

MINUTES OF MEETING

Title of meeting	Cash Programming Working Group
Date & time	20 Feb 2014, 2.30 pm
Location	UNHCR Beirut, Lea Building 1 st floor
Objectives	Support CTP in the response to the Syrian refugee crises in Lebanon
Facilitator /Chair	Charlie Higgins, UNHCR / Isabelle Pelly, SCI
Minutes taker	Charlie Higgins, UNHCR
Participants	List included at the end of the minutes
Item 1. Update from targeting task force (TF)	<p>The TF comprises representatives from WFP, UNHCR and LHIF (4 agencies). This work underpins all other cash programme design. It must meet a tight timeline, it will be based on many discussions including the recommendations from the ECHO meeting in Brussels last month, and its conclusions will inevitably derive from the existing measures of vulnerability and need. Outputs will be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A finalized TOR and timeline for the work; 2. A definition of vulnerability and what this targeting approach is for (i.e. assistance which can be monetized vs. a much wider scope encompassing other assistance, such as education); 3. Lessons learned from previous targeting (e.g. post VASyR use of the Burden Index Score, and the verification exercise); and 4. The process and tools needed to be followed to apply targeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that the appropriate place for a decision on the TF recommendations would be the inter-agency group or its subset, the RRP6 Steering Committee.
<p>Item 2. Update from agencies on the work they are leading on:</p> <p>a. MEB revision (Solidarités International – Cécile Barriere)</p>	<p>The revised Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) will give the basis for calculating the cash transfer amount(s)/assistance package(s). Outputs will be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The categories and levels of expenditure, per sector, in consultation with the sector WGs (through their leads); 2. A review of the composition of the MEB; 3. An analysis of the price monitoring data already gathered by agencies, using the same methodology applied to the WFP food basket; 4. An updated overall national MEB (only for the refugee population at this stage). 5. A proposal for the cash transfer amount(s)/assistance package(s). <p>SI plans to hire a junior analyst to support the price data analysis. The team aims to have this work completed by the first week of April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that the minimum level of expenditure is not necessarily the

amount required for bare survival level in the Lebanese context.

- Agencies were requested to submit all price data they have collected over the duration of the operation, to Cécile at SI.
- The MEB team was requested to consult all sector WGs on the categories and levels of expenditure that comprise the MEB, and to circulate to them an explanation of how it arrived at its recommended MEB, through their leads.

b. Market assessment
(DRC – Debbie Gourlay & WFP – Susana Moreno)

The outputs of the team working on the gaps in market assessment information will be as follows:

1. An understanding of the market information requirements – the questions that everyone wants answered;
2. A review of the existing sources of information, which will be drawn from assessment work already completed and also now being done through the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment, the results of the current winter cash PDM which will indicate the refugees' spending patterns, and also WFP's market assessment questionnaire now being trialed, etc.
3. Design of a data collection template looking at wide range of issues, covering market functionality, composition, connectedness, competitiveness, elasticity and storage capacity, etc.
4. An understanding of what information will be needed once-off, to be the baseline, and what needs to be collected repeatedly.
5. A set of definitions, so that everyone is talking the same language.

The team may decide to not consider the rental market, since this is so informal and diverse that data is not reliable. The aim is to complete steps 1 and 2 by end-Feb, and steps 3, 4 and 5 by 7 March. This will then be followed by an allocation of roles and responsibilities for data collection by mid-March.

- UNHCR to send to the Market Assessment team the matrix of 'who is collecting what data' done in Sep 2013.

c. Operational Set-up (UNHCR – Charlie Higgins & SCI – Isabelle Pelly, WVI- Juliet Lang, ECHO – Maureen Philippon)

The outputs of the team working on the operational set-up will be as follows:

1. A TOR drawn from the original DFID/ECHO proposal for review of the winterization cash concerning the cost effectiveness, connectedness and efficiency of the support systems, informed by the lessons learned study produced by DRC on its experience in implementing that programme.
2. A list of the questions to be answered/issues to be resolved for the implementation of any cash programme, bearing in mind that the literature (e.g. from CaLP) describes the ideal model, whereas we have to make it work in this context and soon, so a reality check must be applied.
3. Suggestions as to the way to divide responsibilities within the inter-agency programme, whether thematically, geographically or both, and concerning the optimal number of partners.
4. The necessary systems and standard operating procedures (SOP) for the system to achieve a basic level of functionality by the beginning of April.

	<p>The team aims to produce the draft TOR by Wed 26 Feb and steps 2 and 3 by mid-March. The final output is the largest, and it is proposed to contract a consultant to bring in the necessary capacity to achieve it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work on risk assessment cannot really be done until the operational set-up is described, since many of the risks lie in implementing the procedures and systems that underpin the programme. • The team was urged to be bold in proposing changes to the status quo, especially in terms of the capacity for cash programming, since the system will not work with the resources currently available.
<p>d. M&E (ACTED – Josh Kirton & IRC – Francesca Battistin)</p>	<p>Although this team will be unable complete its work until decisions are taken on targeting, the team will draft its TOR by Fri 21 Feb. Its outputs will be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A review of the existing M&E systems used in Lebanon so far. 2. A review of the monitoring framework used for cash in Somalia, although it is recognized that the context here is very different (access is better, etc.). 3. A proposal for a broad M&E framework into which all agencies can fit, and to which all agencies can contribute (as recommended in Brussels). <p>The team is looking at bringing in a third party (e.g. ODI or similar) to come in and set-up the overarching framework, and possibly also to continue to manage the system on behalf of all agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without a common log-frame for the objectives and indicators of cash programming, a common M&E system will not work, so agencies must be bound to it either as a consortium or through MOUs.
<p>e. Accountability (No lead as yet)</p>	<p>CaLP has produced a lot of guidance on data protection, which is one of the main challenges given the amount of inter-agency sharing of data that will be needed for the system to function. Guidance and templates are also needed for standards on confidentiality, complaints mechanisms, minimizing costs to beneficiaries and all areas concerning mass communication, such as standards for the use of SMS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was proposed that this team could be tasked with generating the public messaging around cash programming. • A number of interesting initiatives within UNHCR HQ had been referred to at the cash meeting in Brussels, which should be drawn upon. • The team could also look at organizing training in best practices to ensure accountability, based on all established norms and standards. • Although a number of members of the CP-WG are prepared to support this work, it needs a lead. UNHCR to check whether its new Mass Communication specialist would be willing and able to do so.
<p>f. Connecting and coordinating all the work (CP-WG co-leads, UNHCR – Charlie Higgins)</p>	<p>It is evident that all the pieces of work must feed into each other if the outcome is to be a coherent inter-agency cross-sectoral cash programme. For instance the work on MEB, price data analysis, the baseline review of market functionality, and the establishment of a programme monitoring framework are all highly interconnected.</p> <p>The team is looking at engaging a consultant to coordinate the work and ensure</p>

<p>& SCI – Isabelle Pelly)</p>	<p>consistency between the different areas, prior to the arrival of the Senior Cash Adviser (not likely before April).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies need to commit to the recommendations and decisions of the WG, and some advocacy (internal and external) will be needed to achieve this.
<p>Item 3. Review / Research:</p> <p>a. IRC Study of Winter Cash</p>	<p>Christian Lehmann of the University of Brasilia introduced the objectives and methodology of IRC’s Winter Cash Study, designed to improve understanding in two broad areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact of the cash programme on local economies in terms of multiplier effects, including how much income growth it generated, any inflationary effects due to lack of elasticity in the markets, etc. 2. The impact of the cash on beneficiary households in terms of consumption, savings, debt, social capital, community relations, and even psychologically. <p>The most scientifically rigorous way to answer such questions – especially now that the programme has been implemented and it is difficult to establish a baseline – is using a simple Regression Discontinuity Design, comparing the markets and beneficiaries in villages which received the cash with those that did not, i.e. either side of the 500m elevation cut-off used for targeting. Approximately 177 villages with about 2,500 potentially similar beneficiary households exist either side of this line. They will be subject to a survey of prices, consumption, etc. and the results in the two areas will then be compared.</p> <p>The timeframe for the work should be as follows, provided the donors transfer the necessary funds quickly and UNHCR makes available the data on the locations and beneficiaries residing in them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train enumerators by 28 Feb; - Conduct survey during March; - Disseminate initial findings by first week of April. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR will give IRC and the survey team contact details for the agency which implemented the winter cash programme, area by area. • IRC agreed to draft a short abstract about the study, for wider circulation.
<p>Item 4. AOB:</p> <p>a. MSNA</p> <p>b. Next meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chiara Noone, ACTED, updated on the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment initiated by the LHIF, and requested that any agency to send her lists of any ongoing needs assessments that the team may not already be aware of. • The next meeting will be held at 2.30 pm on Thu 6 March in the Lea Building.

Follow-up action	Who	By when
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit all price data they have collected over the duration of the operation, to Cécile at SI. • Consult all sector WGs on the categories and levels of expenditure that comprise the MEB, and circulate an explanation of how the team arrived 	<p>All agencies</p> <p>MEB team (focal point: Cécile Barriere, Solidarités International)</p>	<p>COB Wed 24 Feb</p>

at its recommended MEB.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send the Market Assessment team the matrix of 'who is collecting what data' (Sep 2013). Follow-up on UNHCR accountability initiatives at HQ level, referred to at the meeting in Brussels. UNHCR will see whether its Mass Communication specialist would be willing and able to assume leadership of the Accountability team. Meet with the consultancy company that could take responsibility for coordinating all the work. Give details to IRC and the survey team contact details of the winterization IPs and OPs. Draft a short abstract about the IRC cash study. Send details of any ongoing needs assessment, to feed into the MSNA, to Chiara Noone, ACTED. 	UNHCR (Charlie Higgins) UNHCR (Charlie Higgins) UNHCR (Charlie Higgins) UNHCR (Charlie Higgins) & SCI (Isabelle Pelly) UNHCR (Charlie Higgins) IRC (Burgen Belltawn) All agencies	COB Wed 24 Feb COB Wed 24 Feb

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