

**Terms of Reference  
Cash Working Group – Iraq  
June 2018**

<b>Contents</b>	
<b>Background</b>	2
<b>Objective</b>	3
<b>Participation</b>	4
<b>Responsibilities</b>	4
<b>Operating modalities</b>	5
<b>ANNEX 1: Minimum Commitments for CWG members</b>	6

## Background

In the recent years, humanitarian agencies are increasingly incorporating Cash Based Interventions (hereafter CBIs) within their crisis response programs to deliver multi-sector objectives, and respond to different types of emergencies. In Iraq, CBIs are an appropriate and effective tool to support people affected by the conflict in a way that maintains dignity and choice for beneficiaries while stimulating local economies and markets.

The Cash Working Group (CWG) for Iraq was established in August 2014 as a technical working group within the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) to ensure that Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance interventions in Iraq are coordinated and follow a common rationale and approach. The CWG is actively attended by over 20 members, including NGOs, UN Agencies and Donors. The working group is chaired by UNHCR and co-chaired by Mercy Corps. The CWG reports to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) through the ICCG. The CWG also activated two technical Task Forces<sup>1</sup> that are called on an ad hoc basis to advise the CWG on specific technical matters<sup>2</sup>. The CWG closely coordinates with REACH<sup>3</sup> for the Joint Rapid Assessment of Markets (JRAM) and the Joint Price Monitoring Initiative (JPMI).

## Objective

The overall objective of the CWG for Iraq, as endorsed in these **Terms of Reference**, is to offer a technical platform to promote a coordinated and harmonised implementation of Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) and sectoral cash-based interventions, while enhancing the quality in design and implementation of cash and voucher programmes throughout humanitarian response for Iraq. The work of the CWG rests on the underpinning principle that multi-purpose cash assistance is part of the humanitarian response and aims at supporting the most vulnerable households to meet their basic needs and therefore enhancing their capacities to access rights and services. The CWG is also serving as technical support to sectoral CBIs which cover a variety of programs, including vouchers, unconditional and conditional CBIs.

The specific activities of the Cash Working Group are:

1. **Advocate for and support the development of shared positions and policies on CBIs within the humanitarian planning**

Based on analysis of data and implementation of programs, develop shared positions and policies related to cash and voucher transfer programming; formulate strategy and defense of the multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) and develop MPCA chapter in the HRP; support development of a cash based response strategy within the HRP and contingency plans; lead the CWG in humanitarian pooled fund processes and in CERF applications.

2. **Ensure coordination of MPCA programs**

Consolidate, harmonize and promote the use of most appropriate and efficient cash and voucher delivery mechanisms through coordination, information sharing and dissemination; coordinate Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) across Iraq, including representation at the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) and support to sub-national Cash Working Groups<sup>4</sup>, where needed. Establish standards for information management, including 3/4Ws, Activity Info, post distribution monitoring, and regular CWG products (maps, dashboards,

<sup>1</sup> The Targeting and Vulnerability Task Force (TVTF) and the Market and Market Monitoring Task Force (MMTF)

<sup>2</sup> Such as the amount of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB), the update of technical tools for market assessments and Monitoring of Prices, the review of household assessment tools and vulnerability criteria for eligibility for MPCA.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.reach-initiative.org/tag/iraq>

<sup>4</sup> As of May 2018, two SN CWG are active in Baghdad and Kirkuk. Discussions on the activation of a SN CWG for Ninewa are ongoing.

etc.); as appropriate, engage in data management to support coordination of activities and avoid duplications; support in data analysis to assess impact of CBIs in Iraq.

3. **Ensure harmonization of standards and practices**

Establish standards and common approaches to ensure effective and complementary approaches in cash and voucher transfer programming; support the development and adoption of common tools for assessment, targeting and post-distribution monitoring; ensure cohesion and compliance with HRP strategic priorities. Support clusters/sectors in selecting, designing and utilizing appropriate cash/voucher options for response to populations affected by conflict (displaced, returnees, host communities, etc.); develop and update guidance products for cash actors on MPCA, based on current experience and best practice.

4. **Promote the inclusion and capacity building of new partners in the implementation of MPCA and cash based programming with a specific focus on national NGOs**

Support capacity building initiatives for new partners and national NGOs on MPCA strategic objectives, Activity Info Reporting, endorsed CWG tools. Liaise with REACH to support capacity building on JRAM and JPMI.

5. **Promote linkages and coordination with government social protection mechanisms**

Pursue linkages between cash-based responses in humanitarian programming and national social safety nets, specifically by establishing a technical dialogue with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

## Participation

UN Agencies, NGOs and donors active or interested in the area of cash and voucher programming are invited to participate in the Cash Working Group.

The CWG is formed by Chair and Co-Chair, members, participants and observers. Each partner can define its own status with the CWG depending on interest, capacity and level of engagement in the CWG.

## Responsibilities

### Chair and co-chair

The chair and co-chair are the key focal points for the CWG. They are responsible for facilitating the working group and encourage wide participation from humanitarian actors. Key tasks include:

- Ensuring the CWG meetings are relevant and add value to humanitarian CBIs in Iraq;
- Establishing dialogue with authorities on cash for delivery of humanitarian assistance;
- Formally represent the CWG in the ICCG, HRP and humanitarian pooled fund processes;
- Provide active support to sub-national Cash Working Groups<sup>5</sup>;
- Regular updates of the Iraq CWG online portal ([www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/cash-working-group](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/iraq/cash-working-group)), including:
  - o Sharing of lessons learned and best practice of past and ongoing CBIs in Iraq; relevant research/assessments on CBIs; 3/4Ws, Minimum Expenditure Basket, maps and other CWG products; updated contact details for Chair and Co-Chair; meeting minutes; planned training activities; any other information pertinent to the humanitarian community.
- Support working group members to explore key thematic areas related to CBIs in Iraq;
- Support the humanitarian community in harmonization of methods and tools (assessments, targeting, market, price tracking, post-distribution monitoring, MEB).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid p. 2

### **Members**

Members of the CWG are to provide technical support and guidance to other participants and humanitarian actors, where possible and applicable and actively contribute to the development of a sectoral strategy for Multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). This can include, but is not limited to, recommendations on modalities and cash amounts, targeting and vulnerability approaches, development of technical tools. Members commit to appoint a focal point and a back-up to attend the CWG meetings and technical groups. Members commit to apply the recommendations of the CWG and follow the agreed upon recommendations. Partners agree to become members by accepting the Minimum Commitments for CWG Members (*Annex 1, page 4*).

### **Participants**

Participants to the CWG are agencies and NGOs interested in cash based intervention programs who wish to contribute to the discussions of the CWG. Agencies implementing or willing to implement sectoral CBIs, other than MPCA, are welcome as participants to the CWG and are encouraged to share information, best practices, lessons learned to promote and strengthen linkages and coordination between MPCA and sectoral cash programs.

### **Observers**

Observers of the CWG are welcome to participate to the discussions to the degree they deem appropriate. The CWG remains committed to share information, tools and include in capacity building initiative observers with the aim to enhance coordination and harmonization of approaches.

### **Operating modalities**

The Cash Working Group is chaired by UNHCR and co-chaired by Mercy Corps.

- There is no limit on the number of members, participants and observers in the CWG – all organizations currently implementing or planning to implement CBIs in Iraq are encouraged to participate;
- The CWG meetings will take place monthly on the first Tuesday of the month from 09:30 to 11:30 in Mercy Corps office in Erbil; should the date of the meeting change due to exceptional circumstances, the CWG coordinators will ensure partners are informed in advance.
- Decision-making is based on agreement among the majority of CWG members;
- An agenda for the CWG meeting as well as the previous meeting minutes will be shared on the Sunday prior to the meeting;
- Based on needs and interest, training activities will be organized by the CWG.

## **Annex 1: Minimum Commitments for CWG members**

### **CWG MEMBERS**

#### **MINIMUM COMMITMENTS**

Partners implementing Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance are encouraged to become active members of the CWG. Partners who desire to become members of the CWG are expected to have solid technical expertise in Cash Based Programming, including Multi-Purpose Cash assistance (MPCA) and capacity to support and contribute to technical task forces reporting to the Cash Working Group.

Partners interested in becoming a CWG member commit to

#### **HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES**

- i. Ensure that Cash Based Intervention Programs include check and balances to ensure compliance with humanitarian principles, the Principles of Partnership<sup>6</sup>, and internationally recognized programme standards, including the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (PSEA).
- ii. Report to the CWG undue interferences in the implementation of their activities.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

- iii. Include in Cash Based Intervention Programs internal mechanisms promoting accountability to affected people, including feedback and complaint mechanisms.
- iv. Participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, including providing feedback to complaints channeled through the IDP Call Center;

#### **PROTECTION MAINSTREAMING**

- v. Mainstream protection in programme delivery (including respect for principles of non-discrimination, do no harm and confidentiality).
- vi. Mainstream key programmatic cross-cutting issues (including age, gender, environment and HIV/AIDS).

#### **COORDINATION**

- vii. Contribute to the CWG agenda and actively participate in CWG meetings;
- viii. Proactively share information on on-going and planned activities (3Ws, Sit Rep, Activity Info, JRAM, JPMI, etc.), including assessments and analysis;
- ix. Work cooperatively with other cluster partners to ensure an optimal and strategic use of available resources, and share information on organizational resources.
- x. Operate in an inclusive manner and involve other partners whenever possible in surveys and assessments;
- xi. Share with the CWG analysis on trends, impact and monitoring findings related to implementation of CBI programs;
- xii. Respond within 48 hours to queries on duplication;
- xiii. Apply CWG agreed standards, tools and guidelines;

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<sup>6</sup> These include the values of equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility, and complementarity. See: [www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org)

- xiv. Take on leadership responsibilities in sub-national working groups as needed, subject to capacity and mandate.

### **TECHNICAL EXPERTISE**

- xv. Contribute to the work of the technical taskforces reporting to the CWG and use their technical knowledge, experience and data analysis to inform recommendations on tools and guidelines for the CWG.
- xvi. Be part of the Strategic Review Team for IHF standard allocations;

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

- xvii. Contribute in defining strategic approaches for cash based interventions throughout humanitarian response for Iraq
- xviii. Contributing to the CWG vision and strategic direction for HRP
- xix. Contribute to the analysis of MPCA data to better inform programming and strategic approaches
- xx. Support the CWG in developing strategic directions and guidance, as well as contribute to the MPCA sector in the HRP and HNO processes.

### **REPORTING**

- xxi. Timely report in AI observing the guidelines set by the CWG and disaggregating data by status, gender;
- xxii. Regularly update the online 4Ws; Report on market assessments conducted and share results with the CWG;
- xxiii. Support the CWG with analysis deriving their own assessments and post-distribution monitoring (PDM);

### **DATA SHARING**

- xxiv. Share with the CWG anonymized assessment and PDM data to support the analysis on impact of MPCA as well as technical revision of tools when necessary; the data will be managed by the Information Management Officer in Mercy Corps and used solely for sector analysis with prior consent and agreement by all CWG members.
- xxv. Conclude data sharing agreement with other CWG members of other partners implementing Cash Based Interventions (CBIs) in order to enhance coordination and avoid duplication in the response.

### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

- xxvi. Support, subject to capacity and resources, capacity building initiatives initiated by the CWG to promote harmonization of tools and approaches in the implementation of CBIs and access to technical knowledge for national NGOs (NNGOs)