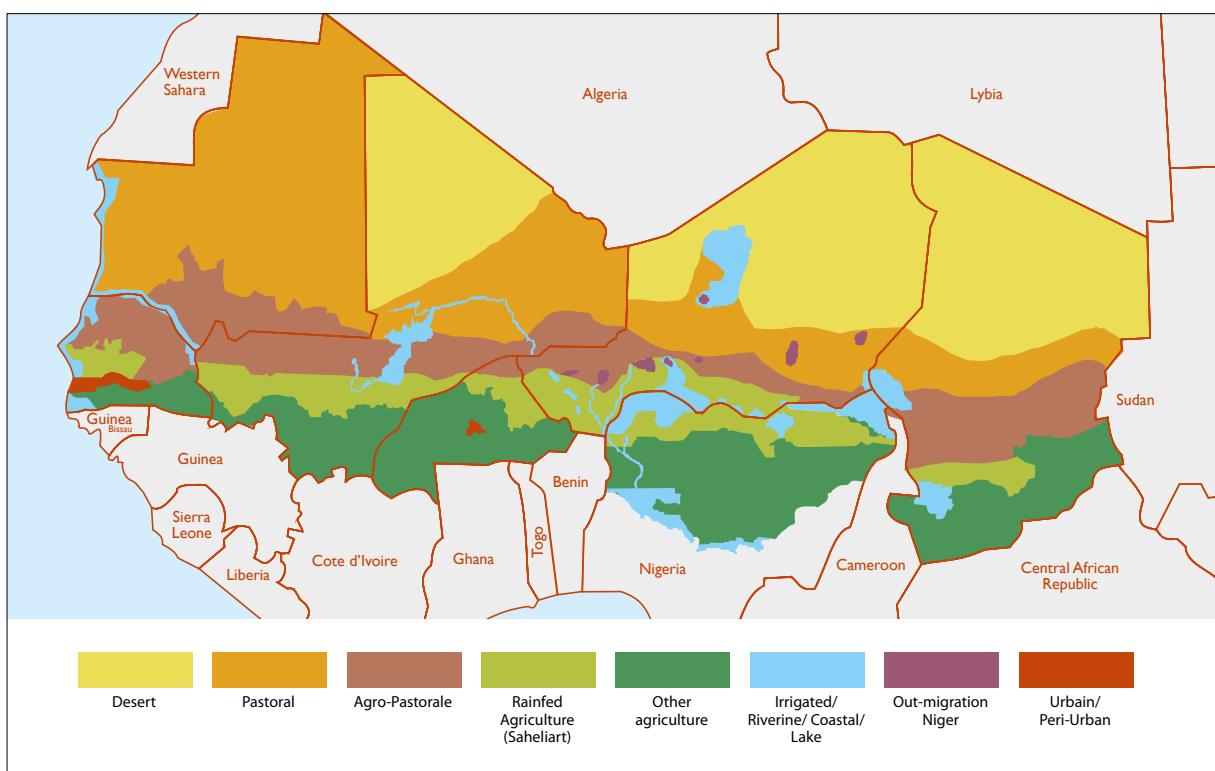
However, certain programmes funded by humanitarian donors or the World Bank that aim to establish social safety nets, as well as the development of strategic social security frameworks by states within the region, are indicative of these countries' desires to progress towards longer-term strategies to eradicate poverty.

At the same time, (post-crisis) revitalisation and reinforcement programmes for livelihoods are carried out when the situation allows.

Increasingly, cash transfer mechanisms are no longer simply being used as social safety nets during hunger gaps or in response to emergency situations, but are being used to help establish livelihood support projects.

Livelihoods in West Africa and in particular the Sahel are dominated by agriculture, pastoralism and agropastoralism, as the map below demonstrates.

Western Africa - Livelihood Zones (General)



Descriptions of livelihood zones for each country can be found on [HEA Sahel's website](#) where more specific profiles – for urban zones², for example – can also be found.

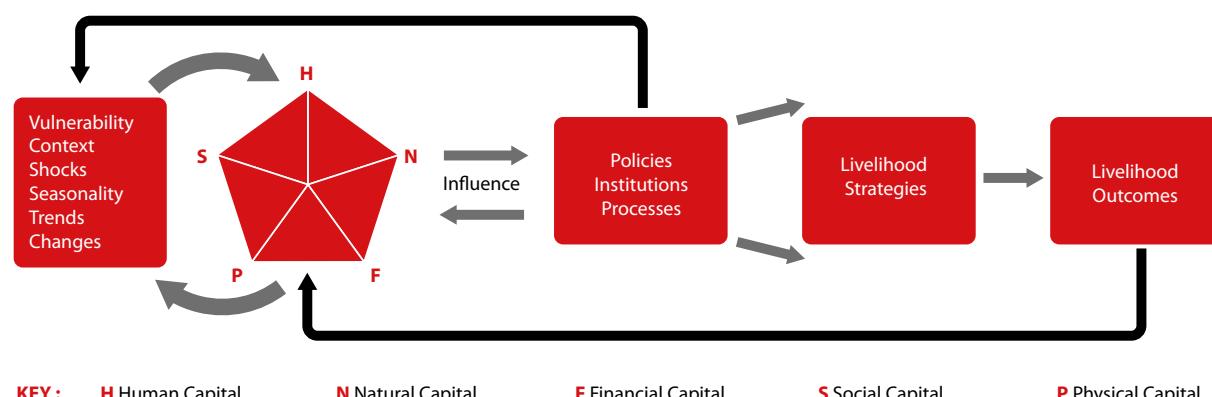
² [Household economy reference profile \(HEA methodology\) Urban Zone for the city of Niamey \(Niger\), 2015](#)

2. CASH TRANSFERS IN LIVELIHOODS SUPPORT

THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK

Definition: Livelihoods encompass the capabilities, assets (including social and material resources) and activities required to make a living. Livelihoods are sustainable when they can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks whilst maintaining or enhancing, for the present and the future, their capacities and assets without diminishing reserves of natural resources.³

Sustainable Livelihoods Framework



The first diagram shows how the factors of a **vulnerable context** influence the **livelihood capitals** of populations, represented here by the pentagon. These capitals are also influenced by **external policies, institutions and processes**.

"**Livelihood strategies** are 'the range and combination of activities and choices that people make in order to achieve their livelihood goals.' On the basis of their personal goals, their resource base and their understanding of the options available, different categories of households - poor and less poor - develop and pursue different livelihood strategies. These strategies include short-term considerations such as ways of earning a living, coping with shocks and managing risk, as well as longer-term aspirations for children's future and old age".⁴

Livelihood outcomes are the results of livelihood strategies for households of different livelihood groups (see DfID's Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets⁵ for more details).

Cash transfers can be effective for each element of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework at various levels, although most interventions focus on livelihood capitals, whereas other types of methodology (advocacy techniques, policies, risk and disaster preparedness) will seek to make an impact at other levels.

Cash transfers allow affected populations to recover their livelihoods through the purchase of essential assets for their livelihoods, access to services and/or debt repayment. They also allow new, more productive and/or resilient livelihoods to be established.

³ Adapted from Chambers, R. and G. Conway (1992) Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century. IDS, Discussion Paper n°296, Brighton: IDS.

⁴ [Rapid Guide for Missions. Analysing local institutions and livelihoods \(2006\)](#), FAO: Rome.

⁵ [DFID \(1999\), Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets](#).

Although it has long been seen as a development matter, humanitarian actors are placing more and more emphasis on the aspect of long-term livelihood sustainability and resilience in the face of future disasters.⁶

Most interventions seek to protect, recoup or build on productive, natural and financial assets, whereas cash transfers also offer opportunities to develop human and social capitals, as well as contribute to market recovery and development.

Examples of action on situations and institutions

Challenge	Type of Interventions
Situations: loss of employment, hunger gap, etc. leading to the sale of productive assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfer of cash for livelihood protection Cash-for-work for community job creation and livelihood recovery
Institutions: lack of community groups able to influence the price of input purchases and sale of animal products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for training to develop cooperative management skills Cash transfer to create capital to establish a cooperative

Examples of capital interventions

Capitals	Types of Interventions
Human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for training to develop technical skills for small-scale herding management Vouchers for training to build awareness regarding livelihoods resilience
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash-for-work to construct a cooperative building Vouchers for training community workers to raise awareness of agricultural microinsurance
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vouchers for boat-building materials Cash for restocking of small ruminants
Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash-for-work for reforestation Cash for access to land ownership (for purchase or permit to access land)
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vouchers for training in accessing microfinance systems Transfer in cash for small business recapitalisation

The importance of livelihoods analysis in programme design

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework demonstrates the connections between the capitals, the context and the strategies that households are able to develop so as to meet their needs short-, mid- and long-term.

When a new strategy is developed or a crisis is faced, we can see not just an interrelation, but also an interdependence between meeting immediate needs, protecting or rebuilding livelihoods. Households will not be able to protect or recover their livelihoods if they are not in a position to meet their basic needs, and they will need their livelihoods in order to meet their needs.

Any analysis to outline cash transfer programming in support of livelihoods must therefore consider all kinds of needs (including health, education, expenses, etc.) and household resources in order to develop an integrated programme approach to tackle livelihoods.

For more on this subject, please see the video produced by Save The Children ([The Livelihoods Lens to integrated programming](#)) and the '[Operational Guidance and Toolkit for Multipurpose Cash Grants](#)' (UNHCR, et al., 2015) for more details.

⁶ See CaLP training module: [Urban Cash Transfer Programming & Livelihoods](#)

TYPES OF LIVELIHOOD INTERVENTIONS

Livelihood support programmes will have different objectives, which will be determined by the context of the intervention. There are three categories of livelihood intervention defined here – livelihood protection, livelihood recovery and livelihood enhancement:

Types of Interventions	Objectives
Protection	Protecting households from engaging in negative coping mechanisms (migration of workers, sales of productive assets, reduction in input use...) which could compromise the longevity of livelihoods short-, mid- or long-term.
Recovery	Enabling households who have been affected by disasters to get back to the position they were in prior to the disaster, to re-establish their livelihoods' productive capacity.
Enhancement	Consolidating and increasing the capacity of households and communities to meet their needs, as well as building their resilience.

See annexe 1 and the CaLP training modules “Cash and Livelihoods” for more details and examples.

TYPES OF CASH TRANSFER FOR LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

Distinctions are made between different kinds of cash transfers: **conditional and unconditional**, and **restricted and unrestricted transfers**.

Conditionality refers to the considerations (aside from targeting criteria) that must be met in order to receive assistance. Restriction refers to the limits imposed by programmes as to how transfers are utilised.

- **Conditional transfers** require beneficiaries to carry out specific actions or activities identified by the project so as to receive cash and/or vouchers. Conditions might include, for example, taking part in a training session, working, presenting a business plan, repaying a loan...
- Unconditional/unconditional transfers do not require beneficiaries to carry out a specific action or activity to be able to receive a transfer/transfers
- **Restricted transfers** can only be used for certain predetermined items or services. Vouchers are by definition restrictive, since voucher use is limited to a certain number of traders/service providers, and therefore to certain types of items or services.
- **Unrestricted/unrestricted transfers** can be used as beneficiaries see fit.

Within the Livelihoods Framework, cash transfers can be divided into four categories:

- Unrestricted and unconditional transfers
- Cash transfers to replace assets
- Cash transfers “plus” for livelihood enhancement
- Cash-for-work

Unrestricted and unconditional transfers

Theory / benefits

These kinds of transfers, for which there are no conditions to be met in order to qualify and no restrictions that apply to their use, allow recipients to look after basic needs and therefore protect their livelihoods, as well as invest in the recovery, enhancement or the diversification of their livelihoods.

In addition to offering recipients the option of not having to resort to negative coping mechanisms (irregular migration, sale of productive assets, debt, etc.), the lack of restrictions and conditionality allows recipients to become fully involved in protecting, recovering or bolstering their livelihoods, whilst being able to make choices that best suit them in terms of investment (purchasing productive assets, developing an income-generating activity, soil protection, etc.). Past experience has shown that these transfers are often used to repay debts, which led to the galvanisation of credit markets.

Limitations

- These transfers can be put towards livelihoods if, and only if, recipients are in a position to meet their most pressing needs.
- Without additional measures (technical training, in financial management, in accessing credit, etc.) there may not always be sufficient knowledge and skills to enable households to develop or build on activities.

Cash transfers for asset replacement

Theory / benefits

In a post-crisis context, where households have lost or sold their assets, the first step towards the development of sustainable and resilient livelihoods is the recovery of these assets, (canoes, livestock, sheds, motors, etc.). Where this is the case, cash transfers help households to acquire and replace their assets and thereby lay the foundations for recovering their livelihoods.

This mechanism is particularly well suited to urban contexts where opportunities to become involved with small businesses and service providers are many and varied.

Limitations

- These transfers generally tend to be considerable in terms of value and the **risks of these being used for purposes other than those initially intended** are greater. There are several ways to limit these risks, including the application of conditions and restrictions. First and foremost, this type of transfer must be accompanied by appropriate measures that aim to clarify the objectives of these transfers and hold recipients accountable to agencies, communities, the authorities, etc.
- Replacing productive assets is a necessary measure, but recovering assets that **do not always provide an immediate source of income** is not enough. Additional livelihood protection measures have to be put in place in order to protect assets until households are in a position where they are generating enough income to attain the livelihoods protection threshold. The poorest, who have no assets at all, have to be able to meet their basic needs before contributing towards the revitalisation of supply market.

Cash transfers “plus” for livelihood enhancement

Theory / benefits

Cash transfers, in this case, are accompanied by technical assistance and/or skills-building measures (technical, financial management, concepts of resilience applied to livelihoods, etc.).⁷ Additional measures could also include indirect action on social, political and economic environments to ensure increased opportunities.

The transfer will, in the first instance, be used for buying assets and/or accumulating capital, and it will also be used to cover daily needs during potential training periods or until there is enough income generated from their activities.

⁷ See also Section 4B. “Additional measures”



EXAMPLE:

Within the context of a project to develop income-generating activities amongst young people who had been taken out of school in Niger, Save the Children provided participants with professional training (technical and financial) over three months, during the course of which the trainees received 45,000 CFAF per month. These monthly transfers gave future entrepreneurs a chance to cover basic needs during their training course, as well as set up capital for their operation.

Limitations

- As with the asset replacement schemes, households have to be in a position to meet their most urgent needs in order to be able to get involved in livelihood-building activities.
- The most vulnerable households will likely experience difficulties in engaging in new activities right away and this process must be incorporated into a long-term project.
- Reinforcing livelihoods against future disasters involves flexibility, a good understanding of the context, and long-term engagement. Humanitarian actors, who often work with short-term funding, only rarely have the opportunity to prepare and execute this type of project in a meaningful way.
- Livelihood enhancement can require good understanding and analysis of market opportunities, expertise in drawing up business plans and skills-building – abilities that are not traditionally available within humanitarian agencies.

Cash-for-work

Theory / benefits

Agencies offer opportunities for temporary work, for which participants receive financial remuneration. The work that is carried out is usually in the interests of the public and/or community and for the most part aims to repair or rebuild collective resources (sanitation system, reforestation, soil protection, etc.). The objective of this kind of intervention is both to provide participants with an income and contribute to the recovery or rebuilding of collective property.

Limitations

- Cash-for-work programmes might compete with other livelihood activities, not just when they are scheduled without consideration for the seasonal calendar, but also because the rate of remuneration may lead certain households to prioritise this activity over livelihoods or paid work in which they are normally involved.
- Particular measures would need to be taken to ensure equal access for all to these work projects (e.g. childcare for single mothers, flexible working hours, appropriate work for those with physical constraints, etc.)
- Cash-for-work programmes are generally more complex and more expensive than unconditional cash transfers.
- The social factors – and in particular that of payment for work that community members usually do on a voluntary basis – may impact negatively on the social cohesion of communities. A good understanding of the social context is required in setting up this kind of programme.

Examples of cash transfer use in livelihood support

	Examples of response options	Examples of cash transfer use in livelihood support	Examples of possible accompanying measures
Unrestricted and unconditional transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to food products • Access to livestock protection inputs • Debt repayment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unconditional sum of cash 	
Cash transfers to replace assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to productive assets • Access to productive capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted sum of cash for purchasing tools • Vouchers for seed fairs • Unconditional sum of cash for lease of arable land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive asset protection (e.g. veterinary care and/or vaccination campaign) • Local authority support for productive asset management • Skills-building in risk management and adaptation • Support for access to microcredit
Cash transfers "plus" for livelihood enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil protection • Access to productive capital • Building existing skills • Diversifying sources of income and food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vouchers for small animal fairs and feed • Cash for AGR • Cash for training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of resilience principles • Supporting communities with maintenance of anti-erosive structures • Building financial management skills for income-generating activities • Building skills in diversification of income and food sources • Supporting access to microcredit • Exploring markets and value chain studies
Cash-for-work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting livelihoods • Protection of community infrastructures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash-for-work for soil protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of resilience principles • Supporting community organisations in managing cash-for-work activities and anti-erosive structure maintenance

3. CASH TRANSFERS FOR LIVELIHOODS – PROJECT CYCLE

A. SITUATIONAL AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

The initial preparation phase (review of existing documents, coordination, defining objectives, etc.) will give a framework and detailed objectives for the situational and needs analysis. The primary objective of this evaluation will be to provide the necessary information for deciding on the objectives for a potential livelihood sector intervention, as well as intervention design. The evaluation will also be able to provide initial indications on the relevance (or not) of cash transfer use during the implementation of a response.

Specific features of livelihoods

Numerous guides on livelihoods evaluation are available.⁸ A **livelihoods evaluation should generally help to determine:**

- **Livelihood zones and socio-economic or livelihood groups and their characteristics**

A “**livelihood zone**” is a homogenous geographical area in terms of its agro-ecological characteristics, options for revenue and food sources, access to markets, etc.

A “**livelihood group**” is a group of people who have access to similar resources, similar social and cultural values, and who share a comparable economic status.

The **categorisation** of each livelihood group helps demonstrate: households’ sources of income and food; their key expenditure items; features of their livelihood capital; the risks to which they are exposed; their ability to adapt to unfavourable contexts; the seasonal calendars they are subject to; connections and interdependencies with other groups and so on – vital information for intervention planning.

- **The most vulnerable homes, their primary needs, adaptation strategies and adaptability, preferred methods of assistance, etc.**

This feedback enables profiles for target populations, vulnerability criteria and objectives for a potential intervention to be defined. Qualitative needs analysis helps to determine the preferred methods of assistance, whilst quantitative needs analysis and household adaptability contribute to households’ transfer calculations.

- **The problems identified and their root causes**

Beyond interventions that aim to meet the most urgent needs (protection, even recovery, if the seasonal calendar permits), identifying problems and their causes allows these causes to be taken into account when defining objectives for livelihood enhancement and resilience-building.

- **The structure of local markets, how they work, prices and availability of basic products, etc.**

This data provides information on the capacity of local markets to supply the products required to protect and/or rebuild livelihoods, the capacity of households to be able to access them, physically and economically, as well as the potential need for direct or indirect market support.

- **Potential opportunities for livelihood enhancement and/or diversification**

⁸ See ACF (2011), *Food Security and Livelihood Assessments – A Practical Guide for Field Workers* and FAO (2009), *The Livelihood Assessment Tool-kit: Analysing and responding to the impact of disasters on the livelihoods of people* and the *Livelihoods Resource Centre*.

Specific features of cash transfers

In cases where it is envisaged that cash transfers will be used as a project implementation mechanism, the following factors must also be considered:

- **The perception of the community and the local authorities with regards to cash transfers / the preferences of households**

On one hand, this enables possible lessons learned from past experiences, particularities and challenges tied in with a local context to be taken into account; and on the other, for clashes with communities and local authorities to be avoided or anticipated.

Even though it appears to be an obvious step, taking the preferences of households into account, as well as those of the local authorities, is not always automatic. Although the majority of donors and actors consider cash transfers to be the most suitable tool for most contexts, **households may have good reason for preferring other methods** (social pressures, specific security risks for certain groups, potential familial conflicts, etc.).

- **Interfamilial and cross-community dynamics with regards to activity and resource management**

It will be useful to ask the following questions:

- Do men and women have the same priorities?
- How are resources managed within the home?
- How are decisions made within the home?
- How are different activities managed within the home?

in order to determine who should receive cash transfers, as well as the risk of:

- disruption of interfamilial and cross-community dynamics in connection with transfers;
- reinforcing pre-existing mechanisms (male chauvinism, domination and/or stigmatisation of a social or ethnic group or others, etc.);
- transfers being used for purposes other than those initially intended.

- **Physical access to markets**

Aside from market characteristics (see the following section), physical access to markets for future transfer beneficiaries is a fundamental condition for setting up interventions that use cash transfers.

- **Availability of and physical access to financial services (IMF, cash transfer bureau, mobile telephone company agent, savings and loans structures, both formal and informal, etc.)**

The ability of recipients to access cash transfer services physically, along with the reliability, efficiency, cost etc. of these services, must be assessed so as to determine possible transfer implementation options.

- **Security risks specific to monetary transfers**

Cash transfers for livelihood support (for recovery and enhancement in particular) are fewer in number (one or two) and their amounts are higher than those for social safety net or food programme transfers, for example. It is therefore particularly important to measure the risks⁹ that are linked specifically to the implementation of activities, for recipients and their communities, for those who carry and distribute cash, for merchants and for agency staff in charge of rolling out the project, as well as to analyse possible mitigative measures for these risks.

⁹ In addition to the systematic security condition analyses that must always be conducted, independent to the sector or implementation methods envisaged.

B. MARKET SYSTEM ANALYSES

Why are market systems important in livelihoods analysis and cash transfer use?

Because markets are indispensable actors in the area of livelihoods.

Supply-and-demand market systems for goods, services and work are key actors that allow livelihoods to function:

- **Goods** provide necessary inputs and productive assets (supply) and allowing the sale of products (demand).
- **Services** (e.g. technical advice for agriculture, veterinarians, electricity, ice for preservation, motors, etc.) are essential, or bring added value, to livelihoods, and are a source of income for suppliers.
- **Paid work**, permanent or temporary, enables employers to accomplish the necessary tasks for their livelihoods and allows income to be generated.

Following the **initial phase of context analysis**, we will examine the markets (their structure, their way of working, prices and availability of inputs and services required for well-functioning livelihoods, etc.) which allows us to evaluate the market's operational level and the consequences on livelihoods.

Because the existence of functioning critical market systems are essential for the use of cash transfers.

Critical market systems are the “market systems that are the most suitable for meeting the needs of the target population in emergency situations – in essence, specific markets which have or could have a major role in the ensuring the survival or protection of the target population’s livelihoods.”¹⁰ By extension, this will include market systems (work, services and goods) which could play an important role in livelihood reinforcement.

What makes a market system critical? ¹¹	
<i>Reasons why a system might be critical</i>	<i>Types of needs</i>
It supplies foods/items essential for survival	Gaps between what households have and what is needed to meet the minimum standards for survival (Sphere)
It supplies inputs or goods to help protect means of subsistence	Lack of inputs, goods or services needed by households to protect and support subsistence activities (e.g. food production)
It supplies revenue, salaries and access to buyers	Loss of opportunities to sell labour, livestock, surplus produce, which households need to earn a minimum living wage

In order to discover whether the market would be suited to an intervention based on cash transfers, an analysis of critical market systems on goods and services for livelihoods will be carried out.

The critical market systems study should allow us to come to a conclusion on two key questions:

- Are market characteristics suited to a livelihoods intervention based on cash transfers?
- If not, what are the market support measures that would ensure it was capable of supporting a cash transfer-based intervention, in the right conditions?

¹⁰ EMMA toolkit, Glossary, p. 206

¹¹ EMMA toolkit: p. 130, Box 7.2

Critical markets analysis (goods and services):

Once the principal needs have been identified, a critical market systems analysis for key goods and services can reveal important information when selecting the most appropriate method.

This analysis should provide answers to the following questions (amongst others):

- Are there functioning markets in affected areas and are they accessible?
- Are the goods and/or services that recipients must procure in order to protect, recuperate or strengthen their livelihoods readily available and at reasonable costs?
- Are there restrictions on the movement of merchandise?
- Is the market competitive (are there high numbers of suppliers in comparison with the number of beneficiaries to support?)
- Is the market integrated?
- Are retailers willing and able to respond to an increase in demand?
- Is quality control of goods in place/possible?

Jobs market analysis

In rural zones, just as in urban zones, numerous households depend on salaried work, including seasonal work, for much of their income. In a post-crisis context, analysis of the labour market and of the crisis' impact on it could provide us with crucial information for response planning, especially in terms of furthering an intervention's impact through a holistic approach to livelihood systems.

This analysis will help identify key labour market actors and how they interrelate, the crisis' impact on actors and on the market system, the assistance that would be required by actors to respond to the crisis, information for better response planning (target group, timings, etc.).

EXAMPLE:

A market study on agricultural labour after the Haiti earthquake¹² led to an analysis that included all livelihood groups who depended directly or indirectly on agricultural work. This study proposed a range of responses for all livelihood groups, from immediate responses for activity relaunch, to stimulus for financial institutions to offer agricultural funding, to stimulus for alternative rural jobs and preparation for the coming hurricane season.

In non-crisis situations, a labour market study will seek to analyse limitations and problems, risks and opportunities linked to labour markets, as well as gain a better understanding of the importance and the role of salaried work for households' livelihoods, as well as the constraints and dangers connected to it: timing, frequency, child labour, security, non-adherence to employment law, market dependence on price changes and/or harvests (e.g. coffee).

Few French-language documents on labour market analysis are available. However, interesting information is available in the WFP's guide "[Labour market analysis guidance](#)" (2013), and the "[Labour Market and Assessment Guidance and Tip Sheets](#)", produced by Mercy Corps in 2015. The pending publication of an (English-language) guide for directing a labour market analysis in humanitarian contexts, which gathers numerous references and examples of studies (Mercy Corps, IRC and Save The Children), should also be noted.

¹² USAID (2010), '[Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis: The Market for Agricultural Labor in Sud-Est Department of Haiti](#)'.

C. RESPONSE ANALYSIS

Response analysis aims to determine the most appropriate response option, based on a complete analysis of the situation and the appraisal of different response options.

The choice of methodologies must focus **primarily on the best strategy for achieving the impact desired** and not necessarily on the practical aspects (speed, cost, etc.). **The most suitable response will often be a combination of activity and methodology** which could be effective when taken separately, and combined, will result in added value that will allow us to best achieve the determined objective.

A number of agencies have developed analytical frameworks, as well as decision trees, to direct response analyses for types of intervention as well as for methods. Oxfam's Livelihood Appropriate decision tree and EMMA's Market Responses decision tree (supply system) may be cited as examples.

The response analysis phase should follow these stages:

- Exploring different response options (livelihoods aspect);
- Calculating totals;
- Exploring different methods and possible mechanisms for implementing response options (goods or cash transfer aspect);
- Risk analysis for each option;
- Cost-efficiency calculations for each method;
- Comparing options and making the decision.



PHOTO: PABLO TOSCO/INTERMON OXFAM

Exploring different response options

Following on from the situational analysis phase, we will have determined what the needs of each livelihood group are. The response analysis should determine the kinds of response possible for each target group. At this stage, consideration is not given to the method of implementation, only to the type of response for the problem identified.

Appropriate responses¹³ in the context of livelihoods should correspond to the needs and capacities of each target group – they are not necessarily aimed at the most vulnerable. Indeed, asset recovery or livelihood-building activities will exclude the poorest households who have no access to any productive assets.

In order to examine the most appropriate response options, the following aspects should be considered:

- 1) **What are the most appropriate interventions for responding to populations' needs? Taking into consideration populations' needs, preferences of target groups, the context and the identified risks.**

Example of response options according to context and identified needs

Context	Needs	Examples of response options
1 – Food crisis during hunger gap	• Livelihoods protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to foodstuffs • Access to inputs (e.g. fodder)
2 – Loss of productive assets following forced displacement	• Recapitalisation, revival of local economic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to productive assets • Access to capital • Access to foodstuffs until activities are relaunched
3 – High vulnerability to changes in climate, recurrent food crises	• Strengthening livelihoods and building their resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil protection • Access to productive capital • Skills-building • Diversifying sources of incomes and food

- 2) **Response options should adhere to the mandate of the organisation.**

3) The skills that are available and that can be mobilised within the organisation (technical, strategic and logistical) will be a limiting factor to consider. The situational analysis might uncover a wide range of needs, from those that are more urgent to longer-term needs for livelihood enhancement or diversification. **Humanitarian agencies very rarely have the skills available to manage long-term projects** on matters of livelihood enhancement and diversification.

Similarly, **bodies classified as development agencies do not always have the required skills to manage cash transfers and the activities they involve** (situational and market analyses, methodology choices and combinations of the most suitable methods, etc.).

Most organisations represented at the workshop will have a limited knowledge of some sectors – primarily food security, livelihoods for the FAO, or cash transfers – but none have all of the skills required for livelihood-building or diversification projects involving cash transfers within their teams.

- 4) **Potential partnerships** with agencies that have specific skillsets (agriculture, fishing, market access, managing small businesses, market analysis, managing projects with cash transfer elements, etc.) will help to broaden the possibilities regarding responses and integrated response options.

¹³ See characteristics in the OGB Rough Guide No. 1.3: Response Analysis



EXAMPLE:

The CCFS project in Mali, partnered with the state technical services in a number of countries in the region; or with the State social services for cash transfers in Sierra Leone.

5) Feasibility (technical, time constraints, compatibility with the seasonal calendar, ability to contact people, etc.):

Interventions carried out within a livelihoods framework must respect the seasonal calendar, the presence of existing livelihoods actors, contact with people, etc.

The process of supplying key inputs will require quality control, involving state technical services; the use of cash transfers involves situational and market analyses – procedures which can take several weeks.

For the context in West Africa, it will be appropriate to take into account seasonal migrations (e.g. pastoral, sales of labour), traditional and religious events, anticipating of possible access constraints due to security situations, etc.

Other factors may also come up:

- Other actors present in the area and their planned projects
- Possible restrictions by the authorities in terms of types of intervention
- Availability of financial resources (Are there enough funds accessible? Is the time at which funds are available compatible with the period of the project?)

Calculating transfer value

Calculating total transfer values will depend on the aim of the intervention, the situations faced by target households and the gaps that the project seeks to fill.

The amounts that will in due course be transferred will also depend on three other factors:¹⁴

- Do you want the amount of payment to vary during the course of the project?
- What is the desired frequency for payments: a single payment, monthly, quarterly...?
- Do you wish to adjust the amounts for each household (according to its size, the number of children, the number of non-disabled people, the area of farmland, the number of animals, etc.)?

Livelihood protection

Where *livelihood protection* is concerned, we do not just aim to cover unmet needs to achieve the survival threshold, but also the requirements for meeting the subsistence threshold.

The HEA methodology defines the survival threshold as the total revenue required to cover:

- a) 100% of minimum food calorie requirements (2,100 kcals per person) plus
- b) the associated costs for food preparation and consumption (for instance salt, soap, petrol and/or firewood for cooking and basic lighting), plus
- c) total expenditure for drinking water.

¹⁴ On this subject, see: Harvey, P. and Bailey, S. (2011), 'Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies', Good Practice Review 11, Chapter 3.3

The livelihood protection threshold is defined as the total income needed to support local livelihoods. This means the total expenditure needed for:

- protecting life (see above), plus
- maintaining access to basic services (e.g. running medical expenses, school fees), plus
- guaranteeing means of subsistence mid- to long-term (e.g. regular purchases of seed, fertiliser, veterinary medicine, etc.), plus
- achieving a locally acceptable way of life (e.g. buying clothes, basic coffee/tea).¹⁵

To assess the needs for each livelihood group, we take into account:

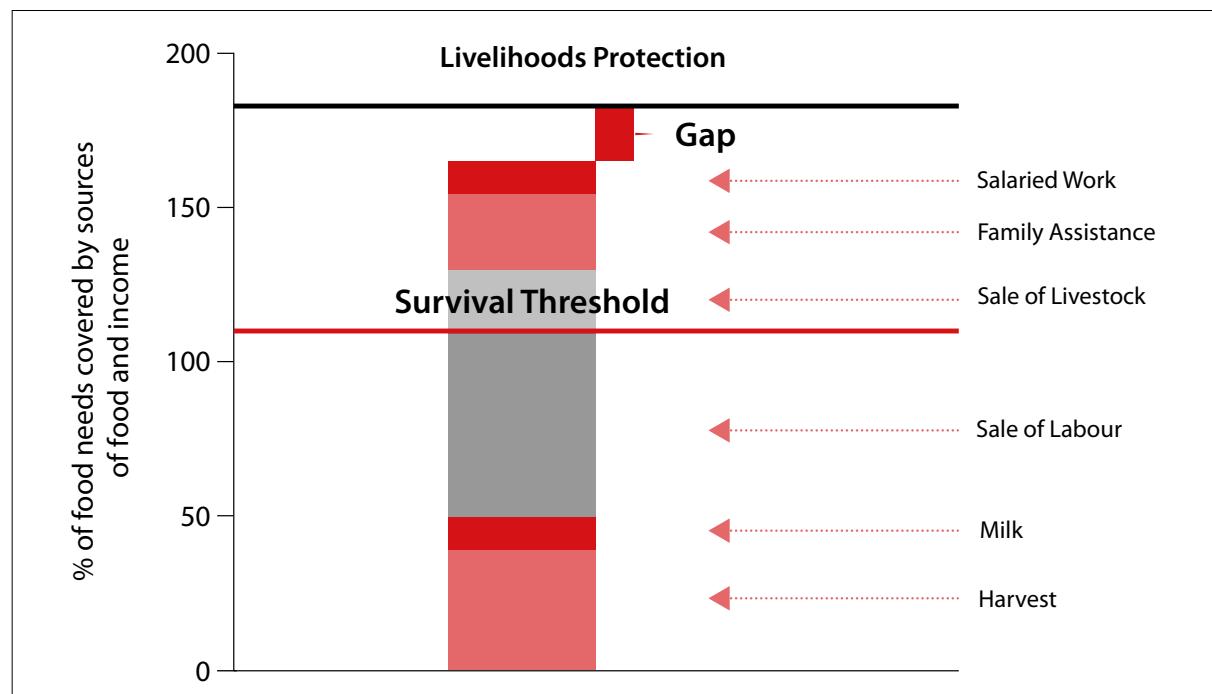
- the capacity of each home to meet these needs without having to adopt negative coping mechanisms (crisis response strategy) including any reserves they have at their disposal,
- the period at which these needs will not be covered,
- comparing afterwards with livelihood protection thresholds in order to identify the gap that must be filled.

On this score, HEA studies have the advantage of integrating these threshold calculations as well as calculating unmet needs in their studies. However, this kind of study is not always possible – you must then resort to other sources of information and methods of assessing needs.

The graphic below illustrates the typical situation faced by the households of a given Sahelian agropastoral socio-economic group at a given period. We see that there are six sources of food and income that enable them to cover about 160% of their food needs.

In this case, the survival threshold is estimated to be around 110% of the value of food needs, whilst the livelihood protection threshold is about 180% of estimated food needs. The gap to be filled in order to meet the livelihood protection threshold will therefore be about 20% of the value of a family's food need, estimated to be around 40,000 CFAF a month, leaving a gap of 8,000 CFAF per month.

Example of HEA-style representation comparing thresholds and households' capacity to meet them



¹⁵ Source: FEG Consulting and Save the Children, 2008.

Yearly seasonal calendar for Mandjoura subprefecture, region of Bahr el Gazal, Chad¹⁶

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov.	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Harvest time												
Availability of camel milk												
Availability of cows' milk												
Availability of goats' milk												
Purchase of food												
Animal migration												
Purchase of animal feed												
Sale of livestock												
Hunger gap												
Cottage industry												
Loan period												
Loan repayment												
Peak prices for basic foodstuffs												
Peak prices for livestock												
Lowest prices for basic foodstuffs												
Lowest prices for livestock												

This calendar enables us to demonstrate the **seasonality of food and income sources**, as well as the **seasonal nature of costs related to livelihood protection**.

The seasonality of prices, food availability, revenue, livelihood costs (purchase of animal feed, etc.) are all factors that will influence the capacity of households to meet their needs, and must therefore be considered when livelihood protection totals are being calculated. **These seasonal factors will affect transfer totals, as well as the durations for which transfers will be needed.**

The gap to be met will therefore vary in value according to the time of year; nevertheless, it is not recommended to adjust this amount for every payment where monthly instalments are concerned. We could, however, consider periods during which the amount should be readjusted.

In cases where the situation changes over the course of the intervention (drought intensifies, state emergency measures, epidemic, change in prices, etc.) the amount may have to be readjusted. **Where this is the case, the crisis modifier developed by Save The Children** is an interesting tool to use for forecasting and adjusting transfer amounts.¹⁷

Transfers will be required until households are able to regain their capacity to maintain their livelihoods in a sustainable way (at harvest time, beginning of the rainy season, periods of paid work, etc.) – that is to say, to meet and surpass the protection threshold sustainably.

Livelihood recovery

In the case of livelihood recovery programmes, we attempt to give households the means to reboot their economic activities sustainably. The total transfer amount should therefore correspond to the sum required to protect and recapitalise livelihoods in a sustainable way.

¹⁶ Source: Livelihoods profile of agropastoralists in Mandjoura Subprefecture, Bahr el Gazal, Chad, March 2012. Oxfam - ECHO

¹⁷ See section 4C on social safety nets for more details

Calculating the transfer amount should take account of the following factors:

- the capacity of households to support their livelihoods in comparison to the estimated protection threshold (see previous section);
- the capacity of households to rebuild the minimum required capital for a sustainable revival of their livelihoods.

The transfer amount should enable households:

- **to protect their livelihoods;**¹⁸
- **to rebuild minimum capital levels in productive and non-productive assets, as well as build up the capital required to access necessary services and inputs in order to recuperate livelihoods sustainably** and enabling households to meet their needs and generate income, allowing for future investment and preparation for potentially adverse situations.

EXAMPLE:



In the case of a household that has lost livestock and access to feed due to drought, the transfer amount should be able to cover:

- the cost of restocking livestock;
- the costs of feed required, as well as veterinary fees, up until the next feedstock harvest or until the household can access resources that enable them to procure feed;
- the amount necessary to meet the livelihood protection threshold.

The calculation should not just incorporate existing assets (those that remain following the shock) but also the household's capacity to rebuild this capital (through secondary activities, access to credit, adaptation strategies, etc.).

Generally, the transfer amount rarely takes into account the value of individual losses, or the household's economic situation prior to the shock – rather, it will consider a minimum capital level which will enable livelihood regeneration.

In effect, we could not consider, for example, restocking over 500 heads of cattle for the more well-off; rather, we would opt for minimum amounts to give a broader scope to the project (e.g. 10 animals per household), primarily so that households can carry out their activities in a sustainable way as quickly as possible, and not re-establish the inequalities that existed prior to the catastrophe.

However, it might be worth considering that in certain cases, the poorest households, who will be excluded from these programmes,¹⁹ often depend largely if not exclusively on the activities of the richest (herding, agricultural work, etc.) and that these richer households will only be in a position to offer them employment if they attain a basic level of economic activity.

In many cases, the richest households will have access to credit – however, it will from time to time be possible to offer them support via direct or indirect means (including facilitating access to conditional loans, through cash-for-work programmes for agricultural plot recovery, etc.) in the interest of other vulnerable socio-economic groups.

¹⁸ Recovery programmes for the most part target households who have lost all or part of their productive assets and recovery measures must be accompanied by existing livelihood protection measures.

¹⁹ They are generally excluded from these programmes as owning or having access to few if any productive assets.

Livelihood building

In the case of livelihood building programmes, we aim to give households the means to build up and/or diversify their livelihoods so that they will be more resilient.

It is appropriate in this situation to maximise the efforts required to meet the set objectives:

- productive capital (e.g. increase of ten small animals);
- infrastructure management needs (e.g. strong anti-erosive barrier, shelters for small businesses);
- training (e.g. training costs, meeting family needs during training courses, etc.);

as well as the capacity of households to meet these objectives. The maximum possible duration to meet this aim will also be an important factor.

In all these cases, the levels of reference (protection threshold, minimum capital for reactivation, etc.), households' capacity, as well as parallel interventions led by the same agency or by other parties involved, must be evaluated.

Transfer frequency options

The decision regarding the frequency of transfers must take into account the project's aims (see below), the costs involved with transfers (cost-effectiveness), potential migratory periods (especially for predominantly pastoral groups), security, households' perceptions, and so on.

Monetary interventions responding to fundamental needs generally (though not invariably) use transfers relatively frequently (e.g. bi-monthly or monthly) so that beneficiaries do not have to look after large sums of money for the entire duration of the project.

Interventions that allow beneficiaries to make larger purchases and investments (e.g. **livelihood recovery** and shelters) generally employ one or two larger instalments to meet this kind of expense.

Projects which place conditions on the manner in which the money is to be used (e.g. to construct shelters or to relaunch an enterprise/activity) make at least two transfers, so as to be able to verify the way in which the first transfer had been spent and ensure that other conditions have been complied with.

As ever, there are compromises – a sole payment will probably be simpler and will enable beneficiaries to make larger purchases, and it will often be more effective since the transfer or distribution fees only have to be paid once. On the other hand, several instalments will allow the organisation to adapt the transfers through the course of the project and will not force beneficiaries to carry or look after large sums of money at home. As with the other aspects of project planning, it is useful to ask beneficiaries for their opinions to find out how often they would like to receive their money.²⁰

Fixed or variable amounts depending on households?

Whether it concerns livelihood protection or livelihood recovery, the issue of how desirable and how realistic it is to have tailored transfers arises.

In the case of protection projects, the decision should be made according to the duration of the project (if the project is short-term, this option could prove to be unprofitable), the number of households, the possible conflicts that these measures could bring about, the practices of other actors, community preferences...

When it comes to livelihood recovery projects, the losses suffered as a result of disasters are only rarely uniform, including those for households from a given socio-economic group. As mentioned previously (in the Calculating Transfer Value section), taking individual losses into account is avoided, to prevent inequalities which already existed prior to the disaster from being re-established.

²⁰ Taken from Harvey, P. and Bailey, S. (2011), '[Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies](#)', Good Practice Review 11.

Nevertheless, it is appropriate for each agency to decide whether their assistance should be aimed first and foremost at losses or at what families will need to regenerate their livelihoods.

Comparing implementation methods for response options

Once different response options are considered, different methods and possible combinations of methods for implementing each of these options are explored, taking into account, amongst others, the following elements:

- The preferences of future beneficiaries.
- The method most in keeping with the capacities and desires of communities.
- The characterising features of critical market systems. Are they suitable for an intervention comprising one or two methods of cash transfer? Are there risks with regards to the quality of the products and/or services households can access? To what extent is it possible to control or diminish these risks?
- Security risks linked with each method (for the beneficiaries, the cash distributors and the organisation).
- Time available for implementation.
- Available skills for project implementation.
- Analysis of the risks associated for each method (security, social...)
- Government policies regarding cash interventions.
- Which method gives the least negative impact possible? ("Do no harm")
- The cost-effectiveness of each method.
- What are the possible links with a longer-term intervention?

At the end of this stage, the agency should be in a position to propose different intervention plans, comprising one or more implementation methods for each response option. The methods proposed will then be compared so as to choose which is/are the most suitable.

At this stage, it is important **not to be influenced too much by the donor's preferences or by the organisation's strategic framework**, which is being directed more and more towards the adoption of cash transfers.

Cash transfers are not always the most appropriate method and at this point, it is important to be open to all methods and combinations of methods and evaluate them objectively. **The choice of method should always be made as a result of the situational analysis and response analysis process.**

Comparing method options

The response options framework is a tool taken from the EMMA toolkit which enables a variety of response and methodology options to be brainstormed, taking into consideration key components for responses and possible response options, so that the most suitable are selected. Although this tool has been taken from the EMMA toolkit, it is applicable to all response analysis procedures. This table will allow you to consider different options, their advantages and limitations, and the feasibility of putting them into practice.

In particular, the analysis process should include:

- the potential impact of the proposed intervention on market systems (positive or negative);
- the risks or vulnerabilities that the proposed intervention could create (for example by increasing workloads for women, placing project activities in competition with household activities...);
- the extent to which the proposition will support or compromise existing long-term interventions.

Using the list of options and their advantages and disadvantages, and a concise analysis of their feasibility, you can begin selecting a series of options which seem to be suitable for the intervention.



PHOTO: JULIE LORENZEN/DANISH R&D CROSS

Methodology options²¹

Response Options	Advantages	Disadvantages	Feasibility	Risk
Direct distribution with local purchases in Bangassou	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools distributed directly to beneficiaries Quality of tools is controlled Support for local merchants and blacksmiths Corresponds to preferences of households surveyed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity of blacksmiths and traders to deliver equipment on time and in the quantities ordered Lack of choice for beneficiaries Importance of logistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Requires 1-1½ months to obtain agricultural tools Required to pre-pay for purchases from merchants and blacksmiths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resale of agricultural tools distributed Insufficient quantities or poor quality of tools delivered Penalty on small traders
Cash distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiaries' choice of the type and quality of tools Limited logistical resources Supports the economic revitalisation of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of cash for other expenses Requires enough funding to be available for Mercy Corps and financial/administrative resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility – nil to medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speculation by traders and blacksmiths Safety of beneficiaries and Mercy Corps teams Pressure from host families on displaced families for access to cash
Distribution of vouchers for tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures spend on agricultural tools and project impact on resilience Limited logistical resources Support for local merchants and blacksmiths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for logistical and financial monitoring procedures Printing, transport and distribution costs for vouchers Prepayment for blacksmiths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong feasibility 1-1½ months for agricultural tools to be available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of theft, loss and forged vouchers Arrangements between beneficiaries and traders/smiths to receive the cash value of the vouchers Beneficiaries' safety

²¹ Taken and adapted from Mercy Corps (2013), 'Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) toolkit, Agricultural Tool Markets, Central African Republic.'

Risk analysis

There are various different degrees of risk inherent with a cash intervention within a livelihoods programme. These risks are all the more significant as the sums transferred are generally higher than in other sectors, and as they seek to develop new activities or support existing activities.

First and foremost, risk analysis is an analysis of the context and the risks inherent to the social, security and economic features, the risks related to managing natural resources, etc. and **gathering results and feedback from past cash transfers** in the area in order to consider lessons learned during intervention planning.

The question of knowing whether risks would be less considerable through use of a solution in kind or using vouchers must be considered for any kind of risk linked to cash transfers.

Risks associated with cash transfers:

We can make a distinction between risks connected with **gender, power relations and vulnerable groups, and risks linked to security and corruption**. The publication "[Good Practice Review](#)", about cash transfer programmes in emergency situations, gives valuable information on this topic, particularly with regards to the fact that **these risks are not always necessarily linked to method, but to context and the way in which these problems are addressed by the programme, notwithstanding the methodology**.

Risks linked to inflation and poor market performance (depletion of products, reduction in quality, etc.) should be assessed and considered whilst selecting methodologies.

If the market study is correctly carried out and concludes that cash transfers are a suitable method for a given programme, the risks of inflation or depletion of products on the market during the course of the intervention will be small. Risk reduction measures are normally carried out further down the line, but this does not excuse a lack of monitoring of the situation. If the risks of inflation are significant, the agency will have to opt for voucher systems and seek to establish a contract with the main traders so that they agree to stabilise prices during a given period or in a currency that is not subject to inflation (depending on the cause).

In all these cases, actors must **anticipate a possible change in context and developing risks** which can prompt actors to change their strategy at any time.

As far as the volatile security context in the Sahel is concerned, cash transfers should not be automatically excluded, but actors should be prepared to change method if necessary and communicate with the donors involved on the subject.

Within the context of livelihoods, we can differentiate between different kinds of risks, technical, natural, social and economic:

Type of Risks	Examples of types of risk
Technical / Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input quality (seed, tools, feed, fishing nets...) • Example: maize blight introduced via new seed • Methods of farming or rearing. • Example: introduction of small ruminants to Northern Mali unable to adapt to climactic, feed or sanitary situations.
Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depletion of natural resources, particularly wood and water. • Example: irrigation project around Lake Chad.
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts linked to the development of collective structures that can destabilise power balances • Example: An abattoir development project in the east of Chad, through its neglect of local authorities and market actors for its management, provoked conflicts between butchers, market actors and the authorities. • Conflict regarding use of natural resources (arable land, water...) • Example: brick production project using large quantities of wood, market project requiring high water usage in the Kanem region, Chad.
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity viability • Example: food shop project in Niger going bankrupt during hunger gap following recurring food distributions or sales subsidised by the state. • Viability of supply market • Example: vegetable production project not giving sufficient study to supply market (Liberia)
Human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwork due to the development of new activities • Example: within the context of a project in Mali, the time investment required to manage a small business, by preventing the head of the household from taking part in other tasks, led to children missing out on schooling in order that he could take care of the shop.

Cost-effectiveness

Comparing “cost-effectiveness” for each method refers to the operational costs involved in delivering the aid intended to households. In concrete terms, it means comparing the costs of different methods for a given type of aid – we will compare the implementation costs of an activity for the various possible methodologies: vouchers, fairs, aid in kind, monetary transfers in cash.

For each option and method, **cost-effectiveness** needs to be taken into account in decision-making. However, **it will not be a deciding factor insofar as aspects such as security, implementation, social acceptability or opportunities for association with other methods (work, training, etc.) could have a greater influence:**²²

²² See Harvey, P. and Bailey, S. (2011), ‘Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies’, Good Practice Review 11, Chapter 3.3p. 38 and 399

In the particular case of cash transfers for livelihoods, it is important to remember the additional costs related to raising awareness, accompanying measures and the community mobilisation that is specific to this method. In fact, many households are not necessarily used to dealing with the amounts employed in the contexts of recovery or diversification projects, which may exceed the budgets that households would normally manage. There may also be a real temptation to spend part or all of the money on other needs, if the project's objectives are not made sufficiently clear to households.

EXAMPLE:

Within the context of a "resilience-building programme with vulnerable households in the Sahel", cash transfer assistance in Niger did not result in any increase in productive assets for households, whilst comparable aid in kind, or a combination of cash and aid in kind, led to a significant increase in productive assets for beneficiary households.

An initial comparison of methods would no doubt have shown that cash transfers are more cost-effective; however, it should be noted that further additional measures would have been required to achieve the same results as aid in kind, and therefore the cost-effectiveness of this option would have been less appealing had the associated costs for these measures been included.

Recommendations for response options

Once again, the response recommendations framework below is a tool that has been taken from the EMMA toolkit. It offers a simple, clear and concise way of presenting decision-makers with the actions you recommend in response to an identified issue.

In this framework, the options and the information gathered for the response analysis are listed. Moreover, by listing the response options in this way, it makes it easier to highlight the relationships between various complementary options.

The key components for this framework are:

- 1. Activities:** these can be stand-alone or a combination of several activities. More often than not, a combination of response options will be necessary (income/employment, production support, direct aid in kind, advocacy, etc.).
- 2. Risks and hypotheses:** what are the potential risks and dangers linked to these activities? Is there any information not available to you and for which you are making assumptions?
- 3. Anticipated effect on the market and target group:** describe briefly the desired impact of this intervention on the livelihoods of target groups and on markets.
- 4. Feasibility and timing:** this brings us back to seasonality and the need to carry out programmes in accordance with seasonal factors and changes in situations. This section could also make reference to activities planned by intergovernmental or other actors which could complement or disrupt recommended activities.
- 5. Indicators:** monitoring and impact indicators for the proposed response will be defined as soon as possible.

Recommendations framework²³

Activity	Risks and hypotheses	Duration	Effects on markets and populations	Indicators
Distributing vouchers for tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of theft, loss, forged vouchers • Arrangements between beneficiaries and traders/smiths to receive the cash value of the vouchers • Beneficiaries' safety 	One month, between September and October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the local economy, with multiplier effects • Strengthening ties between farmers, traders and blacksmiths • Building up the beneficiary population's productive assets • Increased local availability of agricultural produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sown fields • Quantities of agricultural produce harvested • Prices of agricultural produce at market • Number of agricultural work assets per household • Profit generated by beneficiary and non-beneficiary traders • Price changes for agricultural tools
Support for blacksmiths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misappropriation of pre-financing funds by blacksmiths • Reduced capacity of blacksmiths to source raw materials 	Six to nine months, from September onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building blacksmiths' capacities to meet the population's preferences in terms of quality and types of tools • Supporting the local economy, with multiplier effects / the hiring of workers at forges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people hired per blacksmith and average duration of employment • Profit generated by blacksmiths • Stock of tools held by blacksmiths

²³ Taken and adapted from the "Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) toolkit, Agricultural Tool Markets", Mercy Corps. 2013, Central African Republic

4. OPERATIONAL FACTORS

A. MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

Monitoring is a data collection and analysis exercise which helps to measure objective attainment, put the project's implementation process to the test and analyse contextual changes, so that the project may be refocused or adjusted (targeting, cash sums, method, accompanying measures, number of payments, etc.) if necessary.

Context: monitoring, a dynamic situation assessment tool

The intervention and method are selected as a result of context analysis and if the context happens to change, you may be led to reconsider the conclusions of the initial analysis. The security situation or the features of the market system (price, product quality, numbers of actors, availability, etc.) may develop, regardless of project activities, and should be continuously monitored and analysed.

Market mapping and analysis will, for example, help to demonstrate that a cash-based intervention is appropriate; however, if a negating factor happens to change the basis of this analysis (e.g. break in the input supply chain, epidemic amongst small animal livestock, etc.), the suitability of this analysis may be reconsidered.

Project implementation process (operational factor)

As well as monitoring indicators for project implementation, the monitoring system will include aspects that are specific to cash transfer use.²⁴

Likewise, monitoring systems specific to livelihoods projects will be used. It may be worth noting the expected publication of a document outlining standard livelihood indicators (IFRC – CRE, Livelihoods Resource Centre) within the context of the ERC-ECHO project.



PHOTO: GERALD BIKOMBI/IFRC

²⁴ See the Harvey, P. And Bailey, S. (2011), 'Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies', Good Practice Review 11, pp. 82–90.

Examples of indicators of cash transfer contributions to livelihoods:

Indicators	
Use of Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of total amount used to purchase productive assets • % of total amount used to protect existing assets • % of total amount used for product development • % of amount used to establish a new income-generating activity
Productive Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variation in the value of productive capital (e.g. number of animals and their value) due specifically to cash transfers • Increase in the number of types of productive capital (diversification)
Natural Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of arable land that has benefitted from protection (zai pits, anti-erosion barrier...) within the context of a cash-for-work activity • Area of pastureland that has benefitted from protection activities (cash-for-work) • % of time for which quality pastureland is available • % of wooded area (cash-for-work activity)
Social Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of money received used to reimburse cooperative debts • % of amount received that has been distributed within the community
Financial Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of households that have access savings and credit groups (e.g. Cash transfer via IMF + cash for training) • % increase in revenue devoted to livelihood enhancement • Increased numbers of household income sources due to cash transfers
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of households who have been able to develop new technical skills through cash-for-training projects • Number of households who have been able to build their management skills with income-generating activities (cash-for training project)

B.ADDITIONAL MEASURES

Cash transfers are not in any way a stand-alone programme, even if they make up the main part of the project's implementation phase. Additional measures – which should at the very least include social mobilisation – are essential for maximising the project's chances of success.

The complications that cash transfer use (occasionally using a combination of methods) may cause households in the context of livelihood support should not be under-estimated, insofar as these methods require greater active involvement and participation than assistance in kind, and recipients must follow defined procedures to gain access to funds or use vouchers. The implementation of any type of project, particularly one like this, has to be accompanied by activities that communicate the rationale and the aims of the project, raise awareness about method mechanisms (voucher use, mobile telephones, cash, potential restrictions), about complaints systems, etc.

In particular, given that the amounts transferred for livelihood recovery often exceed the kind of sums that the most vulnerable households are used to managing, it is vital that households are given guidance in managing funds, through help with spending plans and productive asset management.

So-called cash transfer plus projects,²⁵ livelihood diversification projects and resilience-building projects present new ideas and skills that need to be developed with the communities and households taking part in the project. In the context of such projects, cash transfers are often no more than a tool and might be a peripheral activity in comparison with the more central capacity-building activities.

²⁵ See Classification, Section 2, p. 11

Examples of types of additional measures for cash transfers for livelihood enhancement:

Activities / Objectives	
Financial Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing capacities in managing financial resources, income-generating activities • Support in investment and expenditure planning, in allocating funds transferred • Management of finances at community level (including decision-making and funding provision mechanisms) • Participative development of management tools • Linking up with micro-finance organisation • Managing capital in crisis periods (e.g. destocking, restocking)
Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new skills among households, groups and/or community authorities • Linking up with existing (state) technical services
Support for Market Actors	<p>Market analysis can demonstrate that actors need external support in order to attain performance levels required by the intervention or satisfy project demands – on a technical level, for example.</p> <p>This support can come in different forms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding by means of loans or donations to increase supply • Logistics: stock, transport, etc. • Technical: veterinary services, quality control, etc.
Other activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness about the theory of resilience • Natural resource management, particularly with agricultural and livestock projects • Market study of value chains, existing supply, demand and potential for expansion, etc. • Structural: infrastructure construction/refurbishment for markets, abattoirs, mills, packing units, etc.

EXAMPLE OF LESSONS LEARNT:



In 2010, Save the Children carried out an urban food security and livelihoods project for poor/very poor families in the town of Karoi in Zimbabwe. The programme was set up to meet immediate food needs and support economic recovery.

Cash-for-work payments were distributed 12 days a month for 9 months, while at the same time, savings and credit groups were being formed with the aim of helping beneficiaries mobilise resources and improving accessibility to other income-generating activities, whilst also training them in book-keeping and managing family budgets.

The capitalisation study found that, to ensure the sustainability of income-generating activities within the project, market analysis prior to the launch of the programme is essential for identifying potential obstacles in the market system, as well as building the capacities of poorer households in planning and managing new economic activities such as these. In actual fact, this kind of support requires a project duration of at least 12–18 months.

Source: Gourlay and Creti (2011)

C. SOCIAL SAFETY NETS AND LIVELIHOOD PROJECTS

EXAMPLE:

The population in the Tahoua region of Niger is vulnerable to frequent droughts, leading to recurrent food and nutritional crises. In 2011, Concern Worldwide carried out a cash-for-work project. Beneficiaries were given training in improved, climate-resilient agricultural practices; they received cash payments for having applied these practices.

Regular transfers enabled the poor to invest time and labour in these practices so they could **improve their climate resilience in the long-term**. They would not have been able to do so without these contributions as they would have had to look for work opportunities on a day-to-day basis. Monitoring carried out in the field demonstrated that these practices had a positive impact on productivity.

Source: Concern Worldwide (2011)

The example above illustrates the fact that regular cash transfers allow the poorest households to break the cycle of poverty if, at the same time, they have the possibility of protecting or developing their livelihoods. Recurring droughts prevent households from protecting their livelihoods, far less develop them, if they are not in a position to meet their basic needs.

Insofar as they become regular and routine (social safety net), cash transfers enable households to look ahead, to plan their expenditure and to establish strategies, whereas cash transfers that are limited only to hunger gaps just about reduce the negative impact of these difficult stages on livelihoods, without any real impact mid- to long-term.

EXAMPLE:

In the context of a project looking at the Common Framework on Seasonal Social Safety Net contribution to Social Protection Policy in Mali, Oxfam took part in organising cash transfers of 100,000F, split into four instalments for each target household (1/3 of a household's total annual income in a regular year) using different transfer methods – IMF, telephone, shopkeepers (depending on the area) – over the course of a year.

The final assessment revealed that households noted an improvement in their livelihoods, accompanied nevertheless by a reduction in stocks of certain assets once the transfers ended, which raises the issue of livelihood preservation. The government has already recognised and registered cash transfers and permanent social safety nets as an effective way of bolstering the livelihoods of the most vulnerable.

The example given above shows both the way that regular cash transfers can contribute to the improvement of livelihoods, and their limitations, when these programmes are limited to no more than a year.

It should be stated here that **social transfers are only one of the tools used for "social protection"**, "defined here as all of the measures, public and private (which act in the public interest) which aim to: reduce people's vulnerability to the risks and the impact of shocks; avoid the use of damaging coping strategies; and guarantee a minimum level of human dignity. Other important social protection tools include: contributory social insurance (retirement, workplace accidents, maternity, illness, etc.); social welfare services (family support services, second chance education, etc.); and social legislation and regulation (work legislation, legal systems that combat discrimination, etc.)"²⁶

²⁶ Cherrier, C. and Tuzzolino, Y. (2014), 'Cash Transfers and Resilience - Strengthening Linkages Between Emergency Cash Transfers and National Social Transfer Programmes in the Sahel', Discussion paper, CaLP, UNICEF, European Commission.

Most West African countries have adopted a strategic framework for social protection. Those involved in the livelihoods sector must account for these initiatives in their programming, by contributing towards them and/or developing complementary activities.

As such, the CCFS project in Mali is an interesting example insofar as it contributes to the institutionalisation of social safety nets (a single register of households; transferring responsibility for managing the database, which serves as Mali's foundational social protection register; synergy with the World Bank's national programme) and it accompanies the revision of the national social protection policy and the national dynamic along with the Cash Working Group, who offer a forum for facilitation, coordination and standardisation of equipment and implementation approaches for different social safety net actors (local, national, international, multilateral).

Linking up with social safety nets - anticipation and preparation

Development projects in the livelihoods sector in West Africa, and in numerous other contexts, are affected by occasional crises, due in particular to climate changes, and their activities are often put at risk by these adverse events.

At the same time, humanitarian organisations are often too late in getting involved, for various reasons – lack of information in advance, lack of time to mobilise funds, lack of a contingency plan – which can prevent timely livelihood protection interventions.

Certain initiatives aim to avoid this kind of situation – notably, we could mention the “crisis modifier” approach, standardised frameworks, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), and so on.

The “crisis modifier” approach, like other initiatives from various organisations working in this field, aims to forecast crises, to be ready to take timely action in facing them, and to adapt its strategy according to a pre-defined set of emergency thresholds.

The crisis modifier approach as defined by Save the Children consists in “a pre-agreed plan, including a funding mechanism, within an existing project to enable early action and mitigation of specific predicted hazards. The essential goal of the crisis modifier approach is to prevent suffering and protect the lives and livelihoods of children and their families, while at the same time ensuring that a predictable crisis does not derail the mid-term development objectives.”

Progress has been made in developing this approach – particular examples include the HEA Sahel project, the Sentinel Sites Pilot (Niger), Finger on the Pulse (East Africa), and the development of the [Situation Response Analysis Framework \(SRAF\)](#).

Early warning surveillance tools, the most recognisable of which are the [Harmonized Frameworks](#) and the [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#), are useful for notification and crisis forecasting, but their role is almost exclusively limited to information alone.

Each organisation is responsible for preparing its own contingency plan and integrating these into the programming of their activities. Within the context of livelihoods, this kind of initiative will involve, **for cash transfers:** pre-crisis mapping and analysis of critical markets (see [PCMMA](#)) and market monitoring; potential contracts with agencies overseeing the transfers and with traders as regards voucher use; training for teams and for partner agencies; establishing standard operational procedures, etc.

For **livelihoods**, livelihood zoning, a study of socio-economic groups for the intervention zone(s), protection thresholds, vulnerability criteria specific to livelihoods, critical thresholds for these limits, etc.

In certain cases, proxy-indicators could also be used (rainfall, exchange rates for importing/exporting, etc.) which would help us to forecast crises and implement appropriate responses so that livelihoods are not exposed to risks during the course of crisis situations that could affect them mid- to-long-term.

In this sense, advancements have been made in West Africa. There is plenty of information, as well as other resources, available on the following websites:

- HEA Sahel www.hea-sahel.org
- FewsNet www.fews.net/west-africa
- IPCInfo www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-countries/western-africa/en

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The context of recurrent and institutional crises is a limiting factor for livelihood enhancement and means having to innovate in terms of interventions. This situation gives greater credence to the idea of moving towards an integrated approach and association with protection and support measures.
- In this context, humanitarian organisations tend to plan support, diversification or resilience interventions in advance; however, these actions cannot take place within the framework of a short-term project and must fit into mid/long-term projects.
Rethinking the role of humanitarians in these types of interventions and exploring the possibilities or partnership and/or transitioning towards development agencies.
- When calculating payments, it is recommended to systemise as much as possible the use of thresholds and actual costs which in practice, for recovery and reinforcement projects, appear to result from compromises between the coverage and the budget available for the most part.

This, of course, requires additional investments in terms of technical analysis and communication with households, as well as regular contact with the population, which is not always possible, especially in conflict zones.

- The stages of the project cycle that have been presented in this document are key steps in intervention planning. They should be considered as fundamental measures to be followed meticulously in order to optimise the intervention's chances of success.
- Many training sessions on cash transfer use have been given in the region; however, during the workshops, it became clear that most of the participants did not have a substantial understanding of this domain, of its consistently strong presence, and of received wisdom regarding cash transfers.

Continuing and/or rethinking the capacity-building approach for cash transfers. Sharing information on available tools to analyse organisations' capacities in livelihoods and cash transfers.

- In the context of skills development, systemising best practice and experience exchanges via clusters and/or cash working groups would surely make a positive contribution. This workshop has highlighted the variety in expectations and how difficult it is to bring together pertinent contextual examples – in this respect, a capitalisation exercise for this type of intervention would be interesting.

Considering best practice exchanges for different themes (similarly to the Livelihoods Centre's work on livelihood indicators) – the presentation developed by the FAO for the Productive Safety Nets programme is an interesting example in this regard.

6. APPENDICES

A. OBJECTIVES OF LIVELIHOODS SECTOR INTERVENTIONS

Livelihood support programmes will have different objectives, which will be determined by the context of the intervention. There are three categories of livelihood intervention defined here – livelihood protection, livelihood recovery and livelihood enhancement.

- **Livelihood protection**

Definition: livelihood protection programmes are projects that aim to protect households from engaging in negative coping mechanisms (migration of workers, sales of productive assets, reduction in input use...) which could compromise the longevity of livelihoods short-, mid- or long-term.

Nutrition, health, food security and direct livelihood protection programmes (such as programmes ensuring access to agricultural inputs, veterinary care, feed, fair sales prices, etc.) are considered to be measures that contribute to livelihood protection.

- **Livelihood recovery**

Definition: "Recovery (reconstruction and rehabilitation) refers to the medium to longer-term planning and implementation of substantive recovery programmes in the first year or longer, following a disaster"²⁷

Livelihood recovery programmes are generally understood to be programmes that aim to help households who have been affected by disasters to get back to the position they were in prior to the disaster, to re-establish their livelihoods' productive capacity.

Livelihood recovery programmes may include the following activities (this list is not exhaustive): restocking, accessing inputs to be able to relaunch agricultural production, recapitalising small businesses, land rehabilitation and protection, accessing materials to relaunch craft activities, fishing, re-establishing means of communication, community and family infrastructures, access to credit, markets, services required for the functioning of livelihoods, etc.

- **Livelihood enhancement**

Definition: livelihood enhancement programmes aim to consolidate and increase the capacity of households and communities to meet their needs as well as build their resilience.

Resilience – according to the literature, resilience means "the ability to resist, recover from, or adapt to the effects of a shock or a change"²⁸. "Resilience is a long-term approach that emphasises the ability to rebound, but also to incorporate adaptation and transformation when change occurs".²⁹

Livelihood enhancement can be achieved by increasing existing productive capital, livelihood diversification, putting risk mitigation mechanisms in place, increasing the added value of production, autonomous disaster response mechanisms, adapting to climate change, etc.

²⁷ IFRC (2011), 'Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming'.

²⁸ IDS (2012), 'Resilience: New Utopia or New Tyranny?'

²⁹ BC3 (2011), 'Multidisciplinary perspectives on urban resilience'.

B. USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

Contextual information

- www.hea-sahel.org
- www.fews.net/west-africa
- www.ipcinfo.org/ipcinfo-countries/western-africa/en

Reference documents:

- DFID (1999), '[Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets](#)'.
- FAO (2006), '[Rapid Guide for Missions. Analysing local institutions and livelihoods](#)'.
- Good Practice Review: Cash Transfer Programmes In Emergencies, Paul Harvey and Sarah Bailey, June 2011
- Harvey, P. And Bailey, S. (2011), '[Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies](#)', Good Practice Review.
- FAO (no date), '[The Livelihood Assessment Tool-kit: Analysing and responding to the impact of disasters on the livelihoods of people \(Volume 3\)](#)'.
- FAO (2013), '[Resilient Livelihoods: Disaster Risk Reduction for Food and Nutrition Security – 2013 Edition](#)'.
- IRC, Save the Children and Mercy Corps (2015), 'Labour Market analysis in humanitarian contexts. A practitioner's guide'.
- Mercy Corps (2015), '[Labor and Market Assessment Guidance and Tip Sheet](#)'.
- SEEP Network (2013), '[Minimum Economic Recovery Standards](#)'.
- Cherrier., C. and Tuzzolino, Y. (2014), '[Cash Transfers and Resilience - Strengthening Linkages Between Emergency Cash Transfers and National Social Transfer Programmes in the Sahel](#)', Discussion paper, CaLP, UNICEF, European Commission.

Websites

- Cash Learning Partnership: www.cashlearning.org/livelihoods
- Livelihoods Resource Centre : www.livelihoodscentre.org
- Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis: <http://emma-toolkit.org/get/download>
- Situation and Response Analysis Framework: www.sraf-guidelines.org



The Cash Learning Partnership

A growing acceptance of cash transfers as an inter-sectorial tool is accompanied by a better understanding of this approach and its potential to break the cycle of poverty, after much discussion on the role cash transfers have to play in building resilience.

In the Sahel, food security experts have become very skilled in the handling of cash transfers. Their use in the region has progressively been extended to other sectors, such as nutrition and livelihoods. Humanitarian actors involved in contexts of chronic crisis are, bit by bit, rethinking their approaches, working more and more closely with development actors to increase the impact of their work in the long term and deal with the causes of poverty.

Moreover, efforts to protect and strengthen livelihoods are focusing more and more on the use of cash transfers as an implementation mechanism. In order to enable knowledge and best practice regarding the use of cash transfers to be shared, a learning workshop on cash transfers and livelihoods was organised in Dakar (Senegal), thanks to ERC funding from ECHO. This learning workshop aimed to gather and share good practice and information regarding the implementation of cash transfers in the area of livelihoods, and to serve as a basis for drafting these guidance notes on using cash transfers within the framework of a livelihoods project.

These guidance notes are primarily intended for those involved in designing and implementing programmes that include cash transfer components within a livelihood support framework.

In particular, they are aimed at:

1. humanitarian workers who have some expertise in cash transfers but limited knowledge of the livelihoods sector
2. and technical workers and livelihoods experts with limited skills in matters concerning cash transfers.

These guidance notes were commissioned by the Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) with the generous support of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO).



Humanitarian Aid
and Civil Protection