

MINUTES OF MEETING

Title of meeting	Cash Transfer Working Group
Date	9 Jan 2014
Location	UNHCR – Beirut
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support CTP in the response to the Syrian refugee crises in Lebanon
Facilitator(s)/Chair(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riikka Mikkola (UNHCR)
Minutes taker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ola Kobeissi (UNHCR)
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List included at the end of the minutes
Main points/questions raised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting addressed the planned transition of the Syrian response from the provision of sector specific cash to multi-sectoral cash grants. This is to be implemented starting April 2013, following the completion of the winterization programme. The aim is to develop a more coordinated and coherent approach among relevant stakeholders toward the implementation of a multi sectoral cash grant system. The meeting posed the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the cash working group's vision for multi-sectoral CTP? • What can and should the CTP WG provide to achieve this vision? • How do the existing plans of various actors (UN/NGO) fit with this vision? • The discussion was guided by an action plan/road map, [drafted by Save and UNHCR] that needs to be endorsed by relevant stakeholders in order to ensure a successful roll out of the multi-sectoral cash grant system. The input provided during discussion in addition to those proposed by UNHCR and Save will inform on the activities that should be undertaken by the cash working group in 2014, contributing toward the effective implementation of the multi-sectoral cash grant system. These actions will also guide the priorities for the cross-agency ‘senior cash adviser’ to be recruited this month. • The meeting was attended by 18 different stakeholders including donors (ECHO and DFID) and humanitarian actors. • Main input on the discussed themes of the action plan/road map, namely those related to “Targeting”, “Assistance Package” and “Operational Set Up” includes the following: <div style="background-color: #f2f2f2; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Targeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHO expressed the need to have access to the raw data used to compile the recently released VASyR report. UNHCR to follow up with WFP on that. </div>

- UNHCR confirmed their commitment to creating a platform for data management around cash, as well as improving the functionality of RAIS to better record info on cash and non-cash assistance.
- ECHO raised the need for a data repository that is much more comprehensive than PROGRES. Based on ECHO's request, UNHCR to confirm whether RAIS can avail socio-economic data to aid in targeting and to be used by all stakeholders whether IPs or others [based on holding a data sharing agreement with UNHCR]. The ethical challenge of storing data on unregistered households was raised, but no concrete solutions proposed.
- DFID stressed the need to determine within a reasonable degree of accuracy the level of vulnerability.
- UNHCR briefly presented their conception of a tiered system indicating that the agency will be providing cash to the most vulnerable tier group identified using UNHCR vulnerability criteria. The other less vulnerable groups, yet in dire need of assistance, will be supported by other partners. As opposed to having a perfect mechanism in place, UNHCR explained the urgency to set up a formal running system whereby improvements will be made to it during phases of implementation. The approach was questioned as it will make it extremely difficult for the other actors to identify and target beneficiaries not considered extremely vulnerable by UNHCR.
- UNHCR stated they had not yet decided how much funding they plan to put towards this.
- UNHCR also updated on the plans to cluster components of a number of sectors providing cash assistance (NFIs, WASH, Shelter, and ultimately food). This will be overseen by Charlie Higgins in close coordination with Senior Cash Advisor.
- DFID raised question on whether tiered system should also apply to other forms of assistance.
- DFID noted that UNHCR should be leading the overall response and aligning all of its processes in support of an effective multi-sectoral cash system. UNHCR expressed some openness to reviewing its targeting methodology if a more effective methodology is agreed upon by other stakeholders
- Amy, LHIF coordinator, presented a brief summary of the progress of the LHIF's sub-group on Multi-Sector Needs assessment (which has now merged with the IM's joint monitoring). One first step for the group is to aggregate available data, which requires specific expertise which has not yet been identified.
- IRC are reviewing its targeting mechanism taking into account food-, crowding- and wealth index, income vs. expenditure information etc. and will share the methodology with the CWG

Assistance Package:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MEB needs to be updated on basis of recent market monitoring and expenditure information from winterisation PDM.• The tiered package of assistance should be designed and based on the MEB, based on a common understanding of what proportion of needs we are willing and able to meet• DFID indicated that they will be funding the following two research studies/reports:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint lessons learned with ECHO on winterisation with a focus on process review and impact assessment (recognising resourcing and timing constraints).• An analytical report on the efficiency and effectiveness of the cash transfer programmes in Lebanon. This evaluation will be timed towards the end of the first quarter (but not overlapping the winterisation review) and consider the deeper economic, social and, possibly, political implications of large scale cash transfer.• IRC is planning in partnership with a Columbia University a research on the impact of the increased scale up of cash assistance programmes in Lebanon, looking into its multiplier effect on the market and Lebanese economy. This report should be out within a year should the work start immediately. DFID requested IRC to send them the TOR for the proposal.	
	Operational Set Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on how RAIS could be used needs to be circulated among relevant stakeholders, including how this links to new arrivals information• Identify the key risks that may be encountered and strategies to mitigate those risks (to be clearly outlined in SOPS)	
	Update on the Winterisation baseline and PDM: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collection of winterization baseline data has not been completed by all organizations yet. UNHCR notified organizations that 15 Jan is the new deadline for data submission. Draft version of the report will be shared by UNHCR end of January.• PDM tool has been finalized in English and the Arabic version is almost done.	
Follow-up action	Who	By when
To share the roadmap matrix with CTWG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNHCR	
To share the PDM questionnaire and link with CTWG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNHCR	
To check with WFP on having access to the VASyR report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNHCR	

To check if RAIS could avail socio economic data of refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR 	
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Key contacts

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