

Common Donor Approach for humanitarian cash programming¹

Humanitarian donors recognize the need for improved donor coordination and coherence and to clearly communicate a shared vision for cash. Through the shared principles below, donors aim to improve the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the assistance received by people affected by crises, and to signal the changes needed in cash programmes. The following principles build on commitments made through the Grand Bargain and findings from the February 2018 joint donor mission to Jordan and Lebanon. They set out a shared vision for the use of cash in humanitarian action and will be jointly used to guide funding decisions.

- 1. Donors want to see all cash programmes provided in a way that maximises accountability to people affected by crises, mainstreams protection and upholds the safety, dignity and preferences of beneficiaries, differentiated to meet the specific needs of girls, boys, women and men, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.**
 - a. Donors will support interventions which include effective and inclusive and actionable feedback mechanisms, and in which affected people have meaningful inputs into programme design.
 - b. Donors will support protection and conflict sensitive interventions which do no harm and which, as far as possible, contribute to building social cohesion.

- 2. Donors want to see both effectiveness and efficiency maximized. This means meeting people's most pressing needs in ways that represent the best outcomes.**
 - a. Operational design should be based on what is evidenced to deliver best for affected people. Donors will support interventions which measure clear and shared outcome indicators, are transparent regarding progress against these, and adapt programme design based on these findings. To ensure accountability, donors encourage the use of a limited number of common outcome indicators (yet to be defined).
 - b. Donors will support the testing of new and innovative approaches and programming, and will support scaling-up up those that deliver results. Donors aim to engage in constructive dialogue, challenging partners to work differently, and supporting them to do so.
 - c. Donors will promote cash programmes which build on technological advances and innovations, and which use technology in ways that strengthen interoperability.

- 3. Donors expect to see cash programmes planned on the basis of joint and impartial needs assessments and robust response analysis, where the most appropriate modality is selected based on evidence and an agreed methodology to assess it.**
 - a. Needs assessments should be joint and multi-sectoral. Analysis of market capacities and services to meet humanitarian needs should be routinely integrated into assessments. Clear links should be made between needs assessments, response analysis and response plans. Donors recommend that this analysis informs the selection of the most appropriate type of assistance in the context where cash assistance is being considered. The type of

¹ The following countries have agreed to the Common Donor Approach for humanitarian cash programming: Australia, Canada, Denmark, EU/DG ECHO, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and USA.

assistance should reflect affected people's preferences and adapt to the context and/or needs changing over time.

- b. Donors will advocate that cash is routinely considered, alongside other types of assistance, that it is prioritized over vouchers wherever appropriate and that specifically multi-purpose cash assistance is considered from the outset. Cash will often be complemented by in-kind assistance, vouchers, service provision and technical assistance.

4. Donors recognize the value of the engagement of different actors in cash programming, but want to see a coherent system and common programming approaches.

- a. Donors will promote a common programming approach to reduce fragmentation, with streamlined systems created to avoid duplication and parallel ways of working. A common programming approach should not hinder innovation and retain sufficient space for partners to nuance approaches if/when the needs of populations across a country differ.
- b. Donors will support efforts to maximise harmonization throughout the programme cycle, including around needs assessments, targeting, calculation of transfer values, reporting, and single, shared or interoperable registries. Harmonization throughout the programme cycle should be pursued in recurring multi-purpose cash transfers for basic needs, in sector-specific cash assistance, as well as in one-off transfers such as for winterization.
- c. Donors will encourage humanitarian actors to share relevant data and registry management, while safeguarding data protection and beneficiary ownership of their own data. Greater transparency, with data treated as a common good, should be fostered.
- d. Donors recognise the important contributions of civil society and NGOs in cash programming, implementation and accountability.

5. Donors expect to see cash programmes use, link to or align with local and national mechanisms such as social protection systems, where possible and appropriate.

- a. Donors will prioritise programmes which complement and are well coordinated with national and local systems. Taking localization commitments into account, donors will support cash programmes which strengthen the ability of national actors and national systems to respond to shocks.
- b. Humanitarian donors will engage with their development counterparts from the outset and seek to ensure complementarity between humanitarian cash programming and predictable, long term funding for safety net approaches.
- c. In situations of conflict and protracted crises, where national systems are not yet developed, donors support building on learning from shock-responsive social protection systems to strengthen humanitarian cash programming.
- d. Donors will carefully consider emerging evidence on linking humanitarian cash transfers, and social protection and ensure this feeds into policy development and funding decisions.

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