



News from Headquarters

- Following up on the OCHA/CaLP/SDC Global Learning Event on Cash Coordination that took place in Geneva in May (see newsletter #3), the [final report](#) and a [short video](#) on the event are available online.
- In September, the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Cash Transfers released its findings (“Doing cash differently – how cash transfers can transform humanitarian aid”). André Dürr participated in a panel discussion on the report findings in Brussels. The report can be found [\[here\]](#).
- The SDC Cash Team together with the CaLP Coordinator implemented a session on CTP during the September *Bereichsleitungs-klausur* (management retreat). The session aimed at raising the strategic profile of CTP with SDC/HA and providing an overview of the latest policy discussions around CTP.
- Following the adoption of the ECHO Common Principles for Multi-Purpose Cash-Based Assistance, SDC/HA formally endorsed these principles in a letter to ECHO in September. The principles can be found [\[here\]](#)
- Between September and November, three one-day trainings on CTP, focusing specifically on Response Options Analysis, i.e. the process of determining what response (modality) is best suited to achieve programme objectives, were organized in Bern. The trainings were attended by 22 SDC staff and 12 external participants. The training materials can be downloaded here [\[here\]](#).
- On 11 November, SDC organized a workshop on CTP with different Swiss NGOs. The objective of the workshop was to exchange experiences among Swiss humanitarian aid actors on CTP and to explore scope for collaboration between Swiss humanitarian aid actors on CTP. The workshop was attended by SDC/HA, Swiss Solidarity, Helvetas, Caritas, Terre des Hommes, Swiss Red Cross and Solidar.
- The Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP), an important partner to SDC/HA on CTP, has recently revised its membership structure. As of 01 January 2016, SDC/HA is an official member of the CaLP.
- SDC/HA financed a three day workshop organized by UNHCR in Geneva in November. The workshop focused on the emerging findings on the linkages between cash and protection, and on the implementation of multi-purpose cash grants. The emerging guidance that was presented and reviewed during this workshop will be made available soon.

Newsletter Content

News from Headquarters

News from the Field

Voices from the Field – Owner-driven housing reconstruction programme in Sri Lanka

Publications

RC/RC Cash in Emergency Toolkit [\[click here\]](#)

Final Report of the Global Learning Event on Cash Coordination [\[click here\]](#)

High Level Panel Report [\[click here\]](#)

Latest CaLP Newsletter [\[click here\]](#)

Voices and Views of Beneficiaries on unconditional Cash Transfers [\[click here\]](#)

New online course: E-Transfers and operationalizing beneficiary data protection [\[click here\]](#)

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News from the Field

- In the second half of 2015, SDC-HA deployed four CTP experts to partner organizations: Andre Dürr has been deployed as of July on a part-time basis to support ICRC HQ in Geneva to contribute to internal CTP guidance and to support the development and implementation of CTP training. Lea Moser was deployed to the SDC Project Office in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, to support the development of a manual on owner-driven housing reconstruction and the holistic village approach. Gabrielle Wilhelm and Karl-Friedrich Glombitza were deployed as WFP C&V Advisers to the country offices in Madagascar and Syria (Damascus).
- The cash for housing repair programme in Sri Lanka is closing its operation at the end of 2015. For more information, please see the Q&A in the next section.

Voices from the Field – Q&A with the SDC Team in Sri Lanka

Programme Background

The thirty year armed conflict in Sri Lanka came to an end in 2009, leaving over 300,000 persons displaced in camps. Over 120,000 houses and essential community infrastructure were destroyed, especially in the Northern Province of the country. Recovery and reconstruction efforts for the war-affected population were identified as the key humanitarian needs to be met. Recognizing the success of SDC's previous reconstruction programmes especially following the 2004 tsunami, SDC was requested by the Government of Sri Lanka to engage in the rehabilitation process and to support the returning population to their villages of origin.



In response, in December 2009 SDC launched a pilot cash-for-housing project in the Jaffna District, reconstructing 300 permanent houses of an entire village

through an owner driven approach, while also restoring essential community infrastructure and providing livelihood support. By end of 2015, SDC has extended the reconstruction programme to over 42 villages (approx. 25'000 persons) in the Jaffna and Kilinochchi Districts of Northern Sri Lanka.

The reconstruction programme was using a holistic approach, including provision of permanent houses for the returnees, rehabilitation of community infrastructure and restoration of livelihoods.. In order to have a critical mass in advocating for essential public services with local authorities, SDC combined this with a "village approach", meaning that selected villages were entirely restored based on key community needs identified during participatory village assessments done together with all relevant local stakeholders.

SDC Project Team



A dedicated SDC project team has been implementing the programme since 2009. For the purpose of this newsletter, the team leader, Lars Büchler, and his team were asked to look back at achievements, challenges, and the role of cash transfers.

Can you explain and describe the role of cash transfers in the different components of the programme?

Different cash approaches were used as key instruments throughout the housing reconstruction process. Beneficiaries of housing assistance received their housing grant through *conditional cash transfers* tied to achieving construction milestones. In order to ensure the targeted use of the funding a voucher system was used, whereby through a pre-agreed arrangement with the banks, beneficiaries became entitled to withdraw from their accounts only the amount specified in the voucher at a given time. In addition, *cash for work* was used at the preparation stages where returnees were mobilized to clear their lands and common roads and build essential features such as culverts. As such cash transfer modalities were carefully planned and built into the reconstruction process.

What do you consider the main achievements of the project/programme?



By end of December 2015, SDC's integral reconstruction programme resulted in the following achievements:

- 5050 families live in reconstructed permanent houses. Over 50% of the assisted families have incomes below the national poverty line.
- Over 800 girls and boys per year have access to pre-school education and over 2,000 girls and boys have access to primary and secondary education in SDC supported villages
- All beneficiaries in SDC supported villages have access to water within 500 meters from their homes (as recommended by the Sphere Minimum Standards) after the renovation of rainwater retention ponds and common wells.
- Through SDC's advocacy efforts essential public services in the villages resumed.

It is commendable that over 98% of beneficiaries surveyed after the construction of their houses, were satisfied with their homes and are keen to live in their places of origin in normalcy. Using cash-for-housing through an owner-driven approach has also enhanced beneficiaries' ownership and sense of self dignity and pride.

Was there anything that the project/programme was not able to achieve?

One of the main challenges encountered throughout the programme was the difficulty in establishing durable livelihoods in the project areas. Beneficiaries were expected to contribute in-kind or in-cash towards the reconstruction of their houses. Due to the lack of income and the lack of financial literacy, many of them (almost 80%) reported relatively high levels of indebt-

edness during a survey implemented in 2014. In order to at least partly overcome this, SDC designed and implemented a financial literacy module for housing beneficiaries. A follow-up survey by SDC in 2015 revealed that over 95% of housing beneficiaries showing improved awareness on financial management as a result.

Over the course of the programme, what were the biggest challenges and how were these overcome?

Overall, SDC's Reconstruction Programme in support of the war-affected populations returning to their villages of origin, has successfully accomplished all the objectives it set out to achieve, using cash transfer modalities in creative and innovative ways throughout the housing reconstruction process. However better livelihood prospects and private sector engagement will be critical to further improve and strengthen economic growth in Northern Sri Lanka and ensure returnees have a stable income in the long-term.