

CaLP North America Needs Assessment

1. Executive Summary

In January 2016, CaLP North America conducted a baseline capacity/needs assessment of the international cash community of practice (CoP) based in the US with an emphasis on identifying critical enablers and blockers to the implementation of cash-based programming with quality and at scale. Information and analysis resulting from this assessment will be used to inform CaLP's capacity building strategy for the US. The assessment also gathered information about needs with respect to **capacity building**, **advocacy**, **research** and **coordination**.

The key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- CaLP is widely regarded as the most useful and reliable source of information on CTP. CaLP's support to convene the US CoP and to provide "safe space" for learning is eagerly anticipated.
- Knowledge about CTP is concentrated in a few individuals in each organization.
- In general, results from this assessment strongly confirm anticipated needs for strong support for **institutionalization** of and preparedness for cash-based assistance, as well as a greater focus on the **operational aspects** of implementing cash-based assistance.
- **Monitoring, evaluation, and accountability guidance** is needed, though primarily to support advocacy objectives rather than to improve the quality of cash-based programming.

Analysis of assessment results suggests that:

- Case studies about institutionalization, including enabling factors, processes and tools used and institutionalization goals would be useful. However, **while learning from others is helpful, ultimately each institution must walk its own path** based on its own mandate, structures, processes, and the individuals that it must work through.
- Improving **response analysis documentation and accountability** may improve MEAL results and contribute to advocacy objectives. It also provides an avenue for engaging productively with the commodities/logistics CoP and for improving the quality of voucher programming.
- **Education, awareness-raising and myth-busting**, are areas in which CaLP is likely best suited contribute to existing initiatives lobbying for increased flexibility of US food assistance.
- CaLP should not emphasize as strongly in the US as elsewhere the multisector/multipurpose grant approach given US donor policy context. However, there is room to **increase joint, multi-sector programming between OFDA and FFP**.
- Based on its funding, its hosting arrangements through TOPS, and staff experience, CaLP North America is particularly sensitive to the food security sector. **CaLP will work actively to engage with and serve other sectors**.
- The challenges to CTP within the US food assistance policy environment, which represents a relatively large share of global humanitarian assistance, are real and powerful. However, there is room for progress even given existing structures.
- The high concentration of financial service providers and private sector actors relevant to humanitarian cash delivery either based in the US or with offices in the US represents an opportunity for coordination and advocacy.

2. Methodologies

This assessment took place between on/about January 11-29 with an additional key informant interview February 1, 2016. There are few documents available relating specifically to the US CoP other than a recent cash policy research

¹ Note: for the purposes of this paper, "cash", cash-transfer programming (CTP), or cash-based interventions/assistance may all refer to projects using either cash or vouchers as opposed to in-kind assistance or market support.

piece shared by the International Rescue Committee. The assessment, therefore, emphasized primary data collection through both a brief Survey Monkey survey and key informant interviews. The survey was distributed through FSN Network, Microlinks, CaLP d-group, Markets in Crisis d-group, CaLP US contacts, etc.; as of January 25, 2016 there were 105 responses. The survey format and key informant interview guide, as well as results of the survey are available in Annex. CaLP also participated in the TOPS Knowledge Sharing Meeting January 27-28 and facilitated a discussion of several cash leaders on January 29, 2016, information and insights from which also contributed to the results and conclusions of this assessment.

3. Study limitations

Limitations of this study include:

- There were few respondents outside the food security and livelihoods area. Additional time to prepare the survey distribution, including identifying additional networks in advance would have been useful.
- The sample size is small.
 - No incentive was provided to motivate responses to the survey, resulting in a <1% response rate to distribution for the online survey.
 - Though the survey had 105 respondents in total, only 85 people responded to several of the most critical questions.
 - There was some overlap between the key informant interviews and the online survey.

4. Overview of respondents

Of the 105 respondents to the survey as of January 25, 2016:

- **NGOs** represented 63% of responses, while USAID contributed to 13% of responses.
- Fifty-six (56) percent of respondents were based **in US headquarters** organizations.
- There was a high rate of response from the **food security sector (36%)**. No other sector reached 10% of responses. CaLP’s survey distribution and networking connections, as well as the US policy environment’s emphasis on food assistance, may have contributed to this distribution.
- There were two to three times more respondents reporting engagement in **technical/programmatic** areas of cash programming (design, technical/managerial support, evaluation) than in operational/logistics or business strategy areas.

Key informants were identified first as the **cash focal points** of major actors in the cash CoP, as well as through references from these informants and USAID’s Markets team. Response from the private sector for key informant interviews was poor.

5. Annex 1: Survey results

What type of organization do you work for?	Percent	Count
Non-profit organization or private voluntary organization	63%	66
USAID	13%	14
Other: UN, other USG, ICRC, consultant, foreign government	9%	9
For profit development company (e.g., contractor, consulting firm, individual consultant)	6%	6
Academic or research institution or student	4%	4
For profit business or commercial company (e.g., financial services provider, mobile network provider)	4%	4
Trade or industry association, network, or partnership	1%	1
Foundation or policy group	1%	1
Total		105

What type of organization do you work for?	Percent	Count
US HQ	56%	59
Other HQ	14%	15
Regional office for organization with a US base	5%	5
National office for organization with a US base	8%	8
Other: Geneva, Pakistan, Nairobi, Canada, UK, Sierra Leone, France, Nigeria, Jordan, global	17%	18
Total		105

What organization do you work for?	
ACDI/VOCA	International Federation of the Red Cross
Action Against Hunger/ACF International	International Medical Corps
Adam Smith International	IRC
Adeso - African Development Solutions	Living Water International Sierra Leone
ADRA International	Lutheran World Relief
American Red Cross	Mercy Corps
CARE	Nigerian Ministry of Women affairs and social development
CDHAM	Near East Foundation
CGAP	Oxfam America
Chemonics International- FEWS NET	PCI
ChildFund International	Red Rose CPS
Community World Service Asia (Formerly Church World Service Pakistan / Afghanistan)	Samaritan's Purse
Consultant	Save the Children
CRS	Social Impact Lab (SIMLab)
FHI 360	UN
Fintrac	USAID/FFP/OFDA/PRM
Fritz Institute	Verifone Mobile Money
Gadjah Mada University	Women's Refugee Commission
Global Communities	World Accord
Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC) - American Red Cross	World Food Program USA
International Committee of the Red Cross	World Vision International
International Emergency Development Aid and Relief	World Vision US

Past/current roles performed with respect to cash programming (select all that apply)	Percent	Count
Design new programs, projects or activities	65%	68
Provide technical support to existing programs, projects or implementation related activities	63%	66
Provide management support to existing programs, projects or implementation related activities	58%	61
Evaluate programs, projects or activities	57%	60
Conduct situation and needs assessment/analysis, including market assessment and analysis	44%	46
Provide training	43%	45
Engage in technical thought leadership at global, regional or country events and forums	41%	43
Engage with civil society	37%	39
Engage with the private sector	35%	37
Inform research and learning agendas	35%	37
Advocacy	33%	35
Coordinate cash interventions across multiple organizations (may include government)	32%	34
Support internal office operations (i.e. finance, administration, logistics, legal)	31%	32
Engage directly, bilaterally with host country government officials	26%	27
Inform business strategies	20%	21
Other	11%	11

None	2%	2
Total		105

Primary sector of expertise:	Percent	Count
Food security	36%	38
Other Unconditional multisectoral unrestricted cash, multipurpose/multisectoral relief/emergency/disaster response, cash and market based approach, grants acquisition; disaster response, project management, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning, livelihoods, economic recovery, protection, markets/market development, financial/information/technology services, consumer protection/research, urban planning, refugee policy, external relations, management, knowledge management	29%	30
Agriculture	9%	9
Nutrition	8%	8
Protection	5%	5
Health	3%	3
Finance/administration	3%	3
WaSH	2%	2
Shelter	2%	2
Logistics	2%	2
Education	2%	2
Camp management	1%	1
Total		105

In your experience, which of the issues below are the biggest challenges or obstacles to implementing quality cash programming at scale in emergencies? (Limit 5)	Percent	Count
Inadequate preparedness (contingency planning, processes and procedures), including relative to other modalities	63%	54
Insufficient technical capacity or related skills regarding cash-based programming	59%	51
Insufficient financial infrastructure in the emergency areas	53%	46
Insufficient market assessment skills and tools to determine whether or not cash is appropriate in the emergency area	33%	28
Lack of institutional cash-based programming experience in the emergency areas	33%	28
Lack of monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) guidance	33%	28
Insufficient response analysis skills and tools to determine whether or not cash is appropriate in the emergency area	30%	26
Insecurity concerns in areas of operation	28%	24
Lack of support from local governments for cash-based programming	20%	17
US foreign assistance policy or structure	19%	16
Insufficient market assessment opportunities	15%	13
Lack of senior management buy-in	15%	13
Other: monitoring/feedback from beneficiaries, lack of operations/logs/finance comfort with cash programming, insufficient coordination among agencies, overly restrictive donor guidance on modalities and monitoring needs, challenges to change mid-project, cash knowledge is centralized with one group in the organization, basic understanding of cash isn't prevalent across the agency, it's not 'senior management buy-in' as much as a lack of understanding the implications of cash and how deeply it affects every aspect of an organizations' operations, lack of understanding and rigor around procurement plus enforcing principles of competition, lack of incentives to do cash when it is appropriate, infrastructure weaknesses in emergency areas (cash is not always appropriate)	12%	10
Lack of cash-based programming experience in my sector	12%	10
Total		86

In your experience, which of the issues below are you least concerned about when implementing	Percent	Count
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quality cash programming at scale in emergencies? (Limit 5)		
Senior management buy-in	42%	35
Market assessment opportunities	37%	31
US foreign assistance policy or structure	36%	30
Cash-based programming experience in my sector	32%	27
Support from local governments for cash-based programming	30%	25
Insecurity concerns in areas of operation	23%	19
Market assessment skills and tools to determine whether or not cash is appropriate in the emergency area	20%	17
Monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) guidance	19%	16
Response analysis skills and tools to determine whether or not cash is appropriate in the emergency area	17%	14
Institutional cash-based programming experience in the emergency areas	15%	13
Preparedness (contingency planning, processes and procedures), including relative to other modalities	14%	12
Financial infrastructure in the emergency areas	12%	10
Technical capacity or related skills regarding cash-based programming	10%	8
Other: feasibility study, all equal	2%	2
Total		84

What skills and knowledge do you think are most lacking with respect to cash-based programming? (Limit 5)	Percent	Count
Beneficiary protection and data management	46%	39
Developing cash-ready standard operating procedures (finance, logistics, human resources, programs, etc.)	45%	38
Multi-sector or multi-purpose cash-based programming	42%	36
Contracting with financial and mobile service providers	42%	36
Monitoring, evaluation, and accountability for cash-based programming	40%	34
Risk management (security for staff/beneficiaries, corruption, responding to security breaches)	36%	31
Modifying transfer values based on changing needs	31%	26
How to identify the assessment tools appropriate for cash-based programming for a given context	28%	24
Cash feasibility assessments	26%	22
Cash-based programming design (targeting, conditionality/restrictions, estimating transfer values, payment mechanisms, etc.)	26%	22
Market assessment and analysis	21%	18
Response analysis (determining appropriate and feasible response modalities: cash, vouchers, in-kind)	21%	18
Examples and experience using cash-based programming outside of the food security/livelihoods sectors	15%	13
Other: experience of how to implement/execute at scale, implementing vouchers, consumer/recipient perspective to assess convenience, assessing MNO capacity, local financial and government systems preparedness	7%	6
Total		85

What areas of research do you think are most important for the US cash community of practice?	Percent	Count
Linking emergency cash transfers to social protection systems	31%	27
The effectiveness of cash in meeting project outcomes as compared to in-kind	27%	23
The multiplier effects of cash versus in-kind assistance	19%	16
Minimum standards of beneficiary data protection	9%	8
Other: new technologies appropriate for CTP, security of cash vs. in-kind in response to Congressional concerns, donor guidance on responding to changing market conditions, donor-level response analysis	8%	7
Total		86

Please name the most useful and reliable sources of information that you have consulted recently about cash transfer programming.		
1st (62 responses/100%)	2nd (45 responses/73%)	3rd (27 responses/44%)
Banking sector	ACF's KACHE system	ACF's Food Security, Servelliance and Cash Based Intervention's Book/Material
Cah and voucher Guideline	books on cash transfer programming in an emergencies	BTCA
CaLP	CALP	CaLP website updates
CaLP	CaLP	Cash in Emergencies Toolkit - IFRC
CaLP	CALP	CRS' case studies
CaLP	CaLP - website/online resources	DFID research on cash E-mobile cash transfer
CALP	CaLP guidelines for E-transfer	ECHO, DFID, SDC
CaLP	CALP publications/trainings	EMMA
CaLP	CaLP toolbox	EMMA
CALP	CALP website	FSPs for information on payment platforms
CaLP	CaLP's website	Grant
CaLP	CaLP's website (thank you! it's awesome!)	ICRC website
CaLP	CARE International Cash Transfer Manual (to be released shortly)	IFRC
CaLP	CGAP	Know Your Customer Standards and Privacy Recommendations for Cash Transfers
CaLP	CGAP	Markets in Crisis email
CaLP	Challenges and the State of Play of Interoperability in Cash Transfer Programming	Mercycorps
CaLP	D-Group	Oxfam
CALP	ELAN	PHAP
CaLP	ELAN	Red Cross
CaLP	Evidence of impact of emergency cash transfers on gender and protection - GSDRC	SEEP
CALP	external cash counterparts with hands on experience (IRC, Save, etc)	The Transfer Project
CALP	FEWS NET	TOPS various online resources
CaLP documents	FSNAU	USAID Food for Peace Website/Publications
CaLP documents	http://www.cashlearning.org/	USAID literature
CALP Literature	ICRC Toolkit	WFP
CALP Website	IFRC Emergency Cash	WFP VAM
CALP Website	IFRC Guide on Cash Programming	
CaLP website	IFRC RAM	
Cash learning partnership website	Institute of Development Studies (IDS)	
Cash program managers in the field	IRD	
colleagues	LWR internal CfW guidance manual	
e learning	MiC	
ELAN	Minimum Economic Recovery Standards	
elan	NGO CTP manuals: CARE, WVI, Adeso, ACF and Mercy Corp	
Emergency Market Mapping Analysis	NGO's SMT's	

EMMA	ODI	
European Commission	PCMMA	
Good Practice Review on cash programming	Report of the High Level Cash Panel	
household economic approach	Research papers by World Bank	
Household Economy Analysis Profiles and OA	Soba flexible facility	
http://rcmcash.org/	UN agencies	
In-house technical experts	UN World Food Programme Studies and Guidance Material	
internal cash counterparts with hands on experience (IFRC, ICRC, etc)	www.rcmcash.org	
Internal USAID experts		
MarKIT		
MARKit		
MasterCard Center for Inclusive Growth		
MIC		
NetHope - newsletter, online resources, webinars		
Oxfam publications		
Project documentation		
rcm red cross tool kit		
Reading info on on-going cash based programs		
Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Cash in Emergency Toolkit		
Research/evaluations conducted by my organization		
Resources shared by TOPs including webinars		
The Sphere Project		
WFP cash and voucher programs		
WFP guidelines		
WFP's revised manual		
written literature of lessons learned by INGOs		

What is your preferred means of sharing and exchanging information about new developments in cash-based programming? (Limit 3)	Percent	Count
Workshop, conference, or learning event	65%	55
Webinar	57%	48
Website or online platform	38%	32
In-person presentation in Washington, DC	37%	31
Email listserv or electronic newsletter	37%	31
D-group	21%	18
Conference call	13%	11
Journal	12%	10
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, blogs, etc.)	12%	10
Other: case studies, emails, an open forum for discussing others' reports and guidance on implementation	5%	4
Total		85

6. Annex 2: Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were held with the following people:

- Alexa Swift, Mercy Corps
- Anne Shaw, USAID/FFP (Nairobi)
- Bianca Flokstra and Paul Forsyth, World Vision

- Dina Brick, CRS
- Greg Matthews, IRC
- Hamilton McNutt, NetHope
- Laura Meissner, USAID/OFDA (DC)
- Lily Frey, Elan
- Lynn Yoshikawa, consultant
- Paul Musser, Mastercard
- Sara Netzer, Save the Children
- Sarah Bailey, consultant
- Sheila Thornton, American Red Cross
- Silke Pietzsch, Action Against Hunger
- Wendy Brightman, American Red Cross