

Terms of reference

Humanitarian and Resilience Programme (HARP) Facility – STTA – Cash Transfer Programmes Review in Kachin/Northern Shan and Rakhine States

Background and context

The HARP-Facility is the principal pillar of the UK's Humanitarian assistance in Myanmar. Launched in 2016, the Facility acts as both a grant funding mechanism and a knowledge platform for the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the wider humanitarian community. The humanitarian context in Myanmar can be characterised as a complex protracted crisis, where humanitarian access is often constrained due to geographical inaccessibility, safety and security issues, restrictions imposed by authorities and, since March 2020, restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Coup on February 1st of this year has further increased the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar and created an increasingly difficult operating context for humanitarian actors.

In HARP-F's role as a funding mechanism, the HARP Facility is responsible for distributing and managing £73 million in grants to organisations meeting the needs of people affected by conflict and natural disasters in Myanmar. The HARP Facility has provided humanitarian assistance across 8 sectors through 54 local and international NGOs in Rakhine, Kachin, Northern Shan, Chin, South East Myanmar and the Thai border area. As a knowledge platform, the HARP Facility provides technical and capacity development support to local and international humanitarian organisations, provides research and contextual analyses to support better understanding of the humanitarian context in Myanmar, and promotes learning on effective humanitarian response through generation of evidence from its grant portfolio.

Cash and Voucher Assistance Supported by HARP-F

This review will build on a cash and voucher assistance strategy developed by HARP-F in 2017 and a 2018 geographic review of potential for cash programming conducted in Kachin and Northern Shan states. The methodology for this review will be consistent with the former review, albeit adapted to the current context.

The HARP-F approach to CVA reflects and delivers FCDO's policy ambitions as part of the Grand Bargain to increase its global investment in cash assistance in humanitarian contexts. Major considerations in the Myanmar context include;

- An approach of *"If not cash – why not cash?"*;
- *"If cash, why not cash via digital delivery modalities?"*
- Significantly reinforcing preparedness for cash through capacity-enhancing and "accompanying" national and local partners;
- Supporting the Cash Working Group (CWG) and coordination infrastructure at national and local levels.

The HARP-F has taken a flexible approach to increase CVA, implementing where appropriate and taking careful note of potential protection issues and market capacities. Mixed cash/asset transfer programmes have been considered in some locations, as has phased programming, which transitioned into increasing levels of CVA over time. HARP-F has also supported the transition towards more efficient and effective delivery modalities, where feasible and appropriate, such as electronic vouchers and mobile money.

Evaluation objectives and target audience

Purpose

To undertake a 4-6 week desk-top review of previous, existing and planned Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) in Kachin/Northern Shan and Rakhine States to help guide and inform the donors and humanitarian actors about the implementation of CVA programs and make recommendations for CVA programming in response to the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar.

A major priority of this review is to closely examine the available evidence on the challenges and opportunities of CVA humanitarian programmes. While much of the research will be derived from reviewing (public as well as non-public) project and programme level documentation, it will be important to place the findings within an overview of the contextual realities post the events of 1 February. Furthermore, despite the fluidity of the current macro-economic and political situation in Myanmar, the review will attempt to be forward-thinking to guide and direct CVA implementation through a systemic approach of inter-organisational cooperation and coordination.

Scope

The scope of work for this assignment requires independently undertaking a short-term, desk-based, study of CVA in Kachin/Northern Shan and Rakhine States. It will consider present and planned CVA activities across local, national and international actors, as well as historical CVA experiences where relevant, and as far as documentation and reporting exists. This evidence will be reviewed and key findings considered, considering inter-agency cooperation and the coordination environment in the specific context of Kachin/Northern Shan and Rakhine States. Links and relationships with non-humanitarian actors will also be important to highlight and consider as appropriate and relevant.

Objective of the Review

The objective of the Review is to examine a set of key issues which appear to restrict a wider-spread and effective use of CVA. Overall, an understanding is needed of the depth and breadth of evidence required for the humanitarian actors to make more informed strategic and program-level decisions for CVA, particularly in the current challenging operational environment.

The Review should reflect on several key issues, which are not limited to, but should include aspects of:

- Context and Current state of CVA
 - An analysis of different cash and voucher transfer modalities utilized by implementing partners. Including what has worked well and what has not worked well, and comparing and contrasting the implementation of the different cash and voucher modalities being used.
 - The review should also address the impact of the events of 1 February on CVA implementation and different modalities, including the various challenges and cost implications.
 - Identification of the current actors operating in the CVA space and how inter-agency coordination and cooperation of CVA in humanitarian and other domains are working.
 - Examination of what helped to shift the attitudes and preference to implement through CVA, especially of local partners.
 - Analysis of market capacities to implement CVA in areas administered both by the de facto authorities and other organisations.
 - How are organizations are establishing and adapting their transfer values
- Cross Cutting Themes – Gender and Protection
 - Strategic and programme level approaches to mitigate or prevent protection and gender concerns related to CVA.
 - How are organisations ensuring accountability to affected populations when implementing CVA?
- Stakeholder Mapping
 - Analysis of the key stakeholders including (including state and non-state actors, financial service providers, and private sector)

- Adjusting to Current Context and Opportunities
 - Current capacities of communities and CSOs to deliver CVA, particularly in access constrained environments. How to adopt the localization of CVA in Myanmar.
 - Options for deployment of CVA rapid response mechanisms and recommendations for more coordinated and aligned programming.
 - What are the possible linkages with social protection and early recovery CVA programs.
 - Recommendations on the opportunities to deploy different transfer modalities (vouchers and cash) including digital cash and voucher transfers.
 - Analysis on overcoming the cash liquidity issues to preserve CVA programs.

Approach and Methodology

Given travel restrictions and access constraints, the evaluation can be conducted remotely using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods proposed by the evaluator. However, evaluators able to propose a national team who are able to access some or all of the operational areas concerned will have an advantage.

At a minimum, it is expected that the evaluation team will:

- Together with HARP-F and others (such as the Cash Working Group) identify where key relevant (public and non-public) information is held and draft a plan to obtain known documentation and where to enquire to open any possible additional lines of (yet unknown) evidence;
- Engage with a wide range of international, national and local agencies involved in CVA work in Kachin/Northern Shan and Rakhine States (this should include HARP-F implementing partners) as well as with CWG and other actors and contacts, to obtain and compile a comprehensive as possible set of relevant documents. These should include publicly available and non-public/internal documents, which can be shared based on confidentiality if required. Documents covering current planning and programmes will be required as well as any relevant historical documents dating no further than some five years;
- Engage with priority CVA actors to clarify details and update evidence and information as necessary. Conduct informal interviews with key actors to complement the information available in documents;
- Review and analyse all the compiled evidence and information obtained and follow up with agencies and other actor where further details is needed;
- Draft two reviews, one for Kachin/Northern Shan and the other for Rakhine State. The length should be no more than 20 pages (plus annexes), and include an executive summary, conclusion, and recommendations.
- Share draft review with HARP-F and meet to discuss draft Review and consider feedback from the HARP-F team
- Finalise and submit Review.

Timeline and deliverables

The consultancy is expected to start as soon as possible and a maximum of 30 working days (not necessarily successive) is budgeted for this Review, including responding to feedback from HARP-F. Any additional days would need to be agreed with HARP-F in advance. A rough outline of the anticipated timeline is presented below together with the expected deliverables:

Inception phase (5 days). Inception report should contain:

- Desk review of programme documentation and existing data
- Propose data collection methods and data sources to be used for addressing each evaluation question.
- Detailed work-plan developed by consultant and agreed on with HARP-F

DELIVERABLE 1: Submission of Inception Report for approval of HARP-F.

Reporting and analysis phase (25 days).

- Implement independent data collection
- The final report should:
 - Provide a comprehensive analysis of compiled data (maximum 20 pages plus annexes)
 - Be circulated to HARP-F for review and comment before finalisation
 - Incorporate feedback from HARP-F staff as relevant

DELIVERABLE 2: Submission of two draft report for review

DELIVERABLE 3: Submission of two final report and annexes (with HARP-F signoff). The team lead may be asked to participate in a workshop/event at the end of the assignment, to present and discuss the results.

Research team composition and required competencies

- Proven experience conducting similar studies and demonstrated expertise research methods
- In-depth understanding and experience in humanitarian programming and cash aid in the context of providing humanitarian aid in a protected crisis.
- Familiarity with the Myanmar humanitarian context and ability to communicate cross-culturally, Myanmar national team members an advantage.
- Ability to synthesize and present findings in an engaging and accessible manner
- Excellent report writing skills in English

Budget and Payment

Bids shall include budgets that are based on the scope of work and proposed objectives. The agreed sum shall cover all fees and costs incurred in conducting the consultancy tasks.

Payment will be made in two instalments: - 40 per cent upon completion of the inception period, - 60 per cent upon submission and approval of the finalised consultancy outputs

Proposal Submission

Application deadline: Close of business 1st August 2021 (Yangon time).

Bids must include the following:

- a) Cover letter: stating candidate/team skills and experience suitable for the consultancy (max 2 page)
- b) Outline of proposed approach, proposed timeframe, basic work plan and budget (max 5 pages- longer submissions may not be read).
- c) CVs of proposed individual(s) and sample of similar assessments/research carried out previously (abbreviated work is adequate, though we may ask for additional text if submission is insufficient to assess quality of work performed).

Bids and queries can be sent to: evaluations@harpfacility.org using the subject line: Study Reviewing the Current State of Protection in Humanitarian Assistance and HARP-F's Role in the Sector