

Consolidated Feedback from Field Consultations on the draft Cash Coordination Guidance for Cluster Coordinators and draft Standard ToRs for Cash Working Groups

Background

Following discussion of the draft cash Coordination Guidance for Cluster Coordinators and the draft Standard ToRs for Cash Working Groups at the GCCG meeting on 30 August 2018 the decision was taken to seek feedback and inputs from field colleagues before endorsing these. CaLP submitted a proposal to the group to conduct a series of regional consultations on both documents on their behalf, seeking feedback from cash and coordination actors at the country and regional levels. CaLP conducted four workshops in February and March 2019: in Nairobi covering Somalia, in Juba covering South Sudan, in Amman covering the Middle East and North Africa and in Dakar covering West Africa. Participants at each workshop included cluster coordinators, intercluster coordinators, Cash Working Group/ Basic Needs Working Group leads, CashCap experts, donors and representatives of UN agencies and NGOs delivering CVA in crisis contexts. Due to a request from GCCG members not to share the documents in full, participants received summaries of both documents which were used as a basis for discussion.

The following is a synthesis of the rich feedback received across the four workshops, which has been shared with workshop participants as well as with the GCCG. We recognise that some feedback, in particular requests for clarity around roles and processes that have not been agreed at the global level, and questions related to the “out of scope” areas of the guidance may be beyond the immediate scope of these documents. We look forward to seeing how this feedback is incorporated in final versions of the documents, and what steps will be taken to follow up on feedback which is judged to be outside the scope of the documents under preparation.

Consolidated feedback

Overall
Across all workshops participants welcomed this initiative , noting that lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of CWGs, and the lack of tools and guidance to support cash coordination, were a significant challenge. It was recognised that these documents can necessarily go only part of the way towards meeting these needs. In response to this, CaLP has commissioned a <u>Cash Coordination Tipsheet</u> , intended as a practical and accessible guide to all existing resources, which will signpost CWG coordinators and other cash and coordination actors to relevant sections of both these documents, and summarise and present other relevant resources.
In all workshops we received strong feedback that coordination overall needs to evolve in response to changing needs and ways of working. Participants emphasised that this must be a field-driven process which puts operational needs before mandates.
There was an emphasis across all workshops on the need for a strengthened intercluster/ intersector space in the response to treat cash as well as other cross-cutting issues. The tasks listed in the documents reviewed assume an expanded, empowered and resourced intercluster/ intersector. In all contexts we looked at, the ICCG currently struggles to cover the growing list of intersectoral tasks, and there were calls in every consultation to address this. Some saw the solution to this issue as strengthening and resourcing the existing ICCGs. Others called for a “companion body” to the ICCG, where technical staff from across the response contribute to cross-sectoral tasks including response analysis, cash coordination, joint needs

assessment, accountability to affected people, market assessments etc. Some referred to this as a “Response Analysis Group”, echoing language from the World Bank Strategic Note, which focused on the tasks necessary to conduct ongoing, high quality response analysis.

In the West Africa workshop, participants felt the CWG has an important role to play in advocating for stronger intersector coordination overall.

Participants were clear that **lack of dedicated resourcing** is the biggest issue affecting Cash Working Groups, many of which are operating with a small proportion of one person’s time dedicated to chairing and supporting the group.

Adequate resourcing for the CWG needs to be ensured. Sources of/ responsibility for adequately resourcing the CWG, including providing training to chairs if necessary, should be made clear, with some suggesting this should be resourced like a cluster, ensuring adequate technical and strategic/ coordination capacity.

Across both documents, the **lack of clarity on responsibility for cash coordination** emerged as a major issue. Many participants felt that assigning responsibility to the ICCG is not clear enough, since (a) the ICCG has a long list of items for which they are accountable, and on which cash coordination may not be prioritised and (b) since the ICCG is composed of all cluster coordinators there is no single responsible entity meaning that accountability is diluted.

Across both documents, the lack of clear **overall responsibility for ensuring quality programming** was a significant concern for participants.

Across both documents, the **lack of clarity on how multipurpose cash** is planned, coordinated and reported, and how the Minimum Expenditure Basket is defined, was identified as a major weakness. Details are listed in the sections below, but participants were clear this is a significant operational issue with no clear answer and on which they would like clarity.

Greater clarity on the balance of work and responsibilities between ICCG and CWG is needed. Both documents give the ICCG responsibility for a series of functions with the CWG in a supporting role. Questions arose in all workshops about the balance of tasks and responsibilities and the relationship between the two bodies. There were several requests for this to be spelled out more clearly, with many noting that both documents assign many additional responsibilities to clusters and the ICCG without specifying where requisite capacity will come from.

In general they felt that there was **some inconsistency between the ToRs and the guidance**, with some feeling that the ToR describes an empowered CWG while the guidance describes a more minimal CWG. Many participants felt that the role of the CWG across both documents is too limited, and that It was noted that the guidance does not specify how cash should be coordinated if a CWG is not established.

CWG ToRs

Language in the ToRs is unclear and passive in many cases, leaving it open to multiple interpretations – these ToRs should use active language and be clear and concrete about the role of the CWG.

Examples of where language is not clear included:

- What does “support the coherent reporting of multipurpose cash” mean?

- What does “the promotion of joint activities” mean in concrete terms?

The ToRs do not address the **CWG’s role in coordination of CVA**, in particular multipurpose cash. Participants in all workshops felt that the ToR should be clear about the role of the CWG in planning, coordinating and reporting multipurpose cash.

Participants across all consultations noted that the CWGs play a significant role in the operational coordination of CVA across the response and this should be reflected and clarified. If the CWG does not do this who does?

Many felt the role of the CWG in coordinating multipurpose cash and in understanding the impact of unrestricted cash delivered under the various clusters (which we know can be used to meet multiple needs) should be more clearly defined.

The ToRs should more clearly set out the **roles and responsibilities of the chair and co-chair**, and details on how these are designated.

No clear guidance is given on how chair and co-chair should be selected, or on what their responsibilities are. Several participants suggested that any agency providing a CWG lead or co-lead should sign a clear letter of commitment detailing the responsibilities of the lead and co-lead, a draft of which could be annexed to this draft ToR.

Some felt the option for rotating chairmanship should be included as an option. Many participants felt that chairmanship of the group should be neutral and owned by the community – not representing a single agency.

The ToRs should provide **greater clarity on membership** of the group, in particular on options for engaging private sector, host governments and donors.

Recognising that membership needs will be context-specific, several participants felt the document should set out some membership options, including core membership and extended membership, in particular in relation to donors, government and private sector actors.

The ToRs describe the CWG as a technical working group only, whereas participants emphasised the **CWG has both a strategic and a technical role**. Participants agreed that while its role is primarily technical, the CWG has an important role to play in strategic decision-making and in linking to other strategic decision-making bodies and ensuring they have the technical basis needed.

Some participants questioned the distinction between the two definitions, arguing that the majority of tasks and decisions have both technical and strategic elements, and that both types of capacity were needed in the group.

The document should **more clearly spell out the relationship with the clusters** and highlight the need for active cluster engagement in CWG.

Several participants felt that the CWG should build much stronger links with the clusters, defining a clear offer to the clusters and securing buy-in and active participation from all clusters. A focal point from each cluster should participate on a regular basis, bringing technical knowledge to the CWG and bringing an understanding of cash across the response to discussions within clusters. This is critical and requires concerted effort. The ToRs would be more useful, in particular for

newly-establishing CWGs, if they could be clearer about the responsibilities of the CWG to engage clusters and of clusters to participate in the CWG.

The ToRs describe the CWG as **“time-limited”**, and this should be deleted or nuanced – the CWG should only be time limited in the same sense that clusters are time-limited, and giving this special prominence is confusing.

However, ToRs should contain a **clear exit/ transition strategy**, including on links with Social Protection. Once the crisis becomes protracted, who takes on responsibility for coordination of humanitarian and development cash assistance and linking with longer term support?

The ToRs should **clarify CWG engagement in ICCG**. Is the CWG chair a full ICCG member? This is relevant for, for example, determining whether the CWG chair should join ICCG assessment missions in Somalia.

The **CWG needs dedicated resourcing** in order to fulfil the functions listed. Dedicated resources are needed to support effective cash coordination, and the ToR should indicate where these resources should come from. All agreed the Cash Working Group needs dedicated resourcing, with several suggesting that should be resourced like a cluster.

The role of the CWG in **ensuring programme quality and advocating for standards** should be included.

While primary responsibility for effective programming sits with the clusters, the role of the CWG in supporting higher quality and more effective cash programming should be laid out, perhaps including a technical quality working group within the group to disseminate guidance and hold members accountable to quality standards.

The **role of the CWG in coordinating evaluations, sharing lessons and ensuring the most effective approaches are scaled** should be included.

While responsibility for evaluations should sit with the clusters, the CWG should seek to consolidate and share learning relevant to the outcomes and impact of cash and voucher programmes, both individually and at the aggregate level, and should function as a platform for sharing lessons, ensuring all actors better understand what is working and where, and that effective approaches are replicated and scaled.

The ToR should be **clearer on the role of the CWG in monitoring** (or consolidating and disseminating monitoring data) of cash and voucher assistance. What is the role of the CWG vis-à-vis clusters, and in relation to monitoring of MPC?

Cash coordination guidance for cluster coordinators

There was a **strong reaction to the areas listed as being outside the scope of the guidance**, with many participants saying these are the exact issues on which guidance is most needed.

There was consensus that inability at the global level to decide on key issues which affect the response should not mean that the hardest decisions are passed to the country level to solve. These – coordination of multipurpose cash, inclusion of cash in the response analysis, leadership of cash coordination – are all key operational questions and a decision and clear guidance is needed. This includes:

- Multipurpose cash. No clear guidance is offered on where multipurpose cash is planned, coordinated and reported. This is a major operational issue and needs to be decided at the global level.
- Response analysis. Where does overall response analysis take place and who decides which needs are best met through multisectoral approaches, including multipurpose cash?

There was a strong feeling across consultations that if this guidance doesn't address questions outside scope (in particular MPC) it's not useful. They asked, if no answers are included in the guidance, when can decisions on these issues be expected?

There were discussions in every consultation around **accountability for cash coordination**. Naming the ICCG as the accountable body for cash coordination is a step in the right direction – but does accountability sit with the coordinator or with all members? Saying that all cluster coordinators are responsible for the effective coordination of cash across the response in effect means that no one is accountable. The guidance needs to clearly define ultimate responsibility.

Several participants felt that the **length and format of the guidance** were not optimised for busy field staff (noting that only a summary of the guidance had been provided). Many felt that a simple one page checklist for cluster leads, which outlines concretely what should be done, would be far more operationally useful. In response to this, CaLP has commissioned a Cash Coordination tipsheet, intended to signpost key elements of this guidance (once public) and other key resources in an accessible manner for busy cash coordinators.

As in the ToRs, the lack of clarity over where **multipurpose cash** sits, how it is planned, coordinated and reported was noted as a major issue. This is covered in detail in the “overall” section above.

Many participants noted the lack of clarity over **where, when and how response analysis takes place**. How is it determined which needs are best met through cluster-specific and which through multisectoral responses including multipurpose cash? They highlighted a need for clear and actionable guidance here.

Many felt that the **guidance loads far too many responsibilities onto the ICCG**. As in the above section, participants felt that realistically the ICCG lacks the time, capacity and space to adequately address issues related to cash.

There is a **need for dedicated space for decisions about the response which affect multiple clusters**, including but not limited to cash. There was a sense that this space should draw on technical expertise from the clusters and seek to provide tools, guidance and planning and coordination support to all intersectoral programming and cross-cutting needs including needs assessment and AAP.

Participants did not see space for this, or an emphasis on the need for this in the guidance. Whether in this guidance or through a different channel, participants felt there was a need to define the set of key outputs/ products needed to support a quality response (which require inputs from all sectors) and assign responsibility for making this happen. This was a clear demand across all consultations.

Many noted that the guidance is very **demanding, in particular of cluster coordinators**. It assumes cluster coordinators have significant available capacity. Several participants stressed that cluster coordinators are already overstretched, and do not have the time or capacity to take on the tasks outlined in the guidance in addition to their current roles.

Many felt that the **role of the Cash Working Group as set out in the guidance is unclear**. Is the CWG a technical working group providing assistance to all the clusters or a body which plans and coordinates cash assistance across the response?

Several participants felt that the guidance contracts the current role of the CWG. There was broad consensus that participants wanted to see an empowered rather than a reduced CWG. It is not feasible for the ICCG to take on responsibility for the list of tasks included in the guidance given the breadth of its other responsibilities. The links between these two bodies, and what ICCG responsibility for cash coordination looks like in practice, need no be more clearly spelled out.

The guidance does not make clear where the functions sitting with the CWG will be carried out **in the case that no CWG is activated**.