INCREASING IMPACT THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION

ANNUAL PLAN
APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023

CALP NETWORK

CHOICE & DIGNITY FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS

1   OPERATING CONTEXT

GLOBAL CHALLENGES

As humanitarian needs continue to mount around the world, many crises are becoming increasingly challenging. Crises in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Haiti, Myanmar and Ukraine have reached new levels of complexity, while major emergencies in Burkina Faso, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen continue unabated. These crises are among the many that are summarised in analysis by the Global Humanitarian Overview, International Crisis Group and The New Humanitarian. Extreme poverty is increasing for the first time in two decades; more than 1 percent of the world's population is now displaced and health systems around the world are under acute pressure.[1] Conflicts and social challenges are being exacerbated by the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and political instability in many places, along with rising nationalism. Against this backdrop, the gap between humanitarian needs and funding grew to its highest in the decade to 2020,[2] and this looks set to continue.

Beyond this worsening operating context, the international humanitarian system is also being challenged on many fronts, with foundational questions being asked about issues from racism to overall efficiency. Despite growing needs and commitments enshrined in the Grand Bargain, there seems little appetite for significant reform any time soon. Among the many issues at stake, accountability to affected populations continues to be sidelined by a focus on the many other accountability requirements across the sector, and efforts to shift power and resources to local actors have been considerably restricted.

CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

The growth of humanitarian cash and voucher assistance (CVA) is regarded as one of the few successes in the implementation of change within the humanitarian system in recent years, enabling greater choice and dignity for recipients of aid and the potential for linkages to greater sustainability through social protection systems.

The use of CVA reached an all-time high in 2020, accounting for approximately 19 percent of international humanitarian assistance,[3] and there is potential for substantially more growth. According to the Global Public Policy Institute, if CVA were to become the default modality wherever it is feasible and appropriate, it would account for 37–42 percent of all humanitarian assistance.[4]

While the increased use of CVA is impressive, there is still much to be done to ensure that recipients receive their preferred modality of assistance in seamless ways and to ensure that assistance is of high quality – particularly when judged from a recipient perspective. The use of multi-purpose cash is increasing – though not without tensions in terms of how it is managed in the humanitarian system (e.g., coordination, links with social protection systems) and how it is monitored without falling back into sector silos. Understanding of user preferences is increasing, and the concerns of recipients are well documented (the work of Ground Truth Solutions and similar such organisations has been instrumental here), but translating awareness into substantive operational change is a slow process.

At the time of writing, there were promising discussions to resolve gaps and address the lack of predictability in cash coordination. If all goes well, recommendations to resolve long-standing issues about how multi-purpose cash is managed within the humanitarian system will be presented to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) for consideration and endorsement in February 2022. A decision on this will be a step towards improved coordination, with an anticipated two-year period of transition needed to implement the changes globally. Monitoring the results of this change will be important to determine whether intended improvements are achieved and to hold the system to account – in particular in relation to maintaining a user-centred approach.

There is a growing plethora of platforms and technologies being used in CVA, offering the potential for improved services and efficiencies. But, as recent incidents have highlighted, data risks are very real, with major concerns raised in responses in Afghanistan, among the Rohingya refugees and elsewhere. The cyber-attack on International

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[1]   OCHA (2022). Global Humanitarian Overview 2022
[2]   Development Initiatives (2021). Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2021.
[3]   Development Initiatives (2021). Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2021.
[4]   GPPI (2016). Drivers and Inhibitors of Change in the Humanitarian System

Committee of the Red Cross further underscores risks. New technologies are often lauded as infallible but – from WhatsApp to blockchain – experience shows this is not the case, and security promises cannot be uncritically relied upon. The risks of technology-based fraud are also present and seldom discussed in the humanitarian space. None of these risks are CVA specific, but given the increasing use of CVA and the high use of data in this area of work, there is an imperative to mobilise action to ensure that risks are mitigated effectively.

COVID-19 saw the acceleration of learning around, and the strengthening of linkages between, CVA and social protection programmes, placing this discussion more firmly than ever before on the agenda of most humanitarian agencies. The case has been made for the benefits of greater coordination between humanitarian CVA and social protection programmes, however, there are also contexts where such linkages would not be appropriate.

From being seen as a somewhat fringe issue even a year ago, the intersection of CVA, the environment and climate change is becoming more widely recognised. Meaningful opportunities exist to mainstream CVA in preparedness efforts and anticipatory action, with examples of initiatives happening in several regions around the world and some integration with social protection programming.

All these issues,[5] and many more, provide the backdrop for the CALP's plans for 2022/23.

2   CALP STRATEGY

The CALP Network strategy, Increasing Impact through Collective Action, was published in 2020 following a comprehensive consultative process. Since then, the CALP team has been adjusting to ensure that work is more owned and driven by members and stakeholders, with the team adopting the appropriate leadership, mobilisation and support roles according to need. Over the last year, we have worked in increasingly networked ways, from developing more inclusive steering groups to guiding research processes, to launching and supporting more member-led forums, to mobilising 95 signatories for the Call for Action letter on cash coordination. According to a September 2021 survey, 69 percent of respondents noted an increase in collaborative working in the past year. While the shift to more networked working has slowed some processes, these more engaged and joined up ways of working have improved the quality of our work and have increased reach and ownership across targeted audiences.

In 2021, we completed an organisational change process to align the team roles and structure to enable effective delivery of the strategy. Good progress was made with recruitment in 2021, with a few more vacancies to be filled before the new financial year starts in April 2022. This recruitment drive, together with investments made, and more planned, in digital platforms and other systems, provides a solid foundation for the continued evolution of CALP.

In the coming year, we will build on this progress and consolidate gains by strengthening membership engagement and enhancing communities of practice across a range of themes. We will continue to strengthen linkages between national, regional and global actors to elevate experiences and ensure stronger feedback loops between policy and practice. With strong demand for training and skills development and CALP resources widely used and valued, we will continue to invest in the development of new courses, the renewal of existing resources, and in ensuring a dispersed cohort of qualified trainers are available to deliver training. Equally, there is high demand for evidence, and the updating of guidance as understanding evolves. Feedback from practitioners[6] surveyed by CALP again confirms the value placed on the evidence, learning and thought leadership generated by CALP – with a desire to see more.

With the use of CVA increasing, a clear strategy in place, and foundational changes made to deliver it, the coming years offer a huge opportunity to mobilise greater and faster change. For the full benefits of CVA to be realised, we need to ensure that it does not simply substitute for in-kind aid but that we capitalise on the opportunity to make aid more people-centred and to drive positive change in the humanitarian system.

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5   K. Peachey (2021). Cash and Voucher Assistance in 2021: 6 Reflections on Progress and Pitfalls. CALP Network blog

6   CALP Network (2021). We Asked, You Answered: Results from the CALP Network's Annual Survey 2021.

3   PLANS FOR 2022/23

The foundations are set for an exciting and ambitious year. We will continue to adjust ways of working to capitalise on the strength and commitment of the CALP Network. With many new CALP team members in post, we will build on developments that are already in progress, work to amplify impact, and be responsive to new and emerging issues and opportunities. We will continue to work in iterative ways – experimenting, reflecting and continuously improving and interrogating our ways of working.

We will strengthen the engagement of local actors, both NGOs and government, in CALP's work as we strive to meaningfully shift power, voice and perspective from international to local. This need has been identified in discussions with actors across the network, identified as a priority by CALP staff and the Technical Advisory Group, and valuable suggestions were also received on this issue in the CALP annual survey. With the renaming of the 'CVA and Localisation Group' (formerly under the Grand Bargain) to the 'Cash and Locally Led Response', thinking is starting to shift, and we will continue to support and advocate for the policy and operational changes that need to follow.

We will strengthen our engagement with financial service providers, which make up a critical but often neglected voice within CVA debates. In keeping with this, we will recruit a new technical adviser with a focus on digital payments and data responsibility to ensure that discussions and actions in this area receive increased attention.

We will continue to bridge the divide between humanitarian and development actors, by strengthening linkages with social protection, exploring questions of financial inclusion, ensuring connectedness in market-based programming discussions and more.

Climate change, with its relevance for CVA preparedness and anticipatory action, is driving new partnerships, with collaboration and learning led by the CALP-facilitated 'CVA, Climate Change and Environment Community of Practice'. Alongside this, we will work internally to minimise our carbon footprint.

In addition to mobilising across the above issues, we will continue debates and discussions to strengthen understanding and action on issues related to gender and inclusion, data interoperability, learning from COVID-19, and other issues as they emerge.

As we work to capitalise further on the strength of the network and harness more collective action, we will seek to ensure greater diversity and inclusion both in the CVA issues we tackle and in the ways we work. Effective communication is a critical part of this – supporting engagement, mobilising collective action and increasing the uptake and application of learning. To this end, our messaging and communication channels will be further enhanced, adapted and targeted to maximise engagement. With strengthened communications capacities, we will continue to expand CALP's reach through email, social media channels and other digital platforms in CALP's four main languages, Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

We will re-establish CALP in the Asia-Pacific region, with plans to recruit a Regional Representative and Administrative Assistant initially. This team will connect and support CVA stakeholders across this vast and diverse region, with support from the wider team. While thematic areas of work will emerge in time, priority areas for the region will be to link CVA with social protection and strengthen CVA preparedness and anticipatory action.

The plans below are presented in line with the five focus areas in the strategy. The plans also embed work related to the enablers outlined in the strategy, i.e., strengthening the engagement and interconnectedness of members, ensuring vibrant communications and exchanges, investing in the team to be equipped to effectively convene and challenge thinking about the system as a whole, and create new alliances where needed, in order to enable systems-level change.

Underpinning the work in each focus area, there will be continued investment in organisational strengthening. Alongside ensuring the financial well-being of CALP, there will be ongoing work to strengthen systems, processes and ways of working needed to operate effectively. This is all in line with the 'fit for the future' section of the strategy. Given changes that have taken place in CALP in recent years, we will work with CALP's host agencies to review and update agreements to support more fluid operational processes and ensure best value for money. With the appointment of an HR business partner, we will continue work envisioned in the organisational change

process, to strengthen staff management and undertake a review of safeguarding, taking actions to strengthen practice as needed. Investments in information technology will be made to enable more effective engagement across the network.

The plans below outline the types of work that will take place and provide examples of specific activities that are envisaged. This is not all we will do. As usual, the Annual Plan will be responsive to evolving needs and priorities, while risks will be managed on a continuous basis, to ensure we deliver and adapt as needed to maximise our collective impact.

Strategic Focus Area 1: Foster collaboration for more effective and sustainable humanitarian CVA that better meets the needs of people living in contexts of crisis

- Co-create new global targets for the development of CVA:

  - Work with stakeholders across the network to develop a collective vision for the future development of CVA, including the development of a new Global Framework for Action.

- Strengthen coordination structures to ensure accountability and linkages between national, regional and global actors, including:

  - Engage and support cash working groups (CWGs) and partners at the response level, to ensure they are equipped with the right tools, guidance and services to deliver quality CVA.

  - Subject to the outcomes of the cash coordination caucus, support the transitional plans in line with decisions made by the IASC.

  - Co-facilitate regional and global CWGs to identify and address learning needs and advance reforms that require collective action, based on needs and developments at the national level, as well as emerging CVA trends.

- Ensure the experiences and expertise of local actors inform and drive decision-making:

  - Support and strengthen collaboration with local NGOs and governments across CALP activities, including through the global and regional communities of practice that focus on supporting locally-led responses.

  - Strengthen partnerships with networks from the Global South, such as the NEAR Network and the Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP).

- Develop and strengthen new and existing communities of practice and working groups to tackle pressing issues and emerging trends:

  - Enhance the new Communities of Practice directory, and raise the profile of the groups to encourage and support participation.

  - Develop a 'Cash 101' area of the CALP website to provide foundational information about CVA and attract a wider readership.

Strategic Focus Area 2: Become an effective global network for the CVA system, inspired by improving outcomes for people living in contexts of crisis

- Increase the CALP team's capacity to facilitate, engage and mobilise the network:

  - Develop a customer relationship management system to support engagement across numerous stakeholders.

  - Develop best practices on engagement, partnership-building and facilitating discussions.

- Enhance inclusive communication platforms to increase CALP's reach and for members to engage across the network:

  - Further enhance the accessibility and functionality of CALP's website in Arabic, French and Spanish.

  - Increase communications on social media in Arabic, French and Spanish, while also further developing communications in English.

  - Continue investments into CALP's website, based on recommendations from the search engine optimisation audit.

  - Improve the library and knowledge management functions and undertake an analysis of resources as a step towards enhancing curation.

- Establish a presence in Asia-Pacific in order to provide better support and ensure that learning from experiences in that region are better reflected in global discussions.

- Continue to strengthen the Board and the Technical Advisory Group, including:

  - Finalise updates to the Board Operational Document and revise related documents accordingly.

  - Define next steps in terms of governance development.

  - Improve inductions for Technical Advisory Group representatives.

  - Continue to publish summaries of Board meeting discussions and start doing so for the Technical Advisory Group in order to enhance transparency and strengthen engagement.

- Strengthen accountability and increase feedback to CALP's stakeholders:

  - Update CALP's Membership Strategy with a consultative, user-centred approach.

  - Develop and trial 'Cash Catch-Ups', whereby stakeholders can learn about CALP Network activities, discuss and input into plans.

  - Develop a public-facing dashboard to illustrate and monitor CALP's work and engagements.

Strategic Focus Areas 3: Strengthen evidence-based policy and action in order to transform humanitarian CVA and 4: Provide thought-leadership on emerging issues likely to affect humanitarian CVA, mindful of the links to the broader financial assistance landscape

Note: these two strategic focus areas are presented together, as many activities contribute to both, as they evolve.

- Generate evidence to fill identified gaps and stakeholder needs, driven by the opportunity to improve outcomes for affected populations:

  - In collaboration with the Network, agree and carry forward research – country, regional and global – needed to inform the development of evidence-based policy and action.

  - Monitor progress in improving outcomes for CVA recipients.

  - Start work on the next State of the World's Cash report, with expected publication in 2023.

  - Map the evolving donor landscape related to CVA.

  - Working collaboratively, undertake response-level evaluations on the use and potential of CVA to ensure user-centred responses.

- Provide thought leadership on emerging issues:
  - Systematically engage with thought leaders to better understand new and emerging issues and present these to the Network.
  - Publish at least 20 blogs and/or articles on emerging issues, and publish regular podcasts.
  - Develop CALP's leadership on a range of issues, including: emerging technologies; the linkages between humanitarian CVA and social protection; and CVA and accountability to people affected by crises, including ensuring their dignity, choice and opportunity.

- Strengthen uptake and use of evidence:
  - Map and plan content over time to make use of significant external developments to continuously message around key issues.
  - Prepare syntheses of emerging bodies of evidence and research to share in user-friendly formats and via multiple channels including social media, e-forums, podcasts, and blogs.
  - Develop webinar series on key issues, such as gender and inclusion, COVID-19 learning and others.

Strategic Focus Area 5: Continue to expand the skills and knowledge required to deliver quality, sustainable humanitarian CVA at scale

- Facilitate the development, publication and dissemination of technical guidance, including:
  - The CALP Glossary, in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.
  - The updated Monitoring 4 CVA guidance (initially developed under the Grand Bargain) alongside the revised Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) Outcome Indicators.
  - Easy-to-use guidance for CVA and health.
  - CALP's revised updated Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) guidance to support MPCA, including with sector-specific guidance.

- Regularly review the uptake of existing guidance to strengthen signposting and, where needed, repackage key guidance into easy-to-access formats, including on social media channels.

- Co-create CALP's learning and training strategy with key stakeholders to identify the optimal platforms, technologies and methodologies to enable both scale and quality learning outcomes.

- Strengthen the network's capacity to deliver training:
  - Continue to increase external training capacities through certified trainers and training partner organisations, with a focus on trainers at regional level.
  - Work with certified trainers, training partner organisations and CWGs to deliver online and face-to-face training, while working to limit the carbon footprint by making training as local as possible, e.g., at national level or with regionally-based trainers.
  - Continue to foster learning among CVA trainers.
  - Explore options for hosting CVA resources generated by others on the Cash Learning Hub.
  - Explore opportunities with higher education institutes for integrating CVA-related curricula into their offerings, as well as other strategic learning partnerships.

- Update and share CALP's training materials:
  - Translate and disseminate the updated flagship CALP Core CVA Skills for Programme Staff course into Arabic, French and Spanish.
  - Update and translate the online training on CVA linkages to social protection, as well as on other topics as needs and demands arise.

- Continue to deliver high-quality online courses, as well as some face-to-face, with the aim of increasing the enrolment of local actors, as well as ensuring strong course completion rates across all participants.

4 INDICATIVE PLANS FOR 2023/24 AND 2024/25

The nature of CALP's work is such that many activities span more than a single year or are ongoing in nature. For example, work on cash coordination has taken several years to progress to this stage, and work will continue when decisions are made by the IASC. Equally, the updating of guidance and training resources continues as evidence and learning evolves. As such, some of the above-mentioned activities will continue year on year – with adjustments made according to need to further improve effectiveness.

The thematic focus of our work will continue to be informed by feedback from the network and horizon scanning by the Technical Advisory Group and the CALP team. At this stage, it is anticipated that some of the themes from this year will continue in future years, with a likelihood that CVA and the environment will continue to assume greater strategic prominence and, in time, links with forecast-based financing may increase.

More specifically, plans will include:

- Building on the Global Framework of Action, we anticipate a number of forums will be established to drive work on priority issues.

- Completion, publication and dissemination of the State of the World's Cash report. Work will begin this year and take approximately 18 months to complete.

- Support CWGs to adjust in line with decisions made by the IASC, and document/share examples of emerging good practice.

- Continue to strengthen our engagement with local actors, with the aim of increasing local actors' leadership in CALP forums.

- Continue to synthesise and share evidence and learning in easily accessible formats.

- Explore options for low bandwidth e-learning.

- A slight expansion of the Asia-Pacific regional office, after the initial set-up is completed this year.

- In 2023/24, we anticipate a review of the CALP strategy to determine the process for the next update in 2025.

5   MONITORING

Key metrics (examples below) will be tracked. With the on-boarding of CALP's first Planning and Monitoring Coordinator, expected in March 2022, we will continue to strengthen our monitoring systems, with the intention of publishing a core set on the website as part of increasing accountability to the network.

Strategic focus area	Indicators
1	• Number of active CALP working groups at the local, regional and global levels. • Perceptions of the quality and/or impact of outputs/Network collective actions and their impact. • Perceptions of the extent that CALP-facilitated guidance, evidence and tools have influenced partner organisations' CVA programming. • Feeling of engagement with the Network, as assessed via the CALP annual survey. • Number of unique page views. Our target is to increase the quarterly figure to 122,000.
2	• Number of CALP-sponsored events that take place using simultaneous interpretation or automated translation. Our target is 20 events with interpretation support to strengthen inclusion. • Percentage of bulk email/newsletter campaign open and click-through rates. We aim to increase our email open rate to 35% and our click-through rate to 13%. • Percentage of survey respondent who perceive that there has been an increase in the diversity and inclusivity of the CALP Network.
3	• Percentage of survey respondents who report that the application of Network-produced evidence and learning has improved the quality of their programming. Our target is 75%. • Number of downloads and percentage year-on-year increase of CALP-produced research and technical publications. • Number and percentage of pieces of research that emerge from consultative/collaborative processes.
4	• Percentage of survey respondents who report that CALP positively influenced the identification of and response to emerging trends, needs and opportunities. Our target is 75%. • Number of downloads of relevant publications (analyses and/or syntheses of evidence and trends) produced by the CALP team or Network. • Percentage of survey respondents who report that CALP has positively contributed towards raising and/or resolving challenging issues relating to CVA.
5	• Percentage of survey respondents who access CALP training courses who state that the experience increased their knowledge and skills to deliver skills-quality CVA. Our target is 90%. • Number of downloads of CALP-produced tools and guidance.

6   BUDGET

CALP's budget for 2022/23 is £3.4 million.

Front cover photo: Anitha working in her small business at the market. Drought has caused hardship and famine in southern Madagascar. WFP is implementing climate adaptation programmes that help communities to better prepare for, respond to and recover from climate shocks.