

Cash Learning Partnership Strategy 2017-20

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THE CASH LEARNING PARTNERSHIP: STRATEGY 2017-20	3
Context.....	3
Theory of Change.....	3
Stakeholder Analysis.....	4
Our Identity	5
CaLP's Objectives	6
Our Approach	8
Membership & networks	8
Partnership.....	9
Regional presence	9
Evidence & impartiality	9
Access for local organisations	9
Prioritisation.....	10
Strengthening the secretariat	10
Monitoring	10

This strategy was approved by CaLP's board in April 2017. It updates and replaces all previous strategy documents.

THE CASH LEARNING PARTNERSHIP: STRATEGY 2017-20

Our Vision is that humanitarian assistance creates the greatest value, choice and dignity for people in crisis.

Our Mission is to radically increase the scale and quality of cash transfer programming as a tool for humanitarian assistance.

Context

During the last ten years, the international humanitarian system has recognised the immense potential of cash transfer programming¹ (CTP). Evidence to date has demonstrated that, in the right circumstances, CTP is a more efficient and effective way to provide aid than traditional in-kind assistance. CTP stimulates local economies to assist recovery and strengthens the dignity of people in crisis. When cash is used well, it enables limited aid budgets to achieve greater humanitarian results.

Cash can also contribute to wider reform of humanitarian assistance. It can be used for multiple purposes across different sectors. It can be delivered by new actors using new technology that disrupts and disintermediates aid. It can link directly to government social protection safety nets. CTP enables new levels of transparency, as cash can be tracked directly from donor to recipient. It supports local actors to use scarce resources for recovery in ways that work for them. All this means that CTP creates new opportunities to improve aid and has political implications within the humanitarian system, challenging established interests and ways of working.

Cash is not a magic bullet. It is only appropriate when markets are functioning adequately. It cannot deliver the full range of humanitarian outcomes in all situations. CTP still requires careful programme design, targeting and implementation relevant to the local context.

In 2015, it was estimated that just 6% of humanitarian assistance was delivered through cash². In 2016, many major humanitarian organisations made significant public commitments to increase the scale and quality of cash transfer programming. These include the commitments made in the Grand Bargain³ and at the World Humanitarian Summit. They are closely linked to ECHO's 10 Common Principles, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2015⁴. They draw from a wide range of well informed analysis and recommendations⁵.

¹ The term "Cash Transfer Programming" is used throughout this document to include cash and vouchers, in accordance with [CaLP's Glossary](#).

² See the High Level Panel report "Doing Cash Differently", ODI & CGD, 2015

³ See <http://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>

⁴ See http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/cash-and-vouchers_en

⁵ For instance: [One Humanity Shared Responsibility](#), the [High Level Panel report](#), the [World Bank's Strategic Note on Cash Transfers](#), the [Agenda for Cash](#).

Theory of Change

CaLP has consolidated the high level commitments and recommendations made during 2015/16 into a single global framework for action ([Access the Global Framework for Action online here](#)). The framework provides a consolidated agenda for implementing commitments and monitoring progress. It sets out the heart of our theory of change for how humanitarian organisations will radically increase the scale and quality of cash transfer programming. It is summarised in six global objectives:

1. Ensure sufficient funding is available for cash transfer programming.
2. Ensure cash is routinely considered, alongside other tools.
3. Build sufficient capacity for cash transfer programming.
4. Ensure the quality of cash transfer programming.
5. Strengthen coordination of cash transfer programming.
6. Strengthen the evidence base and invest in innovation.

These objectives are relevant for a wide range of stakeholders involved in humanitarian assistance. Some can be achieved by organisations working independently. But fundamental progress depends on organisations collaborating to address them collectively. At the operational level, agencies need to coordinate their work in order to deliver consistent programmes and benefit from shared information and approaches. At the global level, collaboration enables sector-wide approaches and standards to be developed with the quality and legitimacy required for wide adoption, and ensures they reflect views from all relevant stakeholders. Organisations need to work together to learn from each other's experience, keep cash high on the collective agenda and address the political implications of CTP, including public perceptions of aid.

CaLP enables that collaboration, while also supporting organisations to make their own progress. We do this by bringing organisations together to strengthen capacity, knowledge and commitment for cash transfer programming across the humanitarian sector. The potential of cash cannot be delivered by organisations working alone.

Stakeholder Analysis

Many different stakeholders are involved in increasing the scale and quality of cash transfer programming in humanitarian assistance. This section sets out the most significant dynamics for our work.

The governments of countries hit by humanitarian crises have primary responsibility for delivering and coordinating humanitarian assistance. Recently, there has been a significant increase in their use of cash transfers in major social safety net programmes, for instance supported by the World Bank. There is growing scope for humanitarian assistance to be channeled through these mechanisms. Host governments are playing an increasingly muscular role in coordinating international assistance. In an increasing number of situations, they may take a lead in overall coordination of cash transfer programming.

International humanitarian actors continue to play a significant role in support of government leadership or, in extreme cases, in its absence. Different stakeholders in the international system have overlapping goals and depend on each other to achieve them. Various coordination

mechanisms exist, but the overall ecosystem is not firmly governed. It is over stretched in comparison to needs, reducing the time and capacity for considered improvements. It is influenced by politics at every level, from geo-strategic to inter-agency and intra-community. Organisations naturally defend their own interests. As a result of all this, inefficiencies exist and change can be difficult. Much of the power lies with those who control funding, access and operational decisions.

Supporting change in the sector requires skillful navigation of these real politics. Major donors are increasing the funding available for cash and experimenting with new ways of commissioning cash transfer programming, based on a variety of visions. UN agencies are investing in the capacities to deliver cash transfer programmes at scale. But there is confusion about how cash fits into existing coordination structures and across mandates. INGOs are wrestling with how to position themselves, whether to build capacity to deliver cash or take up specialist roles in areas like targeting, monitoring or capacity building. The Red Cross Movement is gearing up to engage seriously with cash. Local organisations, including NGOs, continue to play a significant role in rapid delivery over the last mile, but struggle to access funds and influence decisions.

As the largest aid actors are now embracing cash, billions of dollars are involved. The threats to existing interests are significant, along with tensions between actors and different visions for the future. It is still unclear how much cash will be routed through existing structures, how much consolidation will be created and how much aid will be delivered in new ways. Private sector companies recognise the potential to build on their strengths in financial services and expand markets. Globally, remittances from family members living overseas are five times as much as official international humanitarian assistance⁶. New technologies and approaches may further disintermediate existing actors. The landscape is evolving rapidly.

The most influential actors in the current international aid system include major donors and operational agencies. Their policies and practices will shape the future of cash transfer programming. They are signatories of the Grand Bargain, which includes specific commitments to increase the use of cash programming. As a negotiated agreement that has been formally adopted by states, it has political force and contains inevitable compromises. There is a significant opportunity to work with them, building on this momentum.

CaLP will build constructive relationships across the range of these actors. We will bring actors together to strengthen dialogue and identify practical solutions to collective issues. We will support influential actors to achieve their commitments, while also encouraging them to think broadly and inclusively beyond them. We will ensure a representative range of voices are heard in key debates, in order for cash transfer programming to achieve as much as it can for people in crisis.

Our Identity

CaLP is the global partnership for cash transfer programming in humanitarian assistance. We are a catalyst for accelerating change. We work with individual organisations to help them increase the scale and quality of cash programming. And we bring organisations together to address the most pressing collective issues for cash. Since our founding in 2005, CaLP has been at the forefront of promoting and improving cash transfer programming across the humanitarian sector.

In 2015, CaLP changed from a small consortium to become a broad based membership organisation. CaLP currently has 50 members, united by their commitment to our shared mission. Collectively, the members of CaLP deliver the vast majority of cash transfer programming in humanitarian assistance worldwide. Our members include UN agencies, donors, international NGOs, local NGOs and private sector organisations. We expect to increase our membership in the coming years, to include more international humanitarian actors, national humanitarian organisations and innovators and researchers in humanitarian response. Our Board, Technical Advisory Group and Global Advocacy Cash Network are all drawn from our membership. CaLP does not deliver cash transfer programmes directly.

A small secretariat works with members to achieve the objectives set out below. CaLP has offices in the UK, Geneva and regional offices in West Africa, East Africa, Middle East and the US. We expect to open offices in new regions which will be selected according to demand, the opportunity to advance our mission and practical considerations.

CaLP's Objectives

CaLP brings humanitarian actors together to address the many collective aspects of the global framework for action. This is our unique role and contribution. We also provide some services to individual members, based on best practice from across the sector.

The work of CaLP's secretariat is summarised in four strategic objectives:

- A. Provide specialist capacity building services and advice.
- B. Make the evidence base easily accessible, improve it and apply it through standards and tools.
- C. Provide support to coordinating bodies.
- D. Ensure influential policy processes advance CTP and the global framework for action.

These four objectives describe the contribution that CaLP specifically makes to achieving the global framework for action and its six global objectives.

All our work is connected together across our four objectives, so that each area benefits from the work of the others. We strengthen this coherence through priority technical themes. They have been identified based on gaps in evidence, standards and our capacity. They provide concrete ways to galvanise collaboration and focus resources. They are: multi-sector CTP, CTP and risk, markets, digital payments, social protection and CTP, and operational delivery of CTP.

A. Capacity building: Provide specialist capacity building services and advice.

Targets:

1. Develop a full set of training programmes that (a) cover the key competencies required for quality CTP and (b) are integrated into sector-wide training infrastructure.
2. Make our training programmes easily accessible to people working on humanitarian assistance around the world.
3. Train 50,000 people working on humanitarian assistance around the world.

Key partners: CaLP's members, the Humanitarian Leadership Academy, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP), RedR and other training specialists.

This work directly enables Global Objective #3: “Build sufficient capacity for CTP”. As a result of CaLP’s work, all humanitarian organisations will be able to build their capacity to deliver quality cash transfer programmes, based on the best available knowledge. This is a crucial component of preparing for and delivering an increase in the scale and quality of cash transfer programmes.

B. Knowledge management & research: Make the evidence base easily accessible, improve it and apply it through standards and tools.

Targets:

1. Make the best knowledge on CTP easily accessible and useful to humanitarian actors, for instance through a Resource Hub that is well curated, promoted and used.
2. Create common standards and tools, through collective processes, that humanitarian actors use to manage the quality of CTPs, build institutional capacity and share information about cash programming.
3. Significantly strengthen the evidence base for CTP in priority areas for policy and practice, through collective processes, including maintaining an overview of the current evidence base and gaps.

Key partners: CaLP’s members, ELHRA, Sphere, OECD, Development Initiatives and academic research partners.

This work directly enables Global Objectives #2, #4 & #6. CaLP will bring actors together to develop standards and tools that codify best practice, using processes that ensure that the finished products represent a range of views and enjoy a high degree of legitimacy. This is a crucial step for managing quality across the sector. Standards will be integrated with existing approaches. Tools will be designed to support practical decision making (for instance on systematically considering and using cash).

CaLP will provide decision makers and practitioners with powerful summaries of existing knowledge, as well as providing easy access to the key source materials. We will also bring organisations together to identify and fill the most pressing evidence gaps, and to foster and learn from each other’s innovation. We will continue to use the evidence base to support all our work, and promote it across the sector.

All of this will enable the sector as a whole to apply and improve existing knowledge in order to raise the quality of CTPs and generate the greatest humanitarian results from the limited resources available.

C. Coordination: Provide specialist support to coordinating bodies.

Targets:

1. Provide guidance, capacity and support that the majority of national Cash Working Groups use to help them fulfill their roles.
2. Run Regional Cash Working Groups that improve coordination at the regional level (including in Geneva).

Key partners: CaLP’s members, coordinating bodies.

This work directly enables Global Objective #5: “Strengthen coordination”. CaLP will work with others to improve coordination of CTP at the national, regional and global levels. We will provide

practical support and guidance that helps coordinating bodies to achieve more, wherever they are positioned in formal structures. This will meet an urgently felt need, realising more of the benefits of cash transfer programming.

D. Policy: Ensure influential policy processes advance CTP and the global framework for action.

Targets:

We will achieve the following policy goals:

1. Support for CTP is built and maintained in public opinion and major policy and multilateral processes.
2. Humanitarian stakeholders regularly come together to address common issues and follow through on their commitments to increase the scale and quality of CTP.
3. Catalyse the creation of predictable and reliable mechanisms for the strategic coordination of CTP globally.

Key Partners: CaLP's members, donor and host governments, existing coordination bodies, the WHS Secretariat, Development Initiatives and many different policy initiatives and partners, such as the Grand Bargain, Good Humanitarian Donorship and ALNAP.

This work directly enables all six of the global objectives. CaLP will identify, create and act on opportunities to advance all aspects of the global framework for action in significant policy processes. This is necessary in order to keep attention on cash and deliver on commitments.

As described above, we recognise that policy work is associated with political issues across the sector. We will bring influential actors together to identify common ground on the basis of evidence and neutral analysis, and ensure that diverse voices are heard in key debates.

We will influence and advise decision makers on a range of issues, including: increasing funding for CTP (including building support among key stakeholders), ensuring CTP is systematically considered in their policies and procedures, investing in capacity for CTP for themselves and their partners, and improving coordination.

The results of our work will be reflected in the strategies, policies, practices and budgets of humanitarian actors. We will regularly publish authoritative summaries of progress, for instance through a State of the World's Cash report.

Our Approach

Membership & networks

CaLP's members are at the heart of what we do. They will deliver the increase in scale and quality of CTP in humanitarian response. They gain value from being part of our global partnership, both as individual organisations and collectively.

Membership brings benefits and expectations. Members commit to supporting our collective work and actively working to achieve our shared objectives. They dedicate time and expertise to address collective issues. They also support CaLP's team in practical ways, such as through hosting

arrangements and handling funding contracts. CaLP provides benefits to our members. In particular they gain the opportunity to shape the collective work we undertake for the sector. For instance, the Technical Advisory Group oversees the technical direction of CaLP's work.

The secretariat also delivers some services directly to members. All our activities range from convening members to share and address issues through to offering solutions to them at the other. Sometimes we support positions that are not universally supported by all our members. We lead some work, managing it directly from the secretariat. We facilitate some work, in partnership with others. And sometimes we participate in processes run by others. In each case, we make a careful judgement about our role, in dialogue with members, to ensure that we both run appropriate participatory processes and deliver high quality results.

We stay in close communication with our members. We will broaden our membership, to ensure it represents the full breadth of actors in cash transfer programming and actively involves local actors.

We will also continue to nurture our wider networks which are significant assets in our work. These include the wide community of practice of individuals working in cash transfer programming, and our specialist networks across the sector.

Partnership

Wherever possible, we work in partnership with other organisations that support and improve humanitarian assistance. We aim to build CTP into existing initiatives and reforms, in order to make reform more sustainable and easier for organisations to manage. We recognise that many specialist organisations have skills and networks that complement ours. We believe partnerships can increase the value that all organisations create from their limited resources, for the good of all.

Regional presence

CaLP maintains a presence in regional centres for humanitarian work. This enables us to stay directly connected to field realities, even though we cannot afford to maintain a presence at national level. We work with actors in these regions to help them make progress across the global framework for action. We use this experience to guide all our global work, from developing training programmes, tools and standards, to identifying research priorities and informing global policy processes.

Evidence & impartiality

All of CaLP's work is based on the best available evidence and practice about CTP. This is a foundation stone of the quality of our materials and services. It also guides us through policy debates. We provide an impartial platform to debate and resolve contested policy issues. We acknowledge where evidence is inconclusive or not yet generally applicable and work to strengthen it.

Access for local organisations

We strive to engage with local organisations and ensure they can access our services and are actively included in policy initiatives. We will make our training, knowledge and tools available to them, to

the best of our ability, and involve them in shaping coordination and policy issues. We believe that local organisations have a crucial role to play in delivering and shaping humanitarian assistance, as increasingly recognised by the international system. We will promote this in our work.

Prioritisation

The demand for our services is much greater than our capacity to meet it. This is the result of the rapid progress being made in many aspects of CTP. CaLP's secretariat has to prioritise where to focus our resources. We identify activities that have the potential to drive and support the greatest practical progress in achieving the global framework for action. This involves considering factors like: the potential for partnership and having an impact at scale, the significance of technical issues across different contexts, links to related policy processes and levels of political support, our members' views, and views from the South as well as the North. We normally prioritise collective benefit ahead of benefit for individual organisations. We take a demand-led approach, within the priorities outlined in this strategy.

Strengthening the secretariat

In order to achieve the objectives set out above, and respond to the growing demands of our membership, we need to strengthen CaLP's secretariat. CaLP is hosted by a number of our members, in ways that generate mutual value for both parties. For the next phase of CaLP's growth, we need to strengthen CaLP's internal management systems, review our communications, strengthen our monitoring and ensure that our resources and capacities match our ambitions. We will keep CaLP as light and agile as possible, focused on adding value to members rather than creating bureaucracy. We need to ensure our funding model is appropriate for the capacity needed to deliver this strategy, with a focus on longer term strategic grant funding supported by project specific grants. We will also charge fees for some specific services delivered to individual organisations.

Monitoring

Our tools will also enable much improved monitoring across the sector, for instance of the volume and quality of cash transfer programmes, institutional capacity and individual capacity.

We will regularly publish summaries of progress towards the overall global framework for action, as described above. We will regularly monitor our own progress in achieving the targets set out above and publish a short annual report.



The Cash Learning Partnership

info@cashlearning.org

www.cashlearning.org

[@cashlearning](https://www.instagram.com/cashlearning)