

**CALP STRATEGY 2020-2025**

# INCREASING IMPACT THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION

Abridged Version



# WELCOME



**Since its formation in 2005, the Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) has played an instrumental role in advancing the use of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) as an effective tool in humanitarian response. In 2015, after 10 years as an initiative supported by five founding organisations<sup>1</sup>, CaLP opened its doors to members. Today, the CaLP network has more than 90 members - bringing together a diverse range of actors and views.**

As CaLP enters its 16th year, there is much to celebrate. CVA is now a central part of global humanitarian response and the argument that CVA can be a more effective, efficient and accountable form of assistance is broadly accepted. Understanding of how CVA can be used effectively has increased, and it has been integrated into many humanitarian standards. But there is more to be done.

## **SO, WHAT NEXT FOR CaLP?**

While CVA is now a recognised humanitarian response tool, we need to ensure an even stronger focus on quality. Through our ability to convene debates and influence policy, we will ensure that the increasing use of CVA is accompanied by a growing understanding of its intersection with critical issues such as protection, data responsibility and risk. To do this we will place the needs and preferences of crisis affected people at the centre of our decision making and support others to do the same.

This strategy is the culmination of a seven-month process. Through interviews, focus group discussions and a large survey, the process involved over 450 people across the globe. These rich inputs were carefully and respectfully analysed. There was clear convergence of views in some places, with differing perspectives and priorities in others. Differences were handled through regular feedback loops with a strategy working group, the CaLP team and the CaLP Board, where options were discussed, significant points sense-checked and the broad direction of travel agreed.

This strategy marks a watershed for CaLP. Together, we have developed the first CaLP strategy designed for the network - recognising that collective action is critical if we are to achieve the change that is both needed and possible. The shift to collective action will take time. We are ready for this challenge. Will you join us?

**Ron Delnevo**  
Chairman

**Karen Peachey**  
Director

<sup>1</sup> ACF, British Red Cross, Oxfam, NRC and Save the Children are the five founding organisations.



*The conflict in South Sudan has badly affected food security. Reath, (pictured) participated in a cash for work scheme run by Oxfam. He worked to dig trenches in the local market which had been badly flooded, and received payment (and rice) in return. "The market is so important for everyone here. Of course the traders cannot make a living without it, and especially during the lean season before people harvest on their own plots, many people are relying on these shops for a lot of their food." Reath invests the money in buying and re-selling fish. With the profit he buys sorghum.*

*Tim Bierley/Oxfam. 8 November 2017*

## WHO WE ARE



**CaLP is a dynamic global network of over 90 organisations engaged in the critical areas of policy, practice and research in humanitarian CVA and financial assistance more broadly. Collectively, CaLP members deliver the vast majority of humanitarian CVA worldwide.**

What makes CaLP unique is its diversity. Members currently include local and international non-governmental organisations, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross/Crescent Movement, donors, specialist social innovation, technology and financial services companies, researchers and academics, and individual practitioners.

Together, and alongside our strategic partners, we seek to better meet the needs and improve the outcomes for people affected by crisis. To do this we ensure that CVA is a central, scalable component of quality, timely and appropriate humanitarian assistance, and that the need to sustain positive outcomes for people over the longer term is considered.

## OUR CONTEXT



**We live in an era of unprecedented change. A multitude of complex global challenges all require attention – including the climate emergency and its implications for our survival, countless forms of inequality, and global health crises that have evolved alongside increasingly unsustainable lifestyles.**

Some of these challenges, as well as myriad forms of violence, are causing evermore displacement and migration. Each of these challenges is multi-dimensional and interdependent. Advancing any one of these will necessitate collective and systemic thinking and action from a multiplicity of actors, where the emphasis is on innovation through partnership to create previously unimagined possibilities.

Seen in this light, the humanitarian system is no exception when it comes to complexity and the need for change. Various initiatives over the past 15 years have recognised this, from the ‘Four Pillars of Humanitarian Reform’ dating back to 2005, to more recent efforts under the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Cash Transfers of 2015 and the Grand Bargain. These recent efforts point toward the potential of financial assistance, in the form of CVA, as an important lever in creating much-needed transformational change in the humanitarian system.

The growing use of CVA to meet humanitarian needs is challenging traditional sector- and supply-based models, and in doing so it brings opportunities to work with new partners. With this comes links to other reforms in humanitarian assistance, such as the push for localisation, participatory approaches, social protection and market-based support. Given this, CVA is increasingly regarded as a catalyst for positive change and some also consider it a potential catalyst for the digital transformation of the system. The most important imperative for change, however, is not system change per se but the fact that humanitarian actors still struggle to deliver cash under the arrangements and in the situations that recipients prefer.

Responding to the priorities of people living in contexts of crisis requires us to acknowledge that aid recipients view cash much more favourably than humanitarian actors. Change in the system must therefore, first and foremost, be driven by efforts to better meet the differing needs, barriers, priorities and capacities of women and girls, men and boys living in crisis. These efforts must enable greater dignity, choice and the realisation of human rights for all community members – including through greater use of CVA when appropriate.

CaLP’s 2019 *Future of Financial Assistance* report, produced in partnership with IARAN, highlights the urgent need to work differently, to take advantage of emerging opportunities, and to prepare for new challenges. The report highlights three technology-related drivers of change: identity and its digitisation, data and data protection, and mobile technology and internet access. Another driver of change is the increasing and changing role of the private sector – both local and global – in humanitarian action. The report makes clear that the needs and preferences of people living in, and moving through, crisis contexts must drive change; this must not be limited by current ways of working.

A 2019 report from the Overseas Development Institute also reinforces the need for system change, oriented around the needs of affected populations. In terms of CVA, it begs the question: what could be the best arrangement between constituent groups of organisations in which each commits to deliver a set of actions that, taken together, would bring about the required change in the CVA system.<sup>2</sup>

These and other reports, together with the evidence and views gathered during the strategy consultation process, provide an important backdrop to this new CaLP strategy.

2 Metcalfe-Hough, V., Fenton, W. & Poole, L. (2019) *Grand Bargain Independent Annual Report 2019*. Humanitarian Policy Group at ODI, London.

## OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH TO A CHANGING WORLD



**In recognising the uncertainty and volatility of our changing world and of the humanitarian system specifically, and in acknowledging that systemic change depends on collective approaches and cannot be driven by any single organisation, our strategy:**

- ▶ is flexible and responsive to adapt to new and differing needs and changing circumstances;
- ▶ moves CaLP toward a more networked way of working to realise greater collective action for increased impact; and
- ▶ introduces a set of six guiding principles that provide a strong identity and foundation for enabling collective working.

This strategy requires a willingness to innovate and to take risks in order to imagine a different future. It also requires collaborative, visionary and creative leadership from across the CaLP network.

### CaLP ENVISIONS A FUTURE WHERE ...

people are enabled to overcome crises with dignity, by exercising choice and their right to self-determination. This helps to sustain their well-being over time.

### OUR PURPOSE IS TO ...

maximise the potential that humanitarian CVA can bring to people in contexts of crisis, as one component of broader financial assistance.

To do this we catalyse the power, knowledge and capacities of our diverse global network, alongside other local, national, regional and global actors, all of whom are seeking to secure better outcomes for people living in crisis contexts. Our role as a collective is to generate alignment in the approaches and actions of those within and across our network, in order to help optimise the quality and scale of humanitarian CVA. This will enable women and men to better address their priorities.

## TO SUPPORT OUR PURPOSE, WE HAVE FIVE INTERLINKED AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS AND ASSOCIATED OUTCOMES

**OUTCOME:** Humanitarian CVA is more coherent, and CaLP members work in complementary ways to foster better and more sustainable outcomes for people living in crisis contexts.



Foster collaboration for more effective and sustainable humanitarian CVA that better meets the needs of people living in contexts of crisis.

STRATEGIC FOCUS  
**AREA 1**

**OUTCOME:** The CaLP network operates according to a shared vision and shared principles, with collaborative action realised within and across the network.



Become an effective global network for the CVA system, inspired by improving outcomes for people in contexts of crisis.

STRATEGIC FOCUS  
**AREA 2**

## CaLP ENVISIONS...

... a future where people are enabled to overcome crises with dignity, by exercising choice and their right to self-determination. This helps to sustain their well-being over time.

Our purpose is to maximise the potential that humanitarian CVA can bring to people in contexts of crisis, as one component of broader financial assistance

STRATEGIC FOCUS  
**AREA 3**

Strengthen evidence-based policy and action in order to transform humanitarian CVA.



**OUTCOME:** The experience of CVA recipients, alongside other operational and research evidence, is captured and fed into future policies and operational plans.

STRATEGIC FOCUS  
**AREA 4**

Provide thought-leadership on emerging issues likely to affect humanitarian CVA, mindful of the links to broader financial assistance.



**OUTCOME:** The CaLP network has a shared understanding of new ideas and emerging possibilities regarding humanitarian CVA.

STRATEGIC FOCUS  
**AREA 5**

Continue to expand the skills and knowledge required to deliver quality, sustainable humanitarian CVA, at scale.



**OUTCOME:** CaLP members demonstrate the individual and organisational capacity to provide humanitarian CVA to agreed standards and required coverage.

## PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE US



In networks, principles provide the foundation for collective action. CaLP's new principles and their associated behaviours will underpin everything CaLP does. The principles below will continue to be refined – through a process of co-creation between the CaLP team and members – as the network evolves.



### **WE PUT PEOPLE FIRST:**

We respond to the priorities of people in crisis to support their dignity, choice and opportunity



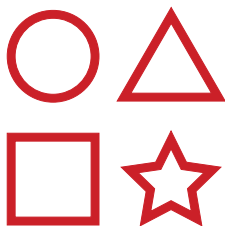
### **WE ARE IMPARTIAL AND INDEPENDENT:**

We demonstrate integrity by focussing on evidence with regard to issues affecting women and men in crisis



### **WE STRIVE TO ADD VALUE:**

We experiment, capture learning, and bring new insights to humanitarian CVA and financial assistance more broadly



### **WE VALUE AND SEEK DIVERSITY:**

We harness the collective and complementary capacity of CaLP's membership, alongside others as appropriate, to maximise the benefits for people living in crisis



### **WE ARE TRANSPARENT AND MUTUALLY ACCOUNTABLE:**

We seek to build a culture of trust to best support collective impact



### **WE ARE RESPONSIBLE STEWARDS OF OUR PLANET:**

We seek to ensure that our actions do not jeopardise the sustainability of the environments in which we work

## TOWARD A NEW WAY OF WORKING



**The world doesn't change one person at a time. It changes when networks of relationships form among people who share a common cause and vision of what's possible. Through these relationships, we develop the new knowledge, practices, courage and commitment that lead to broad-based change.<sup>3</sup>**

### **ENABLER 1: A NETWORK OF INTER-CONNECTED MEMBERS**

- ▶ Network-building is the principal new way of working in this strategy, and CaLP members are the critical enablers. Network-building requires that CaLP members connect and align around shared goals as well as create synergies between different organisations that have distinct specialisms. In this way, CaLP members will be able to leverage their investment in the network and increase their collective impact.
- ▶ In order to realise CaLP's vision and purpose, each member will build on the convergence between their own priorities and those of the CaLP network and consider what more collective working could achieve. This is likely to work best when members find they have individual goals that align with the CaLP strategy. This is a fundamental shift in mindset that will take time and persistence to achieve and is critical to the success of the strategy.

### **ENABLER 2: VIBRANT COMMUNICATIONS, RICH EXCHANGES AND VALUABLE LEARNING**

- ▶ Strong, healthy conversation and communication will be essential to the network's success, both between network members, and between members and diverse communities living in crisis contexts. Putting people living in crisis contexts at the centre of all our learning will be a major driver for all CaLP's activities. This will require members' determination to create reliable communication channels whereby the voices, experiences, priorities and concerns of women and men, and boys and girls can be heard, understood and, ultimately, responded to.
- ▶ Collective learning will be the CaLP network's most critical and valued asset. Work that is already valued in this area will be enhanced as the CaLP team works in more purposeful partnership with CaLP members and strategic partners to generate evidence and learning. As members and others generate and share more evidence and knowledge, the CaLP team will progressively invest more time and resources in curating what exists, examining the gaps, and promoting the application of learning to foster higher quality programming.

### **ENABLER 3: A CALP TEAM THAT FACILITATES, CONVENES AND CHALLENGES**

A major shift implied by this strategy is that the CaLP team will grow its capacity to facilitate, engage and mobilise the membership, and begin to reduce its attention on directly providing services.

- ▶ Members (and beyond) value the CaLP team's thought leadership. While the team will continue to play a central role in providing the impetus and means for this thought leadership, additional investments will be made in facilitating and convening network members to generate futures-thinking agendas.
- ▶ Being impartial does not mean shying away from difficult conversations. Members appreciate the CaLP team's ability to prompt and provoke as well as to amplify issues that individual CaLP members find difficult to do so alone. This role will continue and be given more emphasis.

<sup>3</sup> Wheatley, M. (2006) *Using Emergence to Take Social Innovations to Scale* <https://www.margaretwheatley.com/articles/emergence.html>



## **ENABLER 4: SEEING THE SYSTEM AND BUILDING NEW ALLIANCES**

- ▶ The CaLP team will work with members to co-create a set of global targets in humanitarian CVA that specify collective commitments and objectives. This will enable CaLP members and the CaLP team to assess progress toward the development of a healthy and functioning CVA system in service of people living in crisis contexts.

*“In any complex setting, people typically focus their attention on the parts of the system most visible from their own vantage point. This usually results in arguments about who has the right perspective on the problem. Helping people see the larger system is essential to building a shared understanding of complex problems.”*

PETER SENGE, HAL HAMILTON AND JOHN KANIA (2015), THE DAWN OF SYSTEM LEADERSHIP

## **FIT FOR THE FUTURE**



**This strategy is ambitious in the change it seeks to create. Accordingly, the CaLP Board and the CaLP team will focus on CaLP’s financial well-being as well as the network’s internal structures, processes, systems and culture so that they are strong and robust, whilst also being flexible and able to respond to changing needs.**

### **RESOURCING THE COLLECTIVE:**

To support CaLP in achieving a resilient and responsive funding base, an updated funding model will be developed, and fundraising will become a collective effort built on well-defined roles and responsibilities.

### **GOVERNANCE REFORM:**

CaLP’s governance arrangements will be reviewed and reformed to best support delivery of the new strategy, with mutual accountability and transparent decision-making. The CaLP team will also review its own competencies to ensure it has the capabilities needed to support an effective global network.

### **PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS:**

Systems and processes will be appraised and adjustments made to ensure they are fit-for-purpose to support both the achievement of the new strategy as well as the emerging and evolving governance structure.

### **BECOMING A LEARNING NETWORK:**

Successful evolution of the proposed new networked way of working will depend on the ability of the CaLP network, particularly the CaLP team, to continually monitor, analyse and learn about what it takes to work as an effective global network that seeks to foster systemic change.

### **COMMUNICATION:**

In networks, skilled communication is all about facilitating and convening members to create robust global to local conversations and connections. Communication platforms within and across each level of operation will be used, as well as across different interest and activity groups.

### **RISKS:**

We acknowledge the additional risks we are taking in adopting the change agenda of this strategy. But we see a huge risk in not making these changes – and in this way, seek to transform risk into value.



*Eduardo Salmerón from El Salvador buys goods at the grocery shop in Usulután. On 31st May 2020 as Tropical storm Amanda made landfall in El Salvador, threatening the lives and livelihoods of people. The Italian Cooperation (AICS) donated Euro 500,000 to support WFP in El Salvador with cash transfers to the population affected by the storm.*

*WFP/David Fernandez. 01 August 2020*

## A PHASED APPROACH TO CHANGE



Central to the success of this strategy will be a phased approach to change. Over the next two years, the CaLP team and members will identify and collaborate around a number of initiatives that will enable them to pilot the skills and resources required to work in this way – all the while learning about what it takes to work in greater collaboration.

The full version of this strategy is available on the CaLP website. [www.calpnetwork.org](http://www.calpnetwork.org)

*Front cover image: This family, originally from Syria, have sought refuge in Turkey. Ahmad works in construction – but work is irregular at best and non-existent during winter. The only regular income for the family comes from the EU's Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) cash assistance, and provides the means to buy food, pay rent and heat the house. ESSN is a multi-purpose cash transfer scheme providing monthly assistance through debit cards to more than one million of the most vulnerable refugees in Turkey.*

*WFP/Sinan Cakmak. 17 January 2018*



The Cash Learning Partnership

[www.calpnetwork.org](http://www.calpnetwork.org)