Notes from meeting of CWG Leads (East Africa)
9 August 2017

1. Present:

Agustin Orengo, OCHA – Ethiopia CWG
Nynne Warring, WFP – Somalia CWG
Zeenat Azmi, OCHA – Sudan CWG
Karen Peachey, CaLP – Meeting Convener

2. Apologies:

Deqa Saleh, Adeso – Somalia CWG
Serene Phillips, World Bank – Sudan CWG
Masahiro Matsumoto, WFP – Sudan CWG
Alistair Short, WFP – South Sudan FS Cluster
Ntando Mlobane, WVI – South Sudan Cash TWG
Kenneth Anyanzo, UNHCR – Uganda Technical working group on cash based activities for the refugee response
Naouelle Djamaa, WFP – Uganda Technical working group on cash based activities for the refugee response

3. Agenda

a) Overview from each CWG
b) Challenges
c) Short update from CaLP
d) Future meetings

4. Overview of each CWG

Short overviews followed by a Q&A were given by each of the leads.

4.1 Update from Sudan CWG

- Initial meetings to form a CWG took place in 2016. Group was relaunched in Jan 2017.
- WFP and World Bank are the current co-leads and OCHA is providing secretariat support. There are monthly meetings involving UN, NGOs and some Government representatives. The group is starting to engage the private sector.
- TORs developed with inputs from CaLP.
- Hoping to develop more structured schedule of meetings going forward.
- The CWG has two parts:
  o A core group – which is formed of actors with more CTP experience. They act as a consultative group and help set the direction of the CWG - providing guidance/support. The core group usually engages in a lot of discussions by email and has a pre-meeting ahead of the CWG meeting to look at developments / review documents and – where relevant - generate recommendations for the main group.
  o The CWG is open to anyone. Interest has grown and a lot of people now engage. About 40 people attended the last meeting. Some of the organisations many don’t have much experience.
- Government colleagues attend the CWG but are not currently part of the core group.
- Sudan is at an early stage in terms of using CTP. At the moment, the CWG is largely an information sharing platform. In recent months, presentations have been made different organisations and initial findings from feasibility studies have been informally shared by various agencies ahead of reports being finalized.
- In addition to information sharing, the CWG has started to gather information via the 4W.
4.2 Update from Ethiopia

- First meeting of current group took place in March 2016. There used to be group a CWG before but it became dormant when the former lead left. OCHA and World Vision restarted the group.
- The CWG has a steering committee (7 members) which helps set up the agenda for the CWG. The aim is also to get more technical engagement through the committee.
- The group had a slow start. The first months started with getting TORs developed and trying to establish ways of working. In terms of focus:
  - Initially, was mostly on information sharing, with lots of presentations.
  - Now seeking to move forward on issues such as MEB and transfer values - this has been one of the key asks from new participants.
  - Information for the 4Ws is collected on a quarterly basis.
  - There was a useful session with PSNP – which is the largest safety net programme in Africa. Discussions highlighted that PSNP is targeting people just above the emergency threshold – whereas humanitarian action is looking at people in crisis. Understanding these differences and also the different geographic targeting offers the opportunity for complementarity between PSNP and humanitarian action.
- As discussions have become more practical, interest and participation has increased.
- The CWG currently engages about 40 organisations, and usually 15-30 people attend with participation from UN and NGOs, World Bank. Now also starting to get the private sector involved. The Government is always invited and is on the mailing list for all information, but so far they have only been able to attend twice.
- Information from the Somalia CWG has been useful, helping give ideas about issues and ways of taking work forward in the CWG.

4.3 Update from Somalia

- The Somalia CWG restarted in February this year. CWGs used to exist but had stopped and there had been a gap for some time.
- The CWG is a flexible group which is open to anyone involved in cash transfer programming in the ongoing drought response. When it started in February, there were weekly meetings for a couple months but frequency has now reduced to every 2-3 weeks. Participants include representatives from INGOs, NGOs, UN, World Bank, donors and sometimes cluster leads and others.
- The group started in the context of a serious drought situation, with lot of partners scaling up interventions significantly with lots of emphasis on CTP. The work of the group has been strongly operational including:
  - Work on MEB and transfer rate harmonisation.
  - Developing work on market monitoring to respond to expressed concerns.
  - More recently, after a CaLP lead learning session, three working groups/work streams have developed focused on issues related to:
    - Risk management
    - M&E and feedback
    - Mobile money providers.
- In the longer term, would like to broaden discussions and make more strategic – to consider issues such as social safety-nets, single registries and so on. But that is a while away yet.

5. Some challenges/overall discussions

MEB/transfer values:
- Ethiopia is finding it difficult to get work on MEBs moving. Based on ideas from this meeting, they may seek to form a sub-group to work on this and draw on lessons from elsewhere.
- In Somalia:
  - Discussions related to the MEB involved working with the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU) which has a MEB and built on work was started previously by the FSNAU/FS Cluster/ CaLP/others on interim guidance. Despite all the work which has been done, the MEB remains a
continuous discussion. It was also noted that the definition of the MEB is one thing but decisions about how the MEB translates into transfer values is another.

- The original MEB was developed 10 years ago with a mix between a rights based and expenditure based approach. The CWG recently worked with FSNAU et al to review the MEB and adjust contents and make more regionally and drought appropriate. This resulted in a substantial reduction in value of basket in some parts of the country.

- Some reflections from the Somalia experience are:
  - A big issue to consider at the start of MEB development is the how often agencies can adjust their transfer rates. Some organisations can change regularly and others can’t. Equally need to look at linking the discussion about MEBs to programme discussions from the outset. Without this, a MEB can be calculated and regular revisions made but organisations may not be able/willing to change. As such, it is good to think about (a) how often can people change transfer value (b) what level of detail is needed/what is realistic and how will it be updated (c) how does the MEB relate to programme plans.

Engagement in the CWG:
- Limited cluster engagement has been a challenge for all. May need to consider where to anchor the CWGs so they are not just ‘free floating’ (e.g. link to inter-sector or other platforms)
- In Somalia there has been more cluster engagement but, with the exception of the FS and WASH clusters, it has not always been consistent. When preparing the 4Ws and resulting infographic products, it has been useful to show the work of the clusters - this has helped show more value to their engagement.
- Leading the CWGs is time consuming and a lot falls on the leads.
- In Somalia, the formation of workgroups/work-streams has helped take things forward but has also become clear that much depends on who is involved.
- It is challenge trying to do everything, so need to spread responsibilities.

6. A short update from CaLP

State of the World’s Cash Report
- Asked leads to encourage all CTP actors to complete survey.
- Planning some FGDs and will be targeting national actors - hope to work with a couple of CWGs on this.

E-bulletins
- Appreciated the work of the leads in sharing these.
- CWGs can use the bulletins to share information about meetings/events etc.

7. Next steps

All agreed that the meeting had been valuable, with a practical exchange of ideas which can be used by each CWG. It was agreed that further meetings should be organized and interest was also expressed in a face-to-face discussion.

CaLP will follow-up and arrange a further meeting next month.