

Regional Cash Working Group Meeting of Western and Central Africa

Minutes

Place : Virtual and face-to-face

Date : November 08th, 2023 (9-11H GMT)

Participants : 57 including 17 women

Organizations : OCHA, CALP Network, DRC, Samaritan's Purse, NRC, CARE, WFP, CAFOD UK, IMMAP, World Bank, Action against Hunger, DGECHO, OXFAM, USAID, Première Urgence, CRS, Red-Cross UK, Doctors without Borders, DCA, Save the Children, UNHCR Norcap, Solidarités and national NGOs represented by : AHEAS (Tchad), ASREF (Mali), Aide au Sahel (Mali).

Context

On November 08, 2023, the meeting of the regional cash working group of Western and Central Africa was held virtually, and face-to-face at the OCHA regional office. The meeting is part of the support provided by the regional CWG to the national CWGs in the region with the financial support of the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA/USAID). This meeting was co-organized with the OCHA regional office.

The agenda is centered around a round-table discussion on recent activities of the various CWGs and a presentation followed by question-and-answer segments, all with simultaneous interpretation in English and French.

1- National CWGs round table

Available on recording from 4mn- 48mn

- **Mali CWG**

- Minimum expenditure basket (MEB) process based on a hybrid approach underway, with a transfer amount and transfer value considering the specificities of each region.
- Training in core CVA skills for programme staff.
- CWG national strategy workshop and report validation are scheduled for late November 2023.
- Integration of multi-purpose cash transfers (MPC) into the humanitarian response plan for 2024.
- On the security front, the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was marked by disruptions to market operations in the north of the country.

- **Burkina CWG**

- New decisions to suspend CVA in several regions following a statement by the Ministry of Territorial Administration, affecting the North, East, Center East, Central Plateau and Sahel regions.
- This suspension will be on the agenda of the Humanitarian Country Team meeting scheduled for 8/11/2023 to define the new strategy for team.
- Delay in the approval of the Cash Protocol following the new Cash suspensions. This document will possibly be adopted in the form of an interministerial order or by decree. The Elaboration Committee has submitted those two proposals to the Ministry in charge of humanitarian action.
- The new CRS Co-lead has officially taken up his duties.

- **Cameroun CWG**

- Multifunctional assessments of CVA feasibility.
- Preparation of the consensus retreat on lead's roles and the roadmap for implementing the new coordination model.

- **Nigeria CWG**
 - Finalization and publication of the review report of the MEB of North-East Nigeria available under this link: <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/minimum-expenditure-basket-meb-report-north-east-nigeria-2023>
 - Following the recommendations from the needs assessments of the National Cash and Voucher Assistance Policy (NCVA) and the Inflation and Depreciation Adjustment Study, the CWG has begun mapping financial service providers (FSPs) across northeast Nigeria. Progress in this area will be reported to the regional CWG.
- **Democratic Republic of Congo CWG**
 - Change in the CWG coordination team with the arrival of two new managers: the program coordinator and the TM coordinator for non-programming and information management.
 - Three priorities: **(1)** the challenge of mapping FSPs in the country from the point of view of - geography - security and logistical capacity - speed of services **(2)** the state of play of market monitoring - Dashboard data for Cash feasibility **(3)** Risk analysis and mitigation strategies.
 - The new team also intends to collaborate with other CWGs in the region to establish an inclusive TM strategy and advocacy for the use of mobile money.

For technical reasons, the Chad CWG was unable to present its latest activities.

2- Localization project - FLASH - First Local Humanitarian Alliance in Sahel hotspots - Danish Refugee Council (DRC)

Available on recording from 49mn – 1H41mn

As a prelude to the DRC presentation, the CALP Network recalled the importance of the theme of localization and the need to develop a collective vision and to update and renew political commitments, thus guaranteeing better assistance to populations affected by crises around the world. CALP recalled the objectives adopted at the high-level meeting held jointly with BHA in June.

- Collaboration with local actors.
- More people-centred, effective aid.

At the same occasion, CALP cited the efforts made in this localization process:

- Round table organized with local players in the WCAF region in October.
- Consultations with local stakeholders in the MENA and ESAF regions.

Simultaneously, DRC has shared its localization experience through the FLASH pilot project in conjunction with CVA. The FLASH project aims to launch and support a rapid response mechanism (RRM) piloted by national and/or local players, with operational support from DRC teams.

Here are few key points to remember about this project update:

- **Multi-country project financed by FCDO** targeting the Liptako-Gourma area, and specifically Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger.
- **Rapid response mechanism** has been set up in these countries to meet the needs of displaced populations through CVAs.
- **Budget:** Total budget: 3.2 M Euros - 63% of the budget allocated to the six local partners - 11th month of implementation - partners' overall envelopes are equal - 260 million XOF per partner.
- **Results:** (1) Identification, selection, and long-term commitment phase (2) Capacity-building (3) Implementation of rapid responses by local partners/organizations:

A2N/Burkina Faso, ASMADE/Burkina Faso, UAVES/Mali, AMSODE/Mali, AREN/Niger, ADKOUL/Niger.

- **Challenges:** (1) difficulties related to compliance issues - (2) difficulties related to data and information management - (3) problems related to programmatic quality.
- **Final objective:** To strengthen the capacity of FLASH project partners to secure institutional funding directly from donors.
- **Discussion segment:** Available on recording from 1H32mn - 1H42mn.

3- Group works via Jam Board: How to promote the engagement of local actors within CWGs – a collective brainstorming.

Available on recording from 1h42mn – 1H52mn

As a continuation of the first-year review of the FLASH pilot project, a collective brainstorming session was held to gather their opinions and recommendations for improving the integration of local actors into CWG coordination. The following questions were raised on Jam Board to gather feedback from participants.

- What difficulties do local organizations in the region face regarding their integration into Cash Transfer coordination mechanisms?
- In connection with the previous question, how can national cash working groups support local actors and encourage their involvement?

A compilation of all the answers, along with their translation, is available on the CALP -WCAF regional page, together with this document.

4- AOB

Available on recording from 1H52mn – end

- To register for the launch of the State of World's Cash Report 2023, scheduled on November 15 at 13:00 GMT, interested parties can register at the following link <https://www.calpnetwork.org/event/the-launch-of-the-state-of-worlds-cash-report-2023/>.
- Two upcoming webinars by Save the Children:
 - A series of webinars since October on CVA amounts in nutrition projects, taking into consideration current practices, challenges, and case studies.
 - The document on the most frequently asked questions is available at this link: <https://www.nutritioncluster.net/resources/cash-and-voucher-assistance-nutrition-emergencies-cva-frequent-asked-question-faq>
 - Webinar on the cost of food: orientations, required capacities, experience sharing, challenges and opportunities.
 - Webinar on the presentation of the **NutVal tool**, a spreadsheet developed in Excel for planning, calculating, and monitoring the nutritional value of food aid, scheduled for December 06 at 15h :00 GMT (4 :00pm GMT+1/CET/Geneva Time).