



News from Headquarters

❖ On 06 and 07 November 2014, SDC/HA organized a **Cash Strategy Workshop**. The two-day workshop was attended by SHA cash experts as well as SDC programme officers on day two. The aim of the workshop was to jointly develop the strategic direction of SDC's cash engagement for the coming years, based on past experiences, current and future context, current strengths, and future opportunities. More than 20 SDC CTP Experts and Programme Officers participated actively in the workshop.

❖ Based on the discussions and outputs of the Strategy Workshop, an **Operational Concept** on CTP (2015-2016) was developed and approved by the HA-OpKom on 09 December 2014. The overall objective of the concept is to promote the use of CTP within the SDC and the wider humanitarian system, both in terms of quantity (i.e. more CTP wherever adequate and feasible) and quality (i.e. better assessment, planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of CTP).

In the coming years, SDC/HA will focus on the following outcomes: **1)** Quality CTP is implemented in SDC projects ("direct actions"); **2)** SDC/HA key partners are capacitated and supported in using the CTP in their response; **3)** SDC/HA's engagement on policy dialogue and advocacy related to CTP is strengthened; and **4)** SDC/HA's organizational knowledge and capacity on CTP is strengthened (internal mainstreaming).

❖ During November and December 2014, thematic division meetings were organized with each of the HA divisions (A/A, E/MM, Africa, Multi). The meetings provided an introduction into CTP terminology and key trends (social safety nets and multi-sector cash), explained SDC/HA's current involvement in CTP, and explored opportunities for future cash-based response within SDC/HA programming ("**why not cash?**").

❖ The evaluation findings of the Cash for Hosting Project in Northern Lebanon were presented to the HA-OpKom on 11 November 2014. The E/MM division organized a brown bag lunch on 17 December 2014 to present the key findings from the external evaluation and main lessons learned (see page 2 for more details).

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Publications

Mercy Corps: E-transfer Implementation Guide for Cash Transfer Programming [[click here](#)]

Mercy Corps: Cheaper, faster, better? A case study of new technologies in cash transfers from the Democratic Republic of Congo [[click here](#)]

Haushofery & Shapiro: Policy Brief – Impacts of Unconditional Cash Transfers [[click here](#)]

Events

January to April 2014: CaLP Level I & II trainings in Eastern and Central Africa [[click here](#)]

SDC/HA Cash Team

Rolf Gsell – SDC Focal Person Cash (Rudolf.gsell@eda.admin.ch)

André Dürr – SDC Programme Officer Cash Transfers (andre.duerr@eda.admin.ch)

Hannes Herrmann – Head of Technical Working Group Cash (hannes@herrmann.ch)

News from the Field

- ❖ SDC/HA has recently agreed to deploy two CTP experts to our partners: Marc Gschwend assisted UNHCR Ukraine in preparing their cash response for the IDP crisis. Louis Rovira joined WFP HQ (Cash for Change Unit) to help them roll out the multifunctional training on cash and voucher and strengthen the corporate preparedness package on C&V (see page 4 for the interview with Louis).
- ❖ In October 2014, André Dürr, Maryline Dafflon (Jordan) and Corina Eggenberger (Lebanon) participated in a joint donor mission on multi-sector cash transfers in Jordan and Lebanon. The overall purpose of the mission was to review the progress and support efforts within the two countries in moving towards a more harmonized and integrated delivery of cash (multi-sector CTP, see also thematic focus on page 3).

Cash for Hosting (Lebanon) Evaluation Results



On 11 November 2014, the evaluation results of the Cash for Hosting Project in Northern Lebanon were presented to the HA-OpKom. Because of incompatible views within the evaluation team, two separate evaluation reports were produced. Overall, the project was considered as a success as the overall objective of the project, i.e. to encourage longer term provision of better quality shelter, was achieved. In total, approximately 19'000 Syrian refugees benefited were hosted by project supported families.

The main point of contest within the evaluation team was whether the cash transfer should have supported the host or be directed towards the refugee families. The project chose the former because at the time of the project design, spontaneous hosting based on existing connections between hosts and refugees was

widespread. A further consideration for directly supporting hosting families was that many organizations (primarily UNHCR through its implementing partners) were directing all humanitarian assistance to refugees. The project was meant to lessen the burden on hosting communities. However, the hosting context changed significantly with the increased influx of refugees and a "cash for rent" approach might have been more adequate to provide protective shelter to refugee families at a later stage of the project.

By assisting the hosts directly, the project put the refugee families to some extent in a dependency situation that can have important protection implications. The project did not put enough emphasis on establishing a clear beneficiary feedback mechanism to give the refugee families a voice and detect protection problems at an early stage.

While the project set-up was considered quite lean and efficient (88% of funds reached beneficiaries), the project team did not have sufficient capacities to achieve all three components. The household development component was only partially achieved and the blanket approach in providing household development grants was criticized (i.e. every registered host received a household development grant, irrespective of the state of the house and socio-economic criteria). The community development component was not achieved as planned and a different project set-up would have been required to implement it.

The project was hampered by a lack of planning reliability. It went through three phases and was led by four project managers over the course of two years. Furthermore, the context evolved constantly and fast. The number of host families assisted increase from 328 in phase 1 (2012-13) to 2,460 during phase 3.

On verification and monitoring, a lot of good practices were only integrated during the third phase of the project, such as the use of GPS data for independent verification to reduce reliance on local partners (unannounced local controls) and rotating of verification staff. Setting up informal information channels ("tea drinker") could have helped to identify problems with the community at an earlier stage.

Thematic Focus: Multi-Sector CTP

Following a short introduction into Social Safety Nets in newsletter # 1, this newsletter will focus on multi-sector CTP (also referred to as multi-purpose CTP) as an emerging approach in humanitarian aid.

Today's humanitarian response is organized in sectors and clusters which are responsible to coordinate and implement a humanitarian intervention. This sector logic is today challenged by CTP, as an unrestricted cash transfer can be spent by a beneficiary on their needs across and beyond sectors. In contrast to humanitarian workers, regular people do not categorize their needs into sectors/clusters or view them in isolation from each other.

The basic idea of multi-sector CTP is to provide a cash grant to crisis-affected families to enable them to meet a range of needs across a number of sectors, empowering them to prioritise expenditure without direction from humanitarian organisations.

The transfer amount can be calculated by identifying all components of a humanitarian response that can be monetized and obtained in the local market. The total amount is then ideally transferred through one delivery platform, e.g. bank card or mobile phone transfer (see a visualization of multi-sector cash below). The approach offers efficiency gains by avoiding multiple parallel delivery systems for the transfer. UN Agencies and NGOs can use the same bank card or mobile service to transfer cash assistance to people affected by a crisis. Furthermore, beneficiaries do not have to deal with multiple cards or distributions.

IRC recommends complementing a multi-sector grant with financial management training for recipients. Financial training can improve protection outcomes by empowering women as household decision-makers. When paired with receipt of cash assistance, these women are able to put aside funds for

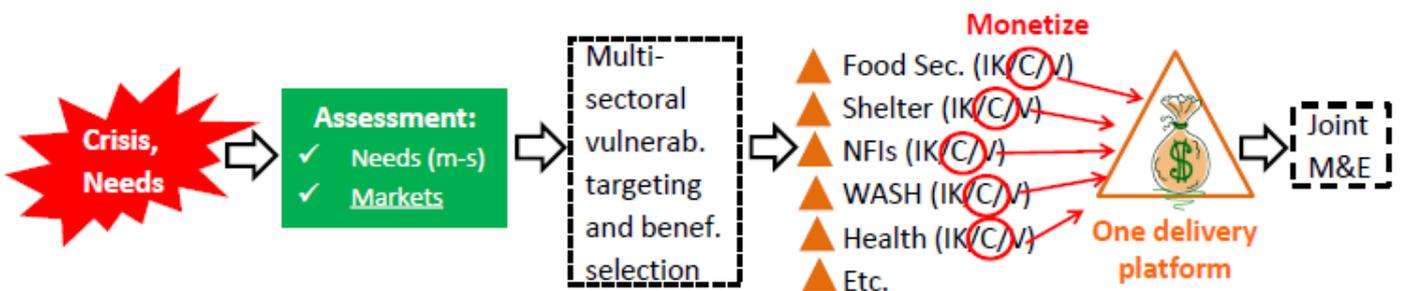
the future, manage debts more effectively, and feel a greater sense of self-confidence.

A multi-sector CTP intervention requires much stronger harmonization and integration of humanitarian action across the project cycle. Following a disaster, *beneficiary needs* have to be looked at from a multi-sector perspective (multi-sector needs assessment). *Beneficiary selection* has to be based on vulnerability criteria across sectors. And *monitoring and evaluation* need to look at key indicators across sectors in order to determine the success of a multi-sector cash intervention.

First attempts of moving towards a multi-sector approach in Jordan, Lebanon and other contexts have proven to be quite challenging. UN Agencies and NGOs with a sector-specific mandate find it difficult to lose "control" on how beneficiaries spend the cash and therefore tend to opt for a voucher system (restricted cash). Furthermore, the setting up of a common delivery platform for transferring cash needs to happen at the very beginning of an intervention. Trying to unify separate systems retroactively proved to be very challenging. The question of who would be in charge of managing the common delivery platform further complicates the multi-sector agenda, maybe because there is limited willingness among the "big players" (i.e. WFP and UNHRC) to take a backseat on this important trend.

Despite these challenges, multi-sector CTP is in the process of transforming humanitarian response based on the promising experiences in Lebanon and Jordan.

For more information on this topic, have a look at [CaLP/IRC Case Study in Lebanon](#) (*Multi-sector cash assistance for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon*) and a recent [article](#) on how cash assistance is changing emergency aid.



**Voices from the Field – Q&A with Louis Rovira,
SDC/HA secondment to WFP Rome**

Louis Rovira joined the SHA Unit in 2004. He is currently deployed to WFP HQ as Cash Advisor within the Cash for Change Unit.

What is the objective of your current mission with WFP in Rome and how does it link to your previous assignment with WFP Regional Bureau in Panama?

During my secondment as Cash and Voucher (C&V) Regional Senior Advisor to WFP Panama Regional Bureau, I was mainly working on building the C&V capacities of 12 WFP Country Offices (COs) with no experiences with these transfer modalities. In addition, I supported them in the conception, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of C&V programming. During these two years of assignment, the region went through a series of disasters and we developed regional guidelines, protocols and tools to efficiently intervene with C&V at the early stages of the emergency. By the end of my assignment in Latin America Region, WFP requested SDC to second me to Rome in order to adjust and integrate these newly elaborated and field tested tools into the WFP Emergency Preparedness Response Package (EPRP) corporate guidelines.

In the past, agencies have struggled to use C&V in an immediate emergency response. It takes time to establish agreements with banks, mobile companies or shop owners. Based on your experience in Latin America, how are you suggesting to resolve this challenge?

I believe the most important part of an emergency response takes place in the preparedness phase, well before a disaster strikes a country. During the preparedness phase, COs have the time to elaborate scenarios based on past experiences, train teams and partners in quick implementation and coordination, fine-tune stand-by agreements and collaboration protocols, and work with the population to increase their resilience to shocks. During the early warning phase, all these standby elements can be activated. At the moment of the impact, it is still necessary to undertake a series of rapid assessments to choose or readjust a prepared response scenario based on the context. The elaboration of Standard Operational

Procedures explaining and coordinating who (units) does what and when in response to a shock, at the different levels (from COs to RBs and HQ) of responsibility, allowed us to deliver C&V assistance to flood affected populations in Paraguay in less than 3 weeks following the shock.

You are also helping to prepare and implement the corporate multifunctional training on C&V. How does the training look like?

I have been fully involved in the preparation of the corporate C&V multifunctional training of trainers (ToT) initiative including the conception of a simulation exercise (1,5 days), the elaboration of several technical presentations, and the revision and fine-tuning of some corporate tools. I am one of the facilitator of the ToT and responsible for the simulation exercise. The ToT has already been implemented for 5 out of 6 WFP regions (almost 120 persons). Once all regions will be covered with the ToT in HQ (January 2015), the trained teams composed of staff members from various COs will go back to their regions and provide the training to their respective WFP COs, reaching almost 70% of the entire WFP field staff. This face-to-face training will be complemented and preceded by an individual e-learning on C&V. At the end of the process, each staff will be certified on his/her C&V knowledge and capacities to use the two modalities. In my opinion, this is an excellent training approach as it involve staff at all levels and the roll-out will be achieved in less than one year. SDC/HA is part of it at all levels with my support to WFP HQ and our secondments at RB and CO level.

According to your opinion, where does WFP stand on integrating cash and vouchers as modalities?

Close to 30% of WFP's planned response in 2014 will be implemented through cash or vouchers. In some countries, the entire response is through C&V. Today, WFP possesses a corporate C&V Business Process Model with relevant tools, a C&V Corporate Manual (to be published at the beginning of 2015), C&V Advisors in all Regional Bureaus and it is rolling out the standardization of all C&V procedures worldwide. It is the most advanced UN Agency when it comes to CTP. At the current pace, it will reach 40% of the response with C&V in the coming years.