

Minutes meeting of Regional Cash Working Group Western & Central

Place : Virtual and face-to-face

Date : January 18th, 2023 (9H-11H GMT)

Participants : 55 including 10 women

Organizations : WorldVision, Alima NGO, Save the Children, Action against Hunger Spain, CARE, WFP, Danish Refugees Council, UNICEF, UNHCR, DG ECHO, Medicos del Mundo, OXFAM, NRC, Danish Churches Alliance, REACH, USAID, Première Urgence Internationale, IMMAP, IFRC, Doctors without borders Barcelona, Diakonie-katastrophenhilfe, Mercy Corps, IOM, Rescue, Concern, UNICEF and CRS.

Context

On January 18, 2023, the regional Cash Working Groups of Western and Central Africa met virtually and face-to-face at the OCHA regional office. This meeting is part of a broader support provided by the regional CWG to the national CWGs of the region with the financial support of the Office of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA/USAID). This meeting was co-organized with the OCHA regional office. The agenda is centered around a roundtable discussion on recent activities of the various CWGs and presentations followed by various question-and-answer segments. Simultaneous interpretation in English and French is provided as well.

1- Roundtable of the national Cash Working Groups

Available on recording (from 3mn- 52mn)

• Burkina Faso CWG

- **Ban on cash** (cash and vouchers) in the Sahel regional territory by the Governor as of December 31, 2022, effective January 1, 2023. This note concerns all humanitarian organizations (United Nations agencies, NGOs, development projects and programs operating in the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Sahel region). Social safety nets funded by the World Bank are also affected by this suspension. The Governor of the Sahel believes that distributions using CVA modalities lead to a lack of resilience for the beneficiaries, social tensions between hosts and displaced populations. Moreover, in his views, this assistance modality could contribute to the financing of non-state armed groups. Despite this ban, state authorities are willing to discuss with humanitarian actors on alternatives such as a support to local cooperatives.
The Government of Burkina Faso has informed the CWG that an impact assessment of this decision will be carried out to evaluate the progress in securing the region. If the impacts are positive, the cash ban could be extended to other regions. The BF CWG plans to adjust and consider the "Do Not Harm" aspects in their planning for the purpose of a revised "transfer value" amount for better social acceptance.
- Departure of the Resident Coordinator .
- Continued advocacy with new team.
- Fear of similar decisions for other regions.
- **CWG activities** for the beginning of the year:
 - 1) Workshop between humanitarian and development actors in collaboration with the government's technical services for a risk analysis and mitigation measures related to CVA activities and the government's social safety nets.
 - 2) Training of the government's technical services on the implementation and monitoring of CVA.
 - 3) Feasibility study of various CVA modalities.

4) Market monitoring in collaboration with WFP / SONAGESS (national food security stock management company of BF) / INSD (national statistics agency of BF) / REACH, CRS, ACTED and WFP for the collection of commodity prices by field teams. These data could be used in the revision of the MEB.

5) Ongoing technical exchanges with other clusters, government stakeholders for the composition of survival MEB.

- **Cameroon CWG**
 - Capacity building in advocacy for cash acceptance targeting ministry agencies, local NGOs, the National Red Cross, and UN agencies. A total of 76 people has benefited from these trainings through 4 sessions - Advocacy missions to regional governors.
 - 2 other advocacy trainings planned for 2023 to cover all crises.
 - Updating of the MEB transfer value by considering the data from the global analysis of food insecurity and the contributions of 4 sectors on the composition of their baskets according to crises and regions. Social protection issues (poverty line and social safety nets) are integrated into the MEB update. Validation of the report by the HCT is underway.
 - 5W of cash from each sector implemented for effective mapping of different CVA interventions.
 - Joint market monitoring for 2023 under the leadership of WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- **RCA CWG**
 - Validation of the MEB conceptual note (Hybrid approach) - Support to cash groups and food security cluster - food basket estimated at 83 400 CFA Francs (XOF)
 - Harmonization of the methodology for calculating the number of beneficiaries by including all the statistics of the different actors.
 - Contribution of RCA CWG to the drafting of the humanitarian response plan - Assessment of assistance during the third quarter reached 612,000 people for an estimated budget of \$22 million.
- **Mali CWG**
 - Filling out 5W (difficulties on the part of actors - incomplete data - plea for each actor to fulfill their accountability duties towards the State)
 - MEB - Difficulties noted during the transitional phase between the OCHA and WFP Coordinating Bodies for the implementation of a national MEB (food security and nutrition at the same time)
- **Chad CWG**
 - Finalization of the national MEB set at 121,000 CFA francs - integration of new clusters.
 - Sharing of the CWG work plan for 2023.
 - Quarterly update of the mapping on CVA.
 - Training on Basic Cash Transfer Skills for program staff of certain NGOs with CALP support (Jan. 23-27, 2023).
- **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) CWG**
 - Participation in the HNO and HRP drafting processes to make sure cash is well considered.
 - A briefing note in collaboration with REACH and WFP on price variations for a revised MEB.
 - ToRs Revision for the new CWG working group model.
 - Capacity building of stakeholders.

2- Cash and Nutrition Working Group: Cash transfers for nutrition in emergencies: operational challenges and good practices.

Available on recording (from 53mn – 1h20mn)

Ms. Diane Moyer, Nutrition Advisor / CONCERN for French speaking countries and Colead of the GNC/CVA technical group for nutrition, made the first presentation of this meeting. This study focuses on the experience of actors in the field on the use of cash and the operational and technical challenges. The methodology used is a combination of project reports and individual interviews with cash/NUT experts (75 people) at all levels working in several humanitarian contexts. This study used the model based on project cycle with the needs analysis to find out if CVA is important in improving nutritional indicators, their feasibility, the different modalities, financing, and project design.

From the analysis of the results, it is important to note the challenges associated with the use of cash in designing the response:

- Complexity of information to analyze (market research, multifactorial causes of malnutrition, functionality of health services) in order to differentiate economic barriers from other barriers.
- Lack of resources, tools, and capacity to conduct these assessments, especially in critical situations.
- Difficulties in targeting (single or permanent registration) and risks associated with nutritional status (no evidence to date).

For the implementation of the response, it is necessary to: strengthen with cash the existing services linked to health services - social behavior change (in the long term, especially for non-conditional CVAs) - keep in mind that conditionality can lead to barriers to accessing assistance.

The monitoring response in this study is characterized by a lack of capacity to collect anthropometric measures that are difficult to monitor remotely and, measure some indicators, vague identification of roles and responsibilities of nutritionists.

As far as recommendations are concerned, participants suggested incorporating a more nutrition-sensitive sub-basket into the MEB and ensuring that the selected cohort meets nutrition criteria. There is also a need for accompanying measures for food support to avoid denaturing the assistance dedicated to nutrition.

3- **CALP [Video](#) : People are on the move: can the world of CVA keep up?**

Available on recording (from 1h21min-1H39min)

The second presentation of this meeting is a study conducted by the CALP/ Americas Regional Office with the support of USAID. The objective of this study is to highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist in the use of aid in the form of CVA in contexts of human mobility, specifically in Latin America. Given the context of the African continent, this theme is relevant in the region, which has nearly 10 million internally displaced people, several thousand refugees and migration routes.

This research through three case studies proposes the following key concepts:

- Mobility as a concept
- Human mobility from the perspective of people on the move
- Very different needs of beneficiaries
- Mobility and its impact on vulnerability

In addition, the three case studies from the Latin America region expose stranded migrants, payment ecosystems along migration routes, and lack of ownership (identification documents) as barriers to CVA implementation.

Meanwhile, as a contribution from participants, there is a joint UNHCR/DRC data collection and protection project on the issue of forced displacement. The project is titled P21 and additional

informations on this topic are available at this following link:
<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/west-and-central-africa/project-21>

Articles on beneficiary mobility (including the executive summary of the study and the framework developed in the study), the use of CVAs in complex areas and more topics are available under this [Link](#)

The CALP video is available under this link : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWPPeyFs-m8&t=1s>

4- OCHA/CALP: Survey of the activities of the regional CWG in 2022 and priority topics for 2023 Available on recording (from 1H39mn-1h54mn)

The regional Cash Working Group's perception survey is part of a consultation process with its members. It was sent to a database of 261 people and 70 responses were received. The survey was administered in English and French and consisted of 14 qualitative, quantitative, open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple-choice questions; addressing different aspects of the meeting such as: frequency, duration, priority topics relevant to the region, suggestions for content, choice of participants, additional activities, and an evaluation of interpretation services.

As a result of this survey, the topics that emerged as priorities for the CWG for 2023 are:

- 1) CVA and Social Protection
- 2) Digitalization and Data Protection
- 3) CVA in hard-to-reach areas
- 4) CVA, Climate change and environment
- 5) CVA and localization

The rest of the statistics from this perception survey are available on the slides.

5- Any other business

Available on recording (from 1h55mn- 2h00mn)

Studies and reports will be launched very soon by the WCAF Regional office. Here is the list:

- Supporting 2 CWGs in the region (BF and Nigeria) with a consultant to identify possible solutions that could be adopted in programs using CVA to address high inflation. At the end of the study, a webinar will be held with various actors in order to provide concrete recommendations.
- Payments in hard-to-reach areas. The consultancy will be published in the coming days.
- Publication of the focus group report with local actors on capacity building needs.
- Finalization of the CALP glossary revision process in French, English, and Spanish. It is expected to be launched by the end of the month.