



DISASTERS
EMERGENCY
COMMITTEE

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International
Development

Multipurpose Cash Assistance in Ukraine

How do DEC Member Agencies operate the sustainability and shock-responsiveness of multipurpose cash assistance in Ukraine?

March 2023

BACKGROUND

This research was prepared for the Disasters Emergency Committee by a consultancy team of four graduate students from the Department of International Development at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The views expressed herein are solely the authors' and do not reflect the official stance of either institution.

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ABBREVIATIONS

C4P	Cash for Protection
CALP	Cash Learning Partnership Network
CCD	Collaborative Cash Delivery Network
CWG	Cash Working Group
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
GTS	Ground Truth Solutions
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KI	Key Informant
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
MPCA	Multipurpose Cash Assistance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
R2P	Right to Protection (Ukrainian NGO)
sclr	Survivor and Community-led Response
SPS	Social Protection Systems/Schemes (in reference to the Ukrainian government)
STAAR	The Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice, and Resources Facility
UN	United Nations

DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise stated, this report draws on definitions provided by the CALP glossary.¹

Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA). Unrestricted money transfers intended to cover the basic needs of a household, either in whole or in part.

Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB). Monetary threshold representing the basic needs and services required by a household, and readily accessible in local markets.

Cash Working Group (CWG). A coordinating body facilitating the administration of multipurpose cash assistance across actors involved in a humanitarian response.

Cash for Protection (C4P). The use of CVA to address specific protection-related needs of a household (UNHCR, 2020).

Cash for Shelter. The provision of cash to meet shelter needs (CRS, 2016).

Group Cash Transfers. Cash transfers to a group within an affected population to implement projects that benefit a subset or the community at large.

Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA). The use of cash transfers and/or vouchers to provide recipients with basic goods and services in the context of a humanitarian response.

¹First established in 2011, and regularly updated, the CALP glossary provides a harmonised list of definitions for terms relating to CVA. <https://group-cash-transfer.calpnetwork.org/resources/glossary-of-terms/>

In-kind Assistance. *De facto*-restricted assistance, provided directly to those in need, in the form of physical goods (e.g. food, hygiene products, clothing, winterisation items), or services (e.g. legal assistance).

Survivor and community-led response (sclr). A humanitarian emergency response approach designed to support locally based groups with the means to design and implement their own projects through microgrants (L2GP, *n.d.*).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The humanitarian response following the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, triggered the fastest and largest scale-up of cash programming in humanitarian history. **Humanitarian actors transferred over US\$1.2 billion in the form of multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to approximately 6 million people within the first year of the response (CWG, 2023).** Reflecting the growing popularity of cash, all DEC Member Agencies operating in Ukraine have used MPCA at some point since the launch of the Secretariat's Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal on March 3, 2022. The speed and size of the scale-up suggest that a meaningful reflection on the strengths and shortcomings of the Ukraine humanitarian response starts with MPCA. While extensive international guidelines exist for cash-based interventions, these should be adapted to reflect the existence of a functioning central government and social protection system (SPS).

This report examines thirteen DEC Member Agencies' implementation of MPCA and other cash-based modalities since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine in February 2022. Findings centre on interviews with ten of thirteen implementing agencies. As Member Agencies enter the second year of the response, they can critically reflect on the role MPCA and cash assistance more broadly can and should play within a complex emergency. How Member Agencies understand 'sustainability' and 'shock-responsiveness' in the context of cash assistance will inform their approach as the conflict continues, needs evolve, and agencies grapple with the reality of providing assistance designed for the short-term alleviation of needs just the short-term design of emergency relief for longer-term needs.

How do DEC Member Agencies understand the sustainability and shock-responsiveness of multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) in Ukraine?

The report develops an answer through 18 semi-structured interviews conducted with cash experts, humanitarian practitioners, and programme managers. The findings reveal patterns across Member Agencies' understanding of sustainability and shock-responsiveness in the context of MPCA.

In many cases, Member Agencies did not innately associate "sustainability" and "shock-responsiveness" with MPCA or cash-based intervention at large. The report identifies four recurrent focuses that serve as building blocks for sustainability and shock-responsiveness.

- 1) Accountability;**
- 2) Coordination;**
- 3) Localisation;**
- 4) Inclusivity.**

The report explores each key theme through:

- i) Sector-Wide Approaches – *What "conventional wisdom" exists?*
- ii) Member Agencies' Approaches – *What are Member Agencies already doing?*
- iii) Blind Spots – *What are the main challenges with current approaches?*
- iv) Points of Promise – *What are existing or emerging efforts to improve these approaches?*

The thematic organisation reflects a logical flow for building sustainability and shock-responsiveness in MPCA and cash assistance at large. Inclusivity, for instance, not explicitly defined within the cash assistance literature but is both a byproduct and benchmark for effective accountability, coordination, and localisation. These focuses often overlap. Coordination and localisation, for instance, both involve coordinating bodies being more structurally equipped to *include* local/national actors (local and national actors) in positions of leadership. This helps Member Agencies deepen the *accountability* of their programming to local needs rather than just checking off international guidelines.

Across focus areas, many interviewees emphasised that the flexibility of DEC funding allowed them to adjust programming to reflect changes in needs and capacity. Interviewees also appreciated DEC's trust, which allowed agencies to complement MPCA with other forms of cash, provide in-kind assistance where markets were not functioning, and implement community-driven approaches such as sclr. It is worth exploring how to extend this flexibility to local and national actors.

Key challenges overwhelmingly concentrated on how to include local and national actors more fully in not only the implementation but the design of cash-assistance. Member Agencies concentrated on building pathways for capacity *exchange*, sharing technical expertise with local partners who, in turn, share their knowledge of local contexts and access to vulnerable groups. Member Agencies seek to ensure assistance complements, rather than replaces or excludes, local efforts.

MPCA is not designed to be sustainable. Sustainability applies to the goal, rather than the modality itself. Member Agencies frame the “*sustainability*” of MPCA and cash assistance as laying early groundwork for longer-term recovery and rehabilitation efforts; including through effectively alleviating current needs. Similarly, Member Agencies understand “*shock-responsive*” MPCA as the operational capacity to adjust cash interventions to reflect changes in needs.

Member Agencies overwhelmingly linked both sustainability and shock responsiveness to resilience. Resilience requires partnership with local actors, ultimately the first and last responders in a crisis regardless of its length. *How* MPCA and cash assistance are approached, and *whose* perspectives these approaches reflect, determines the degree to which programming builds resilience for the communities in which they are carried out. Ultimately, MPCA is most sustainable and shock-responsive when treated as an adaptable *part* of an effective response rather than the *whole*. Complementing MPCA with other forms of assistance designed to fill the gaps in the blanket transfer value increases the sustainability of cash assistance by better aligning cash with differences in needs.

The report builds upon blindspots and points of promise to devise actionable recommendations for improving the accountability, coordination, localisation, and inclusivity of cash programming. These target both the DEC Secretariat and Member Agencies in recognition of the distinct roles they play in funding and designing cash programming. Recommendations range from the more technical, such as conducting Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDMs) on a more regular basis, to normative, such as advocating on local and national actors' behalf to international donors. The list is non-conclusive and designed as a launchpoint for further reflection on how to make cash assistance more sustainable and shock-responsive.

Humanitarian emergency relief, designed to be temporary, is one step toward the long-term goal of “living, not surviving to the end of your days.” Although cash assistance is not designed to continue into perpetuity, it helps lay the groundwork for transition to recovery and rehabilitation. Accountability, coordination, and localisation are pillars of an inclusive response, which in turn ensures that as many people as possible play a role not only in surviving until next week, but in building the Ukraine of next month, of next year, and beyond.

DEC Member Agencies Phase II Planed Presence

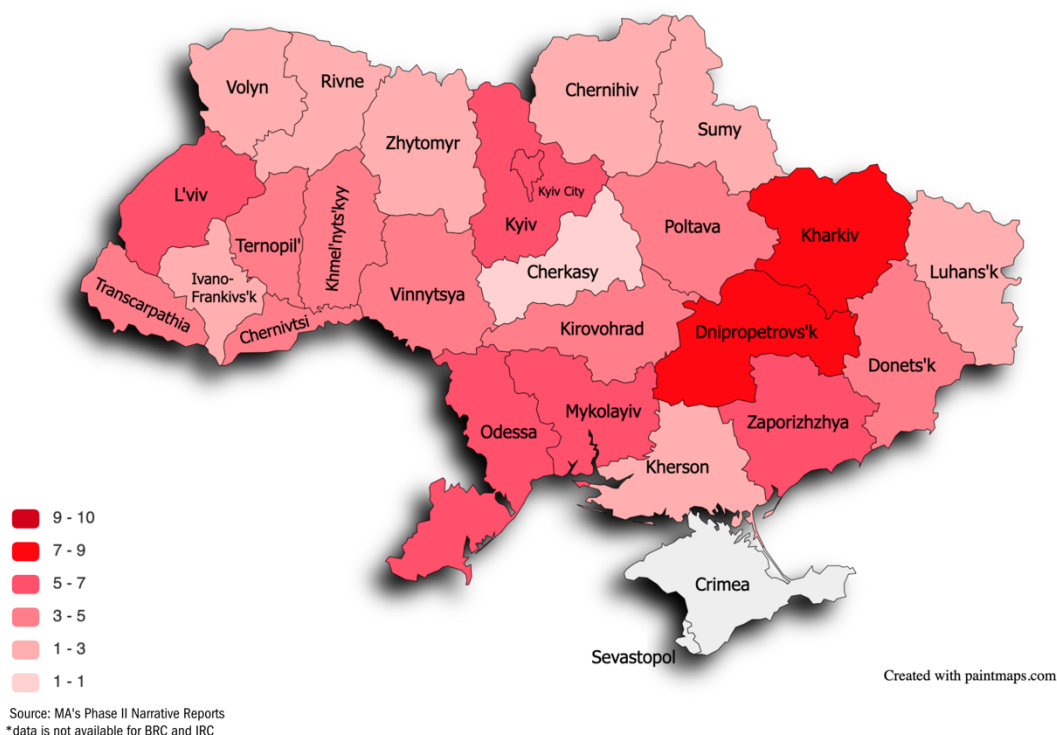


Figure 1. DEC Member Agencies Phase II Planed Presence. Data as received on 31 July, 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

Cash assistance is an increasingly popular modality for humanitarian aid. The early use of cash-based assistance to empower Syrian refugees in Lebanon inspired a reconsideration of how cash can most fully honour the agency of affected communities. DEC, Department for International Development (DFID), Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission, and other major donors encouraged aid agencies to use cash transfers to meet basic needs that crosscut sectors (i.e. for multiple purposes), rather than choosing only one set of needs, such as pre-packaged food or winterisation materials. The emergence of “multipurpose cash assistance” (MPCA) signalled a deepening commitment to flexible, holistic responses. MPCA helps international agencies to harmonise their approaches, avoid duplication, and empower Ukrainians to meet their self-identified needs.

Over a year after its onset, the conflict in Ukraine blurs the lines between short-term emergency relief and longer-term reconstruction efforts. A growing body of literature suggests that MPCA fuels long-term recovery from economically debilitating disasters and conflicts by stimulating local markets (see José et al., 2020). In Ukraine, 50% of all cash assistance falls under the umbrella label of “multipurpose.” However, cash assistance assumes other forms, including Cash for Protection (C4P), Cash for Shelter, and group cash transfers. Given its potential to influence long-term recovery, it is valuable to evaluate how humanitarian aid agencies understand the role cash assistance at-large plays in responding to emergency needs in a protracted crisis.

How can DEC Member Agencies (Member Agencies) ensure that the current cash assistance reaches as many people and is as effective as possible? The murky time horizon of emergency relief raised the opportunity to assess how sustainability and shock-responsiveness, not often defined in terms of a humanitarian response, apply to existing cash assistance. With this focus in mind, the report strives to answer the following question:

How do DEC Member Agencies understand the sustainability and shock-responsiveness of multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) in Ukraine?

The research began with an exclusive focus on MPCA that broadened to encompass other forms, such as C4P, group cash transfers, and Cash for Shelter, embraced by Member Agencies to reflect needs. No modality exists in a vacuum; consequently, a meaningful investigation of MPCA requires simultaneous investigation of how MPCA complements other forms of assistance. The report analyses ten agencies’ use of cash assistance in partnership with Ukrainian local and national actors since the February 2022 invasion.

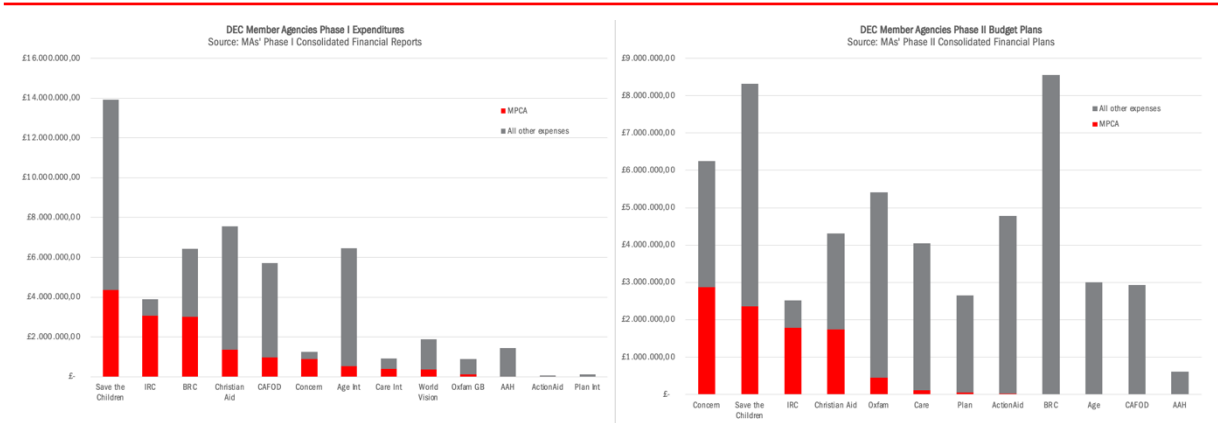


Figure 2. DEC Member Agencies Phase I Expenditures
Figure 3. DEC Member Agencies Phase II Budget Plans

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Desk Analysis

Research blends secondary desk-based research and primary semi-structured interviews. The team conducted a systematic review of academic and practitioner-based literature, perusing over 20 reports published by CALP, CCD, DEC, and STAAR. Peer-reviewed and grey literature is supplemented by findings presented in CALP-convened webinar events that discuss key focus areas and challenges in delivering MPCA. The review also incorporates preliminary findings from Ground Truth Solutions (GTS), an INGO conducting mixed-methods research and focus-group discussions with affected populations to evaluate their perception of humanitarian assistance.

The team then reviewed Member Agencies' narrative and finance reports, which detail funding breakdowns for Phases I and II of programming. These reports revealed the nuts and bolts of Member Agencies' approaches to cash assistance. Each Member Agency filled out DEC templates, which helped standardise analysis. Desk-based research exposed a series of implicit and explicit questions that informed the indicative questions for interviews (Appendix 6).

2.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

The report draws upon 18 60-minute semi-structured interviews conducted in English. The team interviewed a mix of actors (Figure 4). The team received verbal consent in the presence of a witness to transcribe and record each interview and offered each KI the opportunity to remain anonymous or have words paraphrased. In the event an interviewee did not grant permission, team members relied on simultaneous note-taking to minimise gaps in coverage. Reviews of the interview recording verified the accuracy of quotations that appear in this report; interviews that were not recorded are not quoted directly. If permission was granted, participants are referred to by agency, or job title, rather than name to preserve anonymity.

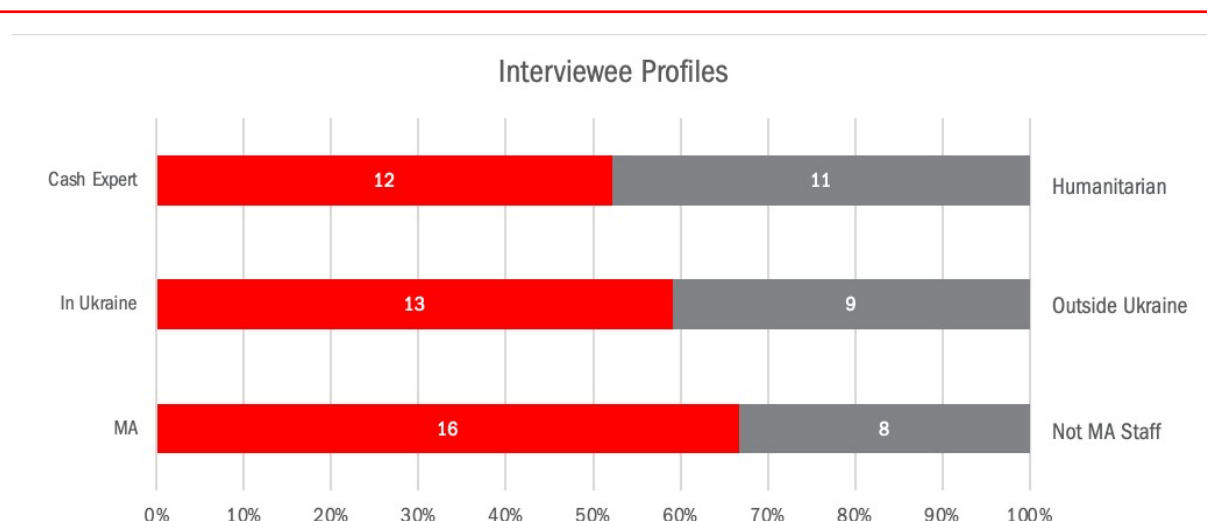


Figure 4. Interviewee Profiles

The research team contacted key in-country and head-office contacts from each Member Agency for interviews. To maximise interviews' potential to plumb not only the policy design but the practice of cash assistance, the team prioritised making contact with in-country staff. However, the unpredictable and high-intensity nature of operating within an active conflict zone limited access to some in-country personnel. The team adapted by interviewing humanitarian programme coordinators based in the U.K. or in neighbouring countries such as Poland. These actors gave wider-lens insight into how cash assistance shaped their Member Agencies' overall presence in Ukraine. Many managers worked previously in Lviv or Kyiv, deepening their awareness of the working conditions of in-country staff.

Interviews concluded with a request for recommendations of colleagues or others in the field who held relevant experiences. This helped cover blindspots in the types of perspectives captured by the initial list of interviewees. For instance, it led to the interview of staff from Right to Protection (R2P), a leading Ukrainian NGO that acts as an implementing partner for some DEC Member Agencies, including HelpAge and World Vision.

3. LIMITATIONS

3.1 Interviewee Profiles

The team was unable to interview staff from three of the thirteen Member Agencies implementing cash assistance in Ukraine; consequently, the report is not fully representative of all operating agencies' understandings of sustainability and shock-responsiveness within the context of their cash assistance. Moreover, the team used other institutions' KI interviews and focus groups to approximate how cash recipients perceived the effectiveness and appropriateness of assistance.

As the central organising body and standard-setter for MPCA in Ukraine, the Cash Working Group (CWG) features prominently in the report. Although the team interviewed many actors with direct experience working with and around CWG, time constraints and access prevented interviews with its convenors. Consequently, the team relied upon both grey literature and interviews to understand how the CWG functions in practice, where it succeeds as a coordinating body, and where it falls short. Furthermore, interviewed staff may not participate across its task forces, limiting their expertise to one facet of how the CWG operates.

Particularly given the attention paid to linking cash assistance to social protection systems (SPS) within the literature, and its centrality to how Member Agencies conceive of sustainability and shock-responsiveness, it would have been valuable to directly interview members of the Ministry of Social Policy (MoSP) or the Ukrainian government at large. The team shared written questions with a Government of Ukraine representative, but did not receive a response.

3.2 Language

All interviews were conducted in English; however, English was not the native language of many interviewees. Some thoughts and observations can be misinterpreted in translation. The majority of interviewees hold decades of experience in the sector and are consequently proficient in its acronyms and buzzwords. Nonetheless, certain words may get lost in translation, and it may mean that key terms the project strives to define, such as “sustainability” and “shock-responsiveness,” carry different implicit associations linked to linguistic differences rather than practice. The research team strove to limit jargon when asking questions and repeated interviewees’ longer responses within their own words to keep communication as clear as possible.

4. RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

The research team includes four London-based graduate students with predominantly Western backgrounds. This may predispose the team to approach analysis from a Western perspective. One team member is from Ukraine, which helps cover some of the blindspots in other team members’ understanding of the emotional and intellectual toll created by working within or being from a country affected by a conflict.

5. KEY FINDINGS

Sustainability and shock-responsiveness are not often understood as intuitive features of a humanitarian response. Throughout interviews, cash coordinators and humanitarian programme managers expressed confusion about the use of this terminology to describe Member Agencies' approach to MPCA and cash assistance at large. Some interviewees likened both MPCA and C4P to unemployment insurance: a temporary fix designed to alleviate immediate suffering. Sustainability and shock-responsiveness may be more relevant to the design of the exit strategy rather than the cash assistance itself. Although Member Agencies did not often use these terms explicitly to describe their cash assistance, interviews revealed that both “sustainability” and “shock-responsiveness” are long-term goals of even short-term assistance. Both concepts are understood in terms of building resilience. Over the course of 18 interviews, four focus areas emerged as building blocks for sustainability and shock-responsiveness: 1) Accountability; 2) Coordination; 3) Localisation; and 4) Inclusivity.

The thematic organisation reflects a logical flow for building sustainability and shock-responsiveness in MPCA and cash assistance at large. Inclusion is less thoroughly operationalised within the cash assistance literature but is a byproduct and benchmark for effective accountability, coordination, and localisation.

KEY THEMES



5.1 Accountability

Sector-Wide Approaches

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee Cash Coordination model (2022) highlights accountability as a key principle. In humanitarian responses, Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) refers to “mechanisms that humanitarian agencies have put in place to ensure that communities are meaningfully and continuously involved in decisions that directly impact their lives” (UNHCR, *n.d.*). AAP attempts to involve affected communities

not only in the implementation but the design of humanitarian response. The collection and incorporation of feedback enhance the shock-responsiveness of humanitarian responses by ensuring programming sensitivity to changing circumstances. As one KI stressed, accountability supports the sustainability “not of the MPCA, but of the goal of the MPCA,” as humanitarian actors “leaving a dent” if their short-term intervention can improve a country’s context and systems in the long term.

Member Agency Approaches

Each agency outlines an organisational accountability framework in their DEC narrative reports. All Member Agencies set up feedback mechanisms for their projects in Ukraine; however, some organisations experienced delays. One Member Agency, for instance, formalised their feedback mechanisms in December 2022. Agencies also conduct PDM surveys, oftentimes on an *adhoc* basis. Agencies such as World Vision, Save the Children, Oxfam, and Plan International work with several national partners and combine feedback mechanisms based on what partners use. These include online feedback forms, hotlines, messenger apps, and in-person surveys.

Member Agencies use social media, communication through social workers, and printed materials to share information with affected populations. In some cases, this has worked well. For example, Save the Children’s Phase I PDM indicated that, while only 50% of their 127 survey respondents knew what the criteria to receive MPCA were, 98% of those named the correct criteria, and 98% “believed the criteria was fair and appropriate to help the most vulnerable people” (on targeting and vulnerabilities, see: 5.4 Inclusivity). OXFAM’s national partner, Women’s Consortium of Ukraine (WCU), found that of the 94% of the 83 respondents to their Phase I PDM felt they had been provided with “full information” regarding cash assistance. In the Phase I PDM published by CAFOD’s partner, 98% of respondents said they had received sufficient information about the programme.

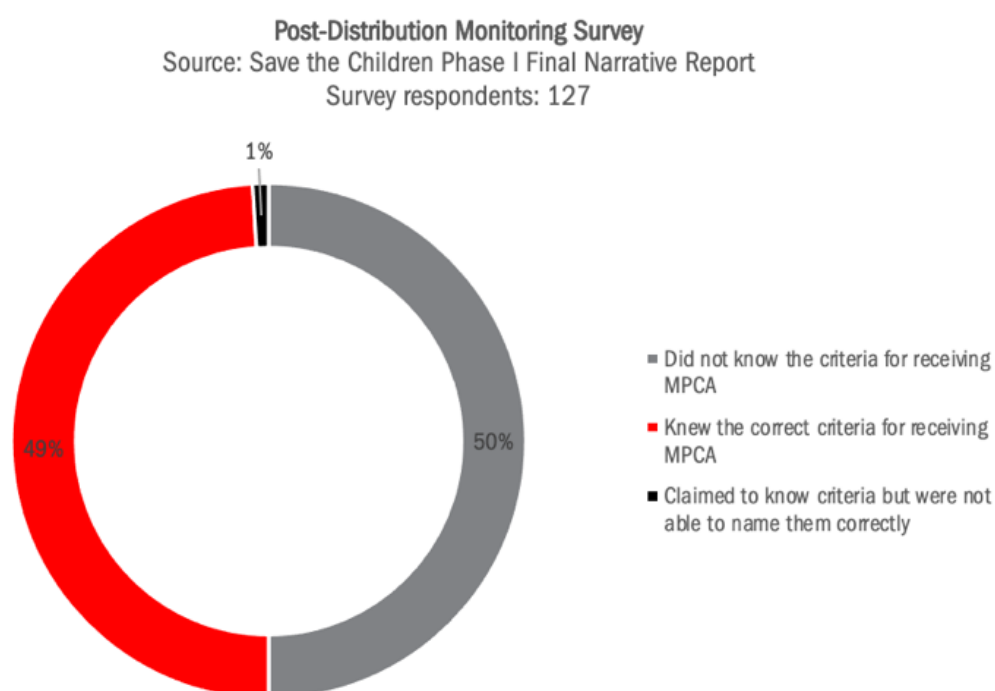


Figure 5. Post-Distribution Monitoring Survey

However, feedback and accountability mechanisms are not yet fully effective across agencies' humanitarian responses. A GTS survey² of over 2,000 people, capturing Ukrainians' perception of humanitarian assistance, found that “three-quarters of people do not know how to ask a question, provide feedback, or make a complaint about aid and services, and, when asked to those aware, only a few (7%) indicated they have done so” (2022, p. 2). This may reveal a gap between organisations' creation of feedback mechanisms and complaints mechanisms and communities' knowledge about them. This limits who feedback mechanisms reach, often in proportion to level of vulnerability. Narrower feedback collection reduces Member Agencies' ability to tailor their cash programmes to communities' diverse needs.

The same survey shows that cash recipients were slightly more likely to say that aid providers should communicate better with communities and volunteers to better target assistance (54%) than those who did not (48%). However, those who received cash were slightly less likely to say that action is needed to prevent and mitigate abuse, corruption, and unfairness during distribution (13%) than those who did not receive cash (19%) [Authors' analysis of GTS' survey results]. Several KIs pointed to unharmonised response mechanisms as further confusing cash recipients. Every partner has their own hotlines, which can confuse cash recipients about which hotline to contact, given the limited available information about which cash-providing actor was directly responsible for their assistance.

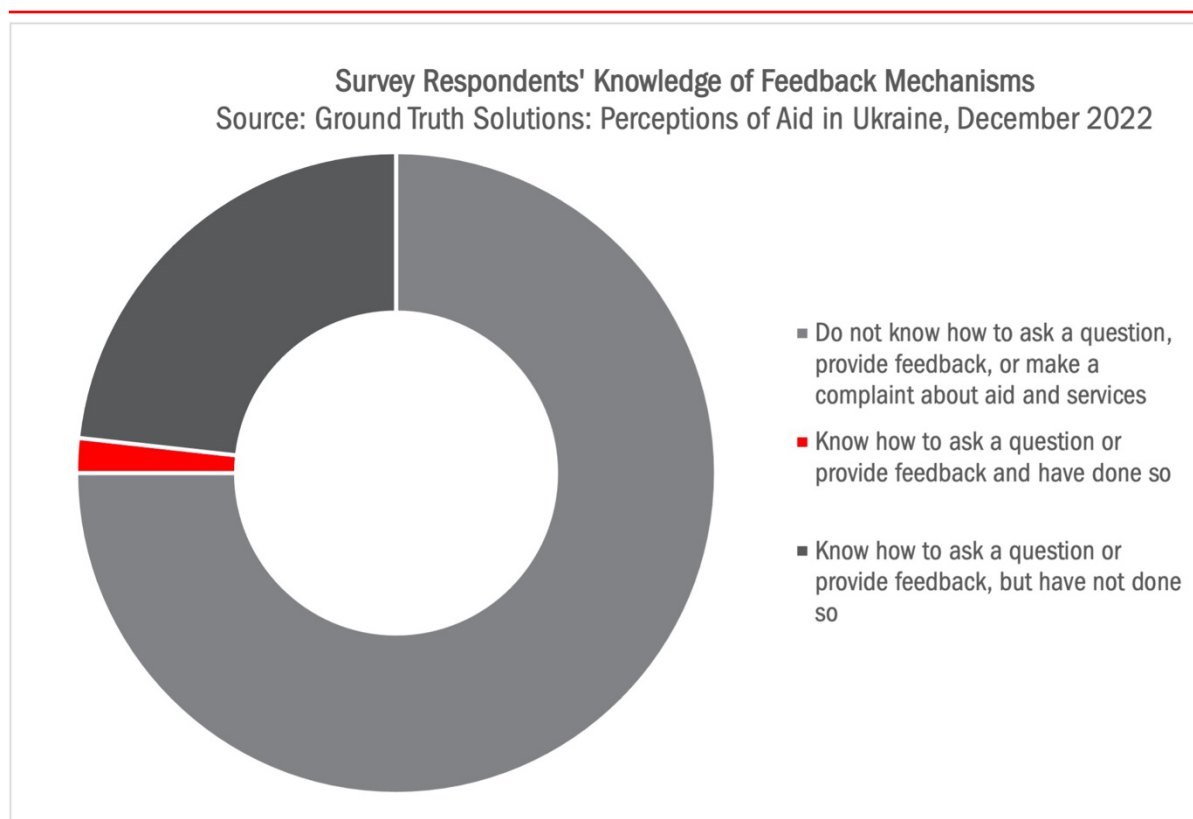


Figure 6. [Ground Truth Solutions](https://group.cash.transfer.groundtruthsolutions.org/projects/a-locally-informed-humanitarian-response-insights-from-ukraine) Survey Respondents' Knowledge of Feedback Mechanisms

²<https://group.cash.transfer.groundtruthsolutions.org/projects/a-locally-informed-humanitarian-response-insights-from-ukraine>

Reliance on digital tools may inadvertently select against cash recipients with limited access or comfort with digital technology (GTS, 2023). Compounding their status as the most under-served groups, the elderly and rural communities were least likely to both know and use feedback mechanisms. Survey data suggests a linkage between low awareness and a low number of complaints and insight provided among the elderly population. 11% of aid recipients between 18-29 years old and 30-44 years old provided feedback, in sharp contrast with the 4% of aid recipients over 60 years old (GTS, 2022, p. 7). In the International Rescue Committee's MPCA PDM report, 92% of 113 respondents said they were aware of feedback mechanisms, and 97% preferred telephone feedback mechanisms. This highlights a demand for the expansion of offline feedback mechanisms. Digital approaches are critical to scaling up assistance; consequently, door-to-door feedback should complement rather than compete with digital approaches.

Blindspots

Gaps in information sharing weaken Member Agencies' accountability to affected populations. Individuals may register, but never be informed whether they are eligible for MPCA or when they might receive it (CALP, 2022). The absence of a uniform method for communicating eligibility increases would-be recipients' vulnerability to phishing scams. Moreover, would-be cash recipients may not always understand how they will receive their money, when, and in what frequencies. They therefore may miss payments. Digital approaches provide one avenue for real-time communication. In Save the Children's Phase I PDM, "the majority (of respondents unsatisfied with the level of communication) expressed that they would have wanted to receive text messages along the process, especially when the transfer was done." Unclear communication can reduce the scale and effectiveness of MPCA.

There is a risk of confusing data collection for accountability. Conventional accountability mechanisms may over-emphasise the collection of sensitive data, reflecting a sector-wide reliance on metrics to prove progress. The global humanitarian lead for Plan International raised the risk of over-reliance on data and 'proven' types of responses stifling innovation, noting that "the more you push for proof, the less you innovate." A humanitarian response manager described the typical amount of data that recipients are asked to share as unjustified if the collected data did not directly inform programming adjustments. However, one KI noted that personal data collection plays a role in de-duplication. This tradeoff creates difficulty determining how much and what personal information to disclose. Agencies need to strike a balance between collecting feedback and respecting cash recipients' right to privacy. This requires balancing accountability to donor requirements with the basic rights and dignity of recipients.

Points of Promise

Member Agencies can invest more heavily in the method that Christian Aid referred to as "horizontal accountability." While other Member Agencies did not explicitly mention it as an approach, publicising complete programme plans and budgets provides local and national actors and cash recipients with clear standards and expectations for the quality of assistance. This reduces reliance on trust alone by building clear incentives for accountability to recipients, rather than exclusively donors, into programme implementation. Sharing information with local partners and communities enables their fuller participation in the design and implementation of appropriate cash interventions

(see: 5.3 Localisation). *Who* designs accountability measures influences their reception. GTS found that those who “received aid from [international organisations] had lower perceptions on their ability to influence how aid is provided than people who mentioned [national and local] aid providers” (2022, p. 6). This may mean that local and national actors’ feedback mechanisms are perceived as more accessible to aid recipients and are consequently more likely to be used.

Member Agencies also safeguard cash recipients’ sensitive data. Christian Aid, for instance, digitally collects the minimum amount of necessary sensitive information to refer people to vulnerable services within its C4P programme. The organisation then deletes the data approximately within a week. They use a summary of the sensitive data for donor reports. When collecting sensitive data, Oxfam informs individuals about its intended use, who has access, the length of retention, and other relevant information.

5.2 Coordination

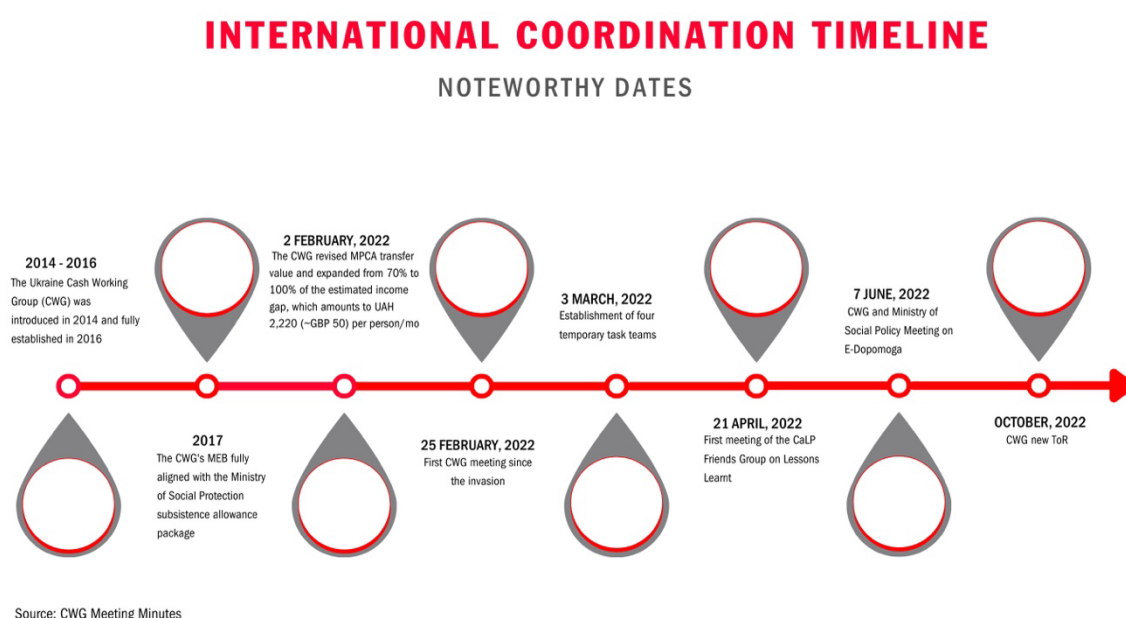


Figure 7. International Coordination Timeline

Sector-Wide Approaches

The Cash Working Group (CWG) is the leading coordination body for MPCA. The CWG includes nine task forces, including Targeting, Delivery Mechanisms, Registration and Deduplication, and Cash and Social Protection. CWGs provide technical support to members, establish best practices, and help coordinate with government-led SPS (IASC, 2022). In an effort to promote the harmonisation and development of MPCA, the CWG also aims to prevent the duplication of assistance.

Member Agency Approaches

CWG standards and guidance featured heavily in the narrative reports and plans of several Member Agencies as a common reference point for harmonising MPCA. The common set of standards informs the coordination of de-duplication. For example, Depaul, an implementing partner of both CAFOD and Plan International, plans to move from in-kind to cash assistance over the course of Phase II and used CWG guidelines to ensure the transition adheres to common standards and complements pre-existing efforts. However, nearly all KIs expressed a desire to update the recommended transfer values to better reflect rising market prices and the variety of needs. An informant from Christian Aid noted:

“the survival expenditure basket assumes that most people had some kind of income and some kind of support structure.”

The ongoing conflict upends this assumption, and thus MPCA recipients' basic needs are often not fully covered. At least four of the thirteen Member Agencies operating in Ukraine provide C4P, Cash for Shelter, or other forms of cash assistance to supplement MPCA. This form of cash assistance is not given in regular thrice-monthly instalments like MPCA but on a one-off basis to meet particularly acute, time-sensitive needs. Examples include refilling a prescription for a neurological disorder or purchasing a back brace. It targets individuals with compounded vulnerabilities, such as disability and old age. These forms of cash assistance fall outside the purview of the CWG. Member Agencies determine the appropriateness of other forms of cash assistance in coordination with their national partners.

Coordination and localisation efforts are often entwined. Member Agency staff and cash experts alike frame coordination with local and national actors as an opportunity for capacity exchange, as INGOs connect national partners to new funding sources and provide technical support to organisations with less experience implementing MPCA. This contributes to sustainable cash response by equipping local partners with the technical know-how and familiarity with international standards to independently provide cash assistance in the future. One KI observed:

“local organisations [...] only see INGOs as supporting, intermediary roles, particularly in coordination with donors. They have been on the ground since the first day of the war.”

Several Member Agencies described the cultivation of partnerships outside CWG to coordinate and support local NGOs. For example, OXFAM explored closer collaboration with CCD to increase local participation in coordination for cash implementation. This increases the sustainability of cash assistance by bringing INGOs into conversations with the local and national actors which, as a long-term presence in Ukraine, are best positioned to adapt emergency relief to the conditions of protracted crisis.

Blindspots

The CWG structure creates challenges for sustainable collaboration between INGOs, donors, and local actors. Professional jargon, specialised technical knowledge, and language barriers were commonly identified as constricting local and national actors' full, confident participation in CWG meetings. The meetings are translated into Ukrainian and several interviewees did not view language as a significant hindrance. However, one KI remained wary of downplaying the significance of language when translating technical vocabulary.

Delays in setting up coordination structures also posed a challenge. CWG meetings began in February and took several additional months to move in person. Although the chaos of the early stages of emergency relief in a conflict zone make some delay inevitable, one KI highlighted how high staff turnover, particularly within INGOs, reduces institutional memory during formative stages of the response. This slows capacity exchange and disrupts learning *through* the crisis. One cash expert acknowledged that coordination is easier to put on paper than practice due to Member Agencies' internal bureaucracy. Organisations lack bandwidth to navigate both internal bureaucracy and coordination with external actors:

"If you only have 10-15% of your time you can devote to coordination due to internal bureaucracy, it is difficult [. . .] If you have six partners and then sub-partners and you're trying to build up cohesion between these groups, there is little energy for external stakeholders."

This limits organisations' ability to invest resources into streamlining coordination with the local and national actors. This may reduce the sustainability of intervention by raising the risks of Member Agencies' coordination efforts developing in parallel to national assistance.

The management of different forms of cash under different working groups and task forces also complicates coordination. The Shelter Cluster oversees Cash for Shelter, whereas the Protection Cluster oversees C4P. This may unintentionally silo cash and complicate Member Agencies' efforts to coordinate across cash interventions. In its Phase II narrative report, Concern acknowledged that "the cross-cutting nature of CVA... means that coordination of assistance modalities, transfer mechanisms, vulnerability criteria, and transfer values are not coordinated across clusters and working groups."

There are few formal coordination and referral mechanisms between DEC Member Agencies. The majority of current inter-agency coordination is *ad-hoc* or based on personal relationships. An informant at HelpAge acknowledged:

"We do have a challenge of coordinating among the DEC Member Agencies. It is a weak coordination mechanism."

Points of Promise

Relationship-building is a natural byproduct of regular contact at working groups and in the coordination of surge responses. A humanitarian manager at Christian Aid described the close relationship between Christian Aid and HelpAge as a partial consequence to their shared use of C4P to supplement the MPCA transfer value. Identifying shared values and preferred approaches creates opportunities for Member Agencies to harmonise their activities, exchange learning, and refer recipients, increasing the scale and context-sensitivity of cash assistance. At least three Member Agencies advocated for the creation of a coordination body explicitly for DEC Member Agencies. The standardisation of coordination between agencies may deepen cash interventions' shock-responsiveness by positioning agencies to complement one another's strengths and solicit rapid feedback on responding to challenges as they arise. This coordination can deepen de-duplication without inadvertently creating new gaps in coverage.

There is growing emphasis on integrating localisation into coordination. In October, the CWG revised its TOR to include a co-chair position "reserved for a national humanitarian actor" (CWG, 2022a, p. 5). Several Member Agencies highlight deepened coordination with local actors as central to a sustainable, shock-responsive cash intervention. The CCD Network provides one promising forum for INGOs to share their technical, cash-specific knowledge with local and national actors. One Member Agency highlighted efforts to deepen its partnership with CCD to better support local and national actors in cash assistance in upcoming months. A more detailed discussion of localised efforts and their implications follow in the subsequent section.

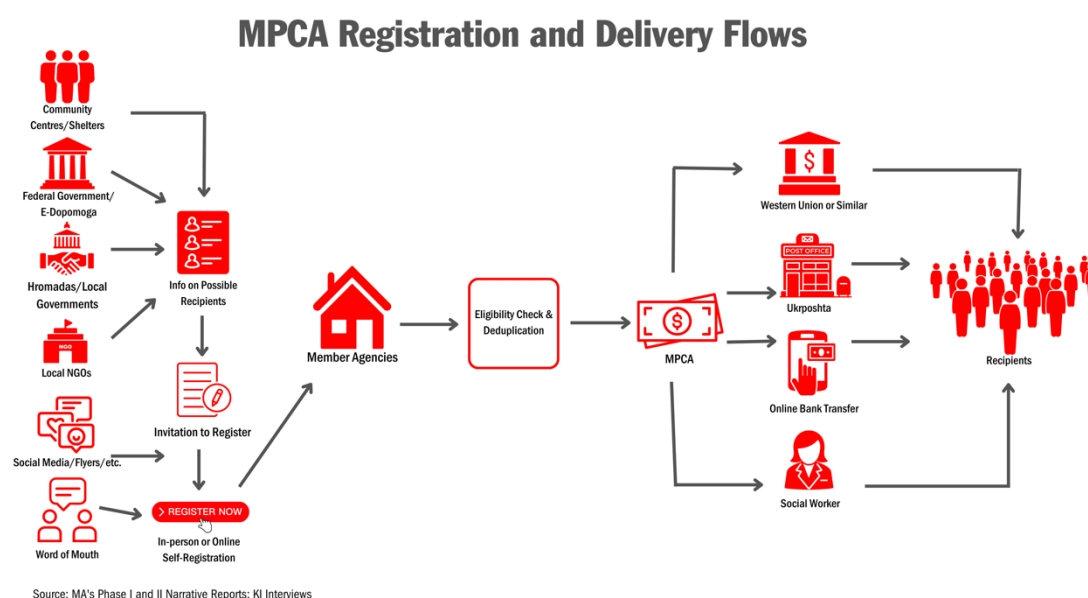


Figure 8. MPCA Registration and Delivery Flows

5.3 Localisation

Sector-Wide Approaches

This report draws on the same IFRC definition of localisation as CALP thematic papers: “increasing international investment and respect for the role of local actors, with the goal of increasing the reach, effectiveness, and accountability of humanitarian action” (IFRC, *n.d.*). The term “localisation” itself is a partial misnomer, ignoring that local actors deliver the majority of humanitarian assistance. The Philanthropy open letter to INGOs³ declared that “almost all humanitarian aid has been provided by 150 local NGOs, church associations and 1,700 newly created volunteer-based CSOs [civil society organisations],” (NNLPD, 2022) many of which, as one localisation advisor stressed, “see themselves as the main actors in the long-term.” The Ukraine humanitarian response can be a watershed development in humanitarian organisations’ efforts to transform “localisation” from buzzword to practice. As interviewees from Depaul Ukraine (Depaul) and CAFOD⁴ noted:

“if you can’t do [localisation] in Ukraine, a well-educated... nation with a functioning government system and strong civil society, where are you going to do it?”

The main question facing Member Agencies is how to best complement local and national actors’ activity and increase access to the funding and technical training that will sustain a long-term, locally-led response.

Member Agency Approaches

Agencies adopt two main approaches in collaborations with local and national actors: leveraging existing capacity and building it up. Member Agencies without an in-country presence prior to February 2022 were more likely to describe their role as a funding “facilitator” in both narrative reports and interviews, whereas Member Agencies with a pre-existing presence more often described their role in terms of “capacity building.”

Member Agencies frame capacity building as training partners in relevant technical skills. HelpAge, for instance, approaches “capacity building” through a community outreach framework. They train traditional caregivers and psychosocial support specialists, or “rehabilitologists,” to provide assistance to the elderly and bed-bound. Concern and HelpAge collaborate with local and national actors in conducting door-to-door registrations. This leverages local and national staff members’ knowledge of Ukrainian and the makeup of the communities they serve. Staff from Concern emphasise that door-to-door registration helps identify needs and gaps in assistance that may not appear in digital registration. Agencies working to build an organisational presence in the country also prioritised recruiting more local staff (Figure 9).

³ <https://philanthropy.com.ua/en/program/view/akso-ne-zaraz-koli>

⁴ Depaul, a charity targeting homelessness in Ukraine since 2007, used DEC and CAFOD funding to scale up operations across several *oblasts* following the Russian invasion.

World Vision: International and Local Staff

April 2022



February 2023



International

Local

Source: WV Phase I and Phase II Narrative Reports

Figure 9. World Vision: International and Local Staff

Other organisations leverage local and national actors' community-based knowledge to identify marginalised people. Community networks help Depaul identify marginalised people who may slip through formal needs assessment. This increases the flexibility of targeting, which in turn deepens response resilience as the conflict takes on new dimensions and new categories of vulnerability emerge. A cash coordinator for Depaul, working with CAFOD in Phase I, stressed that local networks are integral in connecting Depaul to shelters in Kharkiv, which are not otherwise reached by the international system. Depaul-provisioned cash may provide the means to move elsewhere.

Leveraging and strengthening local and national actors' capacity are not mutually exclusive approaches. Most Member Agencies blend the two depending on where they work, who they target, and which relationships they already hold in-country. Many national and local organisations pivoted from advocacy work and community building to humanitarian relief. APH (Alliance for Public Health) a network of LGBTQ rights defenders partnered with Christian Aid, transitioned from advocacy to the direct distribution of assistance. In these cases, Member Agencies share their technical expertise about the specificities of cash and the expectations that international donors hold for funding. Ideally, organisations exchange knowledge of cash and donor requirements with local and national actors' knowledge of community needs and political reality.

Blindspots

It is vital to question who the coordination structures currently serve. A localisation touchpoint noted that Ukrainian organisations, "do not understand the added value of the whole humanitarian coordination structure." The coordination structure was established three months into the humanitarian response and held its meetings online for the first six months of existence. This obstructed full participation by local organisations with

overstretched human resources and unreliable access to the Internet. It took local and national actors three or four months to begin participating regularly in CWG meetings as they adjusted to the demands of providing assistance in conflict. This created an overwhelming, and what one interviewee described as an “intimidating” environment when organisations did join. One KI likened it to “entering the room mid-conversation.” Moreover, local and national actors often lack the financial and operational bandwidth to hire staff dedicated explicitly to coordination, making it difficult to keep up with meetings and become aware of new coordination spaces.

The coordination bodies that set the guidelines and determine “best practice” for the implementation of MPCA can unintentionally sideline national and local organisations. For instance, only two of the five cash consortia in operation include national organisations as co-chairs. The priorities of coordination bodies reflect those of their leadership; consequently, consortia are not primed to address challenges noticed by local and national actors involved in implementation. One KI stressed that, despite international actors forming a majority of CWG actors, few understand the cultural and political idiosyncrasies of working in Ukraine. Participants from INGOs and international donors may hold a detailed understanding of cash as a modality, but a less clear understanding of how to adapt cash assistance to the particularities of Ukraine.

Although Ukrainian translations are often provided, the majority of Community of Practice⁵ meetings generally are held in English. The abundance of technical language, difficult to directly translate to Ukrainian, also raises challenges. Terms such as “deduplication, harmonisation, and minimum expenditure basket” are central to conversations on cash but may unintentionally gate-keep standard-setting from local and national actors without the same technical background. As a KI noted, “with an international actor, local organisations will play the part of the local actor because that is the way in which the international architecture is set up.” This suggests the coordination mechanisms pose a structural obstacle to deeper inclusion of local actors.

Local and national actors often rely upon INGOs for funding because they lack both the institutional memory and technical capacity to fulfil international donors’ extensive due diligence. In a DEC localisation scoping exercise, 90% of surveyed local and national actors identified increased access to funding as most vital in strengthening local humanitarian action (Harrison et al., 2022, p. 12). Although the DEC Secretariat permits the use of due diligence passporting for local and national actors for the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal, its 2022 scoping survey revealed that only three of the thirteen agencies operating in-country use it. This is due to Member Agencies’ internal compliance processes, which does not allow due diligence passporting. Nonetheless, the June 2022 Philanthropy open letter to INGOs highlighted that

“Ukrainian NGOs cannot afford to fill out grant applications in volume, nor multiple, repetitive, lengthy due diligence procedures, by some designated International deadline.”

⁵ The Community of Practice refers to groups of CVA experts that regularly meet, including Shelter and Cash Working Groups and Global Protection Cluster Task Team for Cash for Protection.

Reliance upon DEC Member Agencies as financial intermediaries disadvantages efforts to create equal partnerships. One of the Member Agency interviewees characterised INGOs as “middle men” due to inaccessible donor reporting requirements. The inaccessibility creates structural incentives for a one-way, hierarchical relationship between INGOs and local and national actors, transforming equal partnerships into something that INGOs need to initiate by “giving up” some of their control over funding. This reduces local and national actors’ agency to present their priorities on their own terms. This reliance is not sustainable in the long-term, especially as the purpose of an effective international humanitarian response is to create the conditions for exit.

Points of Promise

Deepened partnerships with local and national actors may allow agencies to pivot from assisting the most easily accessible to the most marginalised, ostracised groups. One humanitarian manager with Christian Aid framed local actors’ role in expanding cash assistance to the hard-to-reach as a question of comfort and representation: “You are more likely to talk with people who look like you.”⁶ For instance, Alliance for Public Health can reach sex workers because sex workers run one of their partner civil society organisations. Interviewees recognised that “communities discriminate” and still conducted needs assessment to identify groups that may be ostracised by informal aid networks. In these cases, Member Agencies’ needs assessment complemented rather than substituted for local and national actors’ work.

New partnership models foreground local and national actors’ knowledge of their communities. Christian Aid, for instance, embraces sclr programming. This casts Christian Aid in a facilitatory role as a response co-creator rather than lead. This approach is well-suited to recognise cash as a means rather than the end of an effective humanitarian response that can consistently, and thus sustainably, meet evolving needs. A humanitarian manager for Christian Aid illustrated the value of sclr through a series of questions that underscored the insufficiency of a single-sector response:

“How do we make sure people are more resilient at the end of a humanitarian response? Not just - are markets functioning? But are they functioning for everybody? Are they providing people with the services they need? Are [people with disabilities] able to reach the markets? Are [they] involved in the co-creation of what that looks like? That really can only be done if you’re a local person because you’re going to be there most of the rest of your life.”

Approaching humanitarian relief through sclr un-siloes cash. It helps ensure that cash assistance builds community resilience. This resilience is a core building block of a shock-responsive, sustainable humanitarian response.

⁶This comment referenced the Edge Effect papers, *The Only Way is Up*, and *We Don’t do a lot for Them Specifically* (see Dwyer, 2021; Edge Effect, 2021).

5.4 Inclusivity

Sector-Wide Approaches

Inclusivity is not a technical but a normative term; consequently, it eludes sector-wide definition. The programmatic priorities necessary for inclusion change according to response context. This report applies the definition developed under the Inclusion Charter. The Inclusion Charter defines inclusivity in humanitarian responses as the delivery of “impartial and accountable humanitarian assistance that responds to vulnerability in all its forms, and reaches the most marginalised people” (AFH, *n.d.*).

Member Agency Approaches

Inclusivity emerged throughout interviews as a key link to sustainability and shock-responsiveness. One KI at a DEC Member Agency framed the “sustainability” of MPCA in terms of meeting the needs of most vulnerable populations. Informants at Plan International emphasised that cash is often preferred to in-kind assistance because it provides recipients with the dignity of choice:

“As a thumb rule, we aren’t telling people how to use this cash. It provides them with freedom, flexibility and dignity.”

This is inclusive because it does not straitjacket which needs qualify as “legitimate.” It recognises affected populations as the ultimate experts of their condition. However, nearly all informants emphasised that the current transfer value for MPCA (UAH 2,220; GBP 50)⁷ is too low to meet needs, particularly for those with compounded vulnerabilities. The Ministry of Social Policy initially set the actual subsistence level, or the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) in 2015 and designed MPCA transfer value to supplement rather than substitute for consistent income (CWG, 2022d). Interviewees across Member Agencies advocate for a substantive increase to reflect lost income, disparity in vulnerability levels, and the emergence of unanticipated needs following the invasion.

Describing a recommendation made by Christian Blind Mission (CBM), one informant from Christian Aid observed:

“If you have HIV, your minimum is higher. You need your meds, better nutrition. If you are disabled in many different ways, your needs might be higher. You might need your food to be delivered. You might not be able to see fully and need someone to help you now that money has changed to rubles.”⁸

⁷22 March 2023 exchange rate.

⁸ This comment referenced a CBM technical brief, *Key Principles and Recommendations for Inclusive Cash and Voucher Assistance in Ukraine*, presented to, but never actioned by the CWG (see Rodogosvsky & Rattray, 2022).

Member Agencies use alternative forms of cash assistance to fill gaps and increase the effectiveness of cash assistance for groups with compounded or unconventional vulnerabilities. C4P helps meet some of the needs missed by the current MPCA transfer value. It can help people meet time-sensitive expenses such as medicine, gas, and rent through one-off cash payments. HelpAge uses C4P to reach bedridden individuals unable to access the community safe spaces at which most cash is delivered. The HelpAge humanitarian programme manager described C4P as “mainstreaming inclusion.”

C4P illustrates how inclusivity and scaling up are not necessarily interchangeable. Christian Aid’s Phase II narrative report described it as “more expensive, with a smaller reach than MPC[A] but the impact is higher, and the sustainability is increased.” Although one-off cash payments are not designed to be sustainable, they fill the blindspots of the one-size-fits-all approach of MPCA, acknowledging that certain groups have a higher baseline level of need. It enables affected populations to participate in and benefit from subsequent reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. Thus, C4P is a viable first step toward sustainable recovery that includes groups otherwise at risk of being left behind.

Group cash transfers also include recipient communities from project design onwards. Implementing partners coordinate with local actors and individuals to put together micro-grants, often within a few thousand U.S. dollars, to address a community-specific need. Projects cited in Christian Aid’s reports include repairing evacuation vehicles, constructing a water tower, or rehabilitating children’s playgrounds. The incorporation of alternative approaches to MPCA enhances the sustainability of cash interventions by funding projects with long-term community-specific benefits.

Group cash transfers and C4P can be applied in tandem; the ChristianAid Phase II narrative report notes that “although sclr allows Christian Aid and partners to engage with communities, C4P allows Christian Aid to meet the needs of those who may not self-organise or benefit from sclr. “The incorporation of alternative approaches to MPCA enhances the sustainability of cash interventions by funding projects with long-term community-specific benefits.

Member Agencies use several referral mechanisms to reach more vulnerable populations. In the implementation of C4P, Christian Aid and HelpAge rely on door-to-door registration to identify candidates and provide appropriate support. Meanwhile, organisations lacking the in-country presence to conduct door-to-door registration with staff, such as OXFAM, coordinate with community partners to reach vulnerable groups.

Many cash coordinators and humanitarian staff on the ground credit digital modalities with a rapid scaling up of cash assistance across Ukraine. Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and digital technologies streamline registration and data storage, while also facilitating the collection of feedback and communication with aid recipients through social media channels such as Telegram (Bryant, 2022; CALP, 2022). Technology also capitalises upon the robust in-country infrastructure and allows for delivery of cash grants through electronic bank transfer, which further reduces the need for on-the-ground coordination.

Blindspots

Despite best efforts to fill gaps left by MPCA with alternative cash modalities, and where necessary, in-kind assistance, KIs spotlighted places where people remain left behind. For

example, Save the Children, one agency working in non-government controlled areas (NGCAs), highlighted that these areas are difficult to work in and largely excluded from cash responses. Restrictions placed by de facto authorities prevent Ukrainian financial institutions and the use of Hryvnia for bank transfers to occur from government controlled areas, making these regions difficult for humanitarian actors to access.

Member Agencies struggle to work with stateless people and individuals without documents, although some organisations provide legal support to help individuals in need of registration documents. Moreover, only 27% of elderly and 29% of rural people included within the GTS Quantitative Perception survey reported that they received cash assistance (2022, p. 3). This reflects ongoing difficulties extending cash assistance beyond those most convenient to reach.

Digital registration systems can be exclusionary when not complemented by offline options. 58.8% of adults in rural areas have little to no digital skills and a majority of these individuals are over the age of 60 (CALP, 2022, p. 5). IDPs may lack access to mobile devices due to looting or other threats while fleeing. This raises challenges that range from registering for cash assistance to giving feedback. The design of digitised systems to standardise reporting and feedback may also blunt the context and recipient-sensitivity of cash assistance. One informant from Concern commented:

“If you're just always doing digital registration, digital transfers, you never really get to engage directly with the beneficiaries of that cash and really understand their circumstances. [...] our registration days also allow us to identify people who may have additional needs, and then we can put the referral mechanisms in place for that.”

This links inclusivity to face-to-face contact. From a scale-oriented perspective, a fully digital approach may appear ideal. From an inclusive perspective, however, blending online and offline approaches enables Member Agencies to discern when additional support is necessary and better identify where a programme looks different on paper than in practice.

Reliance on digital distribution of cash also raises the risk of scams that exploit recipients' limited familiarity with digital technologies. An in-country KI highlighted the growing prevalence of phishing scams that disproportionately impact people already at risk of exclusion, such as the elderly and those with limited digital skills. The use of phishing links has resulted in money being stolen from recipients. On the other hand, individuals wary of these scams may ignore and delete legitimate messages, thus not claiming cash. Although there is not yet extensive data on the occurrence of digital fraud, developing safeguarding mechanisms and campaigns to improve user awareness of common scamming techniques can better protect cash recipients. It also protects the cash recipients' trust in digital distribution systems, which is critical to protecting the perceived legitimacy and appropriateness of cash assistance within affected communities.

Points of Promise

Member Agencies and other actors in the sector continue to innovate new strategies for expanding who designs, implements, and accesses cash assistance. For instance, the European Disability Forum (EDF) introduced activities designed to increase the participation of people with disabilities in the design of cash assistance (EDF, 2022). These activities facilitate direct engagement between organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and the CWG, which may increase advocacy for an increase in transfer value.⁹ Irrespective of any other vulnerability, the odds of an unmet need increases by a factor of 1.7 for individuals with a disability [*Authors' analysis of GTS' survey results*]. People without disabilities are less equipped to anticipate potential obstacles, increasing the risk that programming misses crucial needs. The programme highlights how meaningful inclusion means that affected populations have a stake in both the implementation and design of cash assistance.

DEC Member Agencies can learn from local partners and volunteer networks' use of digital innovation to maximise inclusivity. One network for churches created their own Telegram channel (called Box), so people can arrange distribution 1-on-1 via private channels rather than line up at a public collection booth. This leverages existing community communication networks, rather than constructing a new system from scratch. It also foregrounds community members' agency in driving response.

⁹These initiatives were presented by EDF at a CALP webinar, *Mainstreaming Disability Inclusion into Humanitarian CVA* (see CALP, 2023).

6. CONCLUSION

Although research began with an exclusive focus on MPCA, both narrative reports and interviews revealed C4P, group cash transfers, and even in-kind assistance as core complements. DEC Member Agencies overwhelmingly understood the “sustainability” and “shock-responsiveness” of cash assistance at-large as building resilience.

Cash is not a silver bullet response. MPCA, C4P, and group cash transfers are modalities, not ends. Many interviewees emphasised that the flexibility of DEC funding allowed them to rapidly adjust programming to real-time changes in needs. Moreover, KIs appreciated feeling trusted by the DEC Secretariat to make decisions about which forms of assistance would prove most effective. This created the opportunity for “trickle down trust.” DEC trusted Member Agencies to allocate funding responsibly, which allowed agencies to complement MPCA with other forms of cash, provide in-kind assistance where markets were not functioning, and implement community-driven approaches such as sclr. It is worth exploring how this trust and flexibility, so vital to allowing Member Agencies to work effectively, can be more fully extended to national partners.

Ukraine is unlike many other humanitarian crises. The government continues to function. The government ran a social protection system before the conflict that, although weakened and not able to meet all needs, continues to provide assistance. Several interviewees highlighted the risk of Member Agencies creating a parallel system for cash assistance that is not sustainable. One KI noted, “There will not be billions and billions of pounds in cash in three years’ time. How do you fill the gaps without creating new ones?” Pivoting towards coordination with the government is central to a sustainable, shock-responsive use of cash assistance. This is new for a humanitarian system developed in anticipation of working within places without a strong government presence. Therefore, the architecture itself complicates Member Agencies’ efforts to better coordinate and localise responses.

The lines between emergency relief and development assistance become blurred as crises become protracted. A KI, describing MPCA as context-sensitive emergency relief, stated that “our sustainability will come when war has come to an end.” What happens, however, when fighting has no forecastable “end”? This raises questions about how to transition from humanitarian emergency relief to recovery assistance, and how to initiate and build relationships with the development actors that have the resources and mandate to preside over medium and long-term programming. These challenges fall outside the scope of this report but may drive future investigations.

Humanitarian emergency relief, designed to be temporary, is one step toward the long-term goal of “living, not surviving to the end of your days.” Although cash assistance is not designed to continue into perpetuity, it helps lay the groundwork for transition to recovery and rehabilitation. Accountability, coordination, and localisation are pillars of an inclusive response, which in turn ensures that as many people as possible play a role not only in surviving until next week, but in building the Ukraine of next month, of next year, and beyond.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations reflect the research team's analysis and KIs' suggestions.

7.1 Accountability

For DEC Member Agencies:

1. Expand offline feedback mechanisms for cash programming, including hotlines.
2. Conduct PDMs at regular intervals with larger sample sizes.
3. Publicise programmes' vulnerability criteria using online and offline communication strategies to affected populations and national implementing partners.
4. Ensure recipients of MPCA are aware *inter alia* of application stage, which actor will provide aid, when they can expect to receive it, how to do so, and where they can request assistance or more information.

For DEC Secretariat:

1. Continue increasing emphasis on accountability to recipient communities.

7.2 Coordination

For DEC Member Agencies:

1. Provide technical training and support in cash assistance to local and national actors.
2. Invest in partnerships with local and national actors outside the CWG.
3. Advocate for national implementing partners with international donors.
4. Lobby for set time at the beginning of CWG meetings for local and national actors to present first.

For DEC Secretariat:

1. Encourage peer learning between Member Agencies.

7.3 Localisation

For DEC Member Agencies:

1. Establish micro-grants for local and national actors to offset some of the human and financial resources expended when applying for direct UHF funding.
2. Explore options to expand due diligence passporting to local and national actors.
3. Initiate partnerships with local and national actors involved in development work prior to 2022.

For DEC Secretariat:

1. Expand the localisation section of the narrative report template.
2. Continue developing a locally-led pooled fund and information management platform.

7.4 Inclusivity

For DEC Member Agencies:

1. Complement MPCA with alternative cash modalities that meet specific needs.
2. Pilot sclr-informed projects with national implementing partners.
3. Collaborate and promote leadership of national vulnerability-specific organisations, such as organisations of persons with disabilities.

For DEC Secretariat:

1. Support the effective participation of local and national actors in (new) coordination mechanisms.
2. Initiate a peer-learning process for Member Agencies engaged in sclr approaches.

7.5 General

For DEC Secretariat:

1. Disseminate report findings to DEC Member Agency staff working with cash in Ukraine.
2. Translate this report into Ukrainian to increase findings' accessibility.

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<https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/42554/accountability-to-affected-populations-aap>

APPENDIX 1: Final Terms of Reference

LSE/International Development Project Proposal Template	
Organisation and Department	Organisation: Disasters Emergency Committee group.cash.transfer.dec.org.uk Department: Programmes & Accountability
Project Working Title	Understanding the Sustainability and Shock Responsiveness of Multipurpose Cash Assistance in Ukraine
Background: Two short paragraphs. In the first, please provide a brief description of your organisation and its objectives. In the second, please provide a brief introduction to the topic to be addressed by the project. Why is the organisation interested? Why is the subject itself interesting?	<p>The DEC brings together 15 leading aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently at times of crisis overseas. The Ukraine conflict began on 24th February 2022, since then 6 million people have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries, often arriving with only what they could carry; and another 7 million people displaced inside the country. Homes have been destroyed or are unsafe to live in. Critical infrastructure such as health facilities, water supplies and schools have also been damaged or destroyed.</p> <p>The DEC launched the Ukraine Humanitarian appeal on March 3rd 2022, £380 million were raised by the end of August 2022. 13 DEC Member Agencies are implementing programmes in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Hungary and Moldova. One of the most effective ways to support families on the move is to provide them with MPCA so they can meet their own needs, as well as support local business owners. In the Ukraine regional response, the MPCA modality has been widely used and efforts are being made by humanitarians to link MPCA with pre-existing social protection schemes.</p>
Question: (One or two sentences. What is the motivating question? What is it, specifically, that your organisation would like to know?)	How do DEC Member Agencies understand the sustainability and shock responsiveness of multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) in Ukraine?
Objective: (Short paragraph that explains what you hope to get out of the answer and how you may use the students' work to advance organizational objectives.)	Reflecting the DEC's role as a facilitating body that distributes funds without earmarking conditions for their use, the project aims to foreground Member Agencies' expertise and experience. The synthesis of desk and interview analysis will reveal general trends across how member agencies understand sustainability and shock responsiveness in the context of MPCA, and how that influences the administration of cash assistance.
Methodology: How the students are expected to answer the question. E.g. desk research, interviews, survey, review of internal documents, etc. If you wish the students to define the methodology please say so	<p>Desk review of DEC members reporting documents with a focus on MPCA related data and information as well as literature review on the subject</p> <p>Remote interviews with DEC members and other organisations (UN, National and local authorities, INGO and NGO MPCA programme managers).</p> <p>Remote interviews with other MPCA networks and working groups (CALP Network, Cash Working Groups in Ukraine and other countries, etc.)</p>
Critical skills: What – if any – specific skills are needed to deliver this project? For example, specific analytic skills. Please note that we cannot accept projects that require non-English language skills as critical to the project's success.	<p>Strong research and analytical skills</p> <p>Knowledge of humanitarian assistance and social protection systems</p> <p>Familiarity with MPCA modality in particular</p>
Contact: (Name and email address of the person/s in your organisation who will be responsible for liaising with students.)	<p>Primary contact: Charlotte Heward, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Coordinator for the DEC Ukraine appeal: cheward@dec.org.uk</p> <p>Secondary contact: Katy Bobin, DEC Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Manager kbobin@dec.org.uk</p>

APPENDIX 2: Initial Terms of Reference

LSE/International Development Project Proposal Template	
Organisation and Department	Organisation: Disasters Emergency Committee <u>group cash transfer.dec.org.uk</u> Department: Programmes & Accountability
Project Working Title	Linking national social protection systems and humanitarian multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) in the Ukraine regional humanitarian response
Background: Two short paragraphs. In the first, please provide a brief description of your organisation and its objectives. In the second, please provide a brief introduction to the topic to be addressed by the project. Why is the organisation interested? Why is the subject itself interesting?	<p>The DEC brings together 15 leading aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently at times of crisis overseas. The Ukraine conflict began on 24th February 2022, since then 6 million people have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries, often arriving with only what they could carry; and another 7 million people displaced inside the country. Homes have been destroyed or are unsafe to live in. Critical infrastructure such as health facilities, water supplies and schools have also been damaged or destroyed.</p> <p>The DEC launched the Ukraine Humanitarian appeal on March 3rd 2022, £380 million were raised by the end of August 2022. 13 DEC Member Agencies are implementing programmes in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Hungary and Moldova. One of the most effective ways to support families on the move is to provide them with MPCA so they can meet their own needs, as well as support local business owners. In the Ukraine regional response, the MPCA modality has been widely used and efforts are being made by humanitarians to link MPCA with pre-existing social protection schemes.</p>
Question: (One or two sentences. What is the motivating question? What is it, specifically, that your organisation would like to know?)	<p>How should humanitarian organisations implement MPCA programmes in contexts where social protection schemes pre-exist?</p> <p>How can the humanitarian sector support shock responsiveness in situations of crisis in the Ukrainian regional context?</p>
Objective: (Short paragraph that explains what you hope to get out of the answer and how you may use the students' work to advance organizational objectives.)	The DEC and Member Agencies hope to analyse the complexity of operating in such contexts and identify drivers to support social protection systems' shock-responsiveness, as well as observe hindering factors that might need to be alleviated for a more effective response.
Methodology: How the students are expected to answer the question. E.g. desk research, interviews, survey, review of internal documents, etc. If you wish the students to define the methodology please say so	<p>Desk review of DEC members reporting documents with a focus on MPCA related data and information as well as literature review on the subject</p> <p>Remote interviews with DEC members and other organisations (UN, National and local authorities, INGO and NGO MPCA programme managers).</p> <p>Remote interviews with other MPCA networks and working groups (CALP Network, Cash Working Groups in Ukraine and other countries, etc.)</p>
Critical skills: What – if any - specific skills are needed to deliver this project? For example, specific analytic skills. Please note that we cannot accept projects that require non-English language skills as critical to the project's success.	<p>Strong research and analytical skills</p> <p>Knowledge of humanitarian assistance and social protection systems</p> <p>Familiarity with MPCA modality in particular</p>
Contact: (Name and email address of the person/s in your organisation who will be responsible for liaising with students.)	<p>Primary contact: Charlotte Heward, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Coordinator for the DEC Ukraine appeal: <u>cheward@dec.org.uk</u></p> <p>Secondary contact: Katy Bobin, DEC Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Manager <u>kbobin@dec.org.uk</u></p>

APPENDIX 3: Revised TOR Explanations

The initial Terms of Reference (TOR) focused on understanding how DEC Member Agencies should engage with existing SPS in the context of the conflict in Ukraine, in addition to analysing how Member Agencies can support shock-responsiveness in situations of crisis, specifically focusing on Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Hungary and Moldova. Working in conjunction with the client, our goal was to refine the two broad-based questions proposed by DEC into a single, working research question with a clear thematic and geographic focus. After having multiple discussions with DEC and Key Aid Consulting (KAC), who are also consulting researchers for DEC's Ukraine response, it was decided to focus our attention on Ukraine due to its significance. Consequently, a new set of questions has emerged, resulting in the decision to focus on the shock-responsiveness and sustainability of MPCA in Ukraine. Lastly, even though MPCA was the only type of modality proposed in the TOR, some conversations also included other forms of CVA.

APPENDIX 4: Researchers' Profiles

Chloe Rudnicki is an MSc student in International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies. She received her undergraduate degree with honours in International Relations and Political Science from Boston University. Five years of volunteer work in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, clarified Chloe's desire to contribute to humanitarian aid policy that better reflects the priorities of communities served. Chloe researched for the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance at USAID, where she synthesised interview and desk analysis to assess how political and administrative influences shaped the annual budget for emergency responses in Central and South Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Chloe also co-wrote a paper exploring what national NGO workers perceive as the most potent challenges facing the humanitarian sector, currently under review for publication at Disasters, for the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative.

Ioanna Schuppert is currently pursuing an MSc in International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies with an Applied Development Economics specialism at LSE, and coordinates a pro bono legal advice project for Ukrainians in the UK. She holds degrees in International Relations (BA) from Durham University and in Human Rights Law (LLM) from the University of Edinburgh. Her LLM thesis covered the situation of displaced Syrians in Denmark, and she has published a paper on the Criminalisation of Civil Society Actors Supporting Migrants and Refugees in Europe. Her professional experience is also in the development, management, and monitoring of projects supporting refugees and migrants in Greece; these projects have covered the provision of services, including legal support, child protection, education, WASH, torture rehabilitation, as well as cash transfers.

Vlada Yaremenko holds a Bachelor's in International Studies from the University of Utah. She is currently pursuing an MSc in International Development and Humanitarian

Emergencies with hopes to utilise her degree and previous experiences to help rebuild her home country of Ukraine after the war. Her previous experiences include working with vulnerable communities in India, with Young Professionals in Foreign Policy in Washington, D.C., and with the UN as a Youth Sub-committee Co-chair for the 68th United Nation Civil Society Conference. Furthermore, Vlada has served on the board of the USNC for UN Women Utah Chapter as the Vice President of Public Relations and Membership Committee as well as on the executive committee for the Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy board. Prior to enrolling at LSE, Vlada worked as a Business Development Manager for the Economic Development Corporation of Utah where her role was to collaborate with the public and private sectors to promote quality job growth and increase capital investment into the state.

Grace Yuan has a Bachelor's of International Relations from Ritsumeikan University. Her research interests include peacebuilding and post-violence reconstruction. She has extensive experience working with various NGOs in East and South East Asia, conducting both research and advocacy support. She is well-versed in a variety of both quantitative and qualitative methods, with strong data analysis and interpretation skills. She is fluent in English and Chinese, and technically proficient in Adobe Illustrator, Google Docx, Microsoft Word, and R Studio.

APPENDIX 5: Research Background One-Pager

This document was shared with each Member Agency and KI prior to the interview.

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06/02/2023

Multi-purpose Cash Assistance in Ukraine Research

The project seeks to understand how DEC Member Agencies work to implement multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) programmes in Ukraine since the start of the conflict in February 2022. MPCA empowers affected populations to identify and meet their own needs on a household and community basis. Research also suggests that MPCA fuels long-term recovery from economically debilitating disasters and conflicts by stimulating local markets.¹ However, the bulk of existing research on MPCA programmes fails to examine the implementation of cash assistance in active conflict zones.² Consequently, focusing on the implementation of MPCA in Ukraine can make a valuable contribution to the literature.

The project will examine **how DEC Member Agencies understand the sustainability and shock-responsiveness of MPCA in Ukraine, given the volatility of the ongoing conflict.** Reflecting the DEC's role as a facilitating body that distributes funds without earmarking conditions for their use, the project aims to foreground Member Agencies' expertise and experience. The synthesis of desk and interview analysis will reveal general trends across how member agencies understand sustainability and shock responsiveness in the context of MPCA, and how that influences the administration of cash assistance.

The driving research question is:

1. **How do DEC Member Agencies understand the sustainability and shock responsiveness of multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) in Ukraine?**

Indicative Interview Questions

1. Please tell us about your experience thus far working with MPCA in Ukraine.
2. How does your organisation understand and evaluate "sustainability" within the context of MPCA in Ukraine?
3. How does your organisation understand and evaluate "shock responsiveness" within the context of MPCA in Ukraine?
4. How, if at all, has your organisation's approach to cash assistance changed since the start of the war? Could you elaborate on these changes?
5. How would you describe the relationship between your agency's MPCA and existing SPS in Ukraine?
6. What mechanisms are in place to protect marginalised groups, such as the elderly and disabled?
7. Please tell us about the use of digital technologies in the distribution of MPCA, and the impact you think that has had.

¹ Jodar, José, Anna Kondakhchyan, Ruth McCormack, Karen Peachy, Laura Phelps, and Gaby Smith. 2020. *The State of the World's Cash 2020 – Cash and Voucher Assistance in Humanitarian Aid*. CaLP. Accessed 14 December 2022. https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SOWC2020_Full-report.pdf.

² Vogel, Birte, Kristina Tschunkert, and Isabelle Schläpfer. 2022. "The Social Meaning of Money: Multidimensional Implications of Humanitarian Cash and Voucher Assistance." *Disasters* 46 (2): 348–370.

APPENDIX 6: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Below are the boilerplate questions utilised for the interviews; however, since each Member Agency had a diverse set of literature and data, some of the questions were specifically targeted for Member Agencies and/or interviewees.

INTRODUCTION: Hello, we are a team of graduate student consultants at the LSE collaborating with the Disasters Emergency Committee. We are researching what sustainability and shock-responsiveness mean to each member agency in the context of multipurpose cash assistance delivered in Ukraine since the onset of the conflict in February 2022. Our research synthesises desk and interview analysis. Thus far, this includes academic and practitioner literature on cash assistance, member agencies' documents for phases I and II of programming, and interviews with cash assistance experts and member agency staff directly involved in the cash assistance programmes in Ukraine.

CONSENT: Would you be okay with us recording this session for the purpose of transcription? All information, including direct quotes, can be paraphrased and/or kept anonymous at your discretion.

BOILERPLATE QUESTIONS

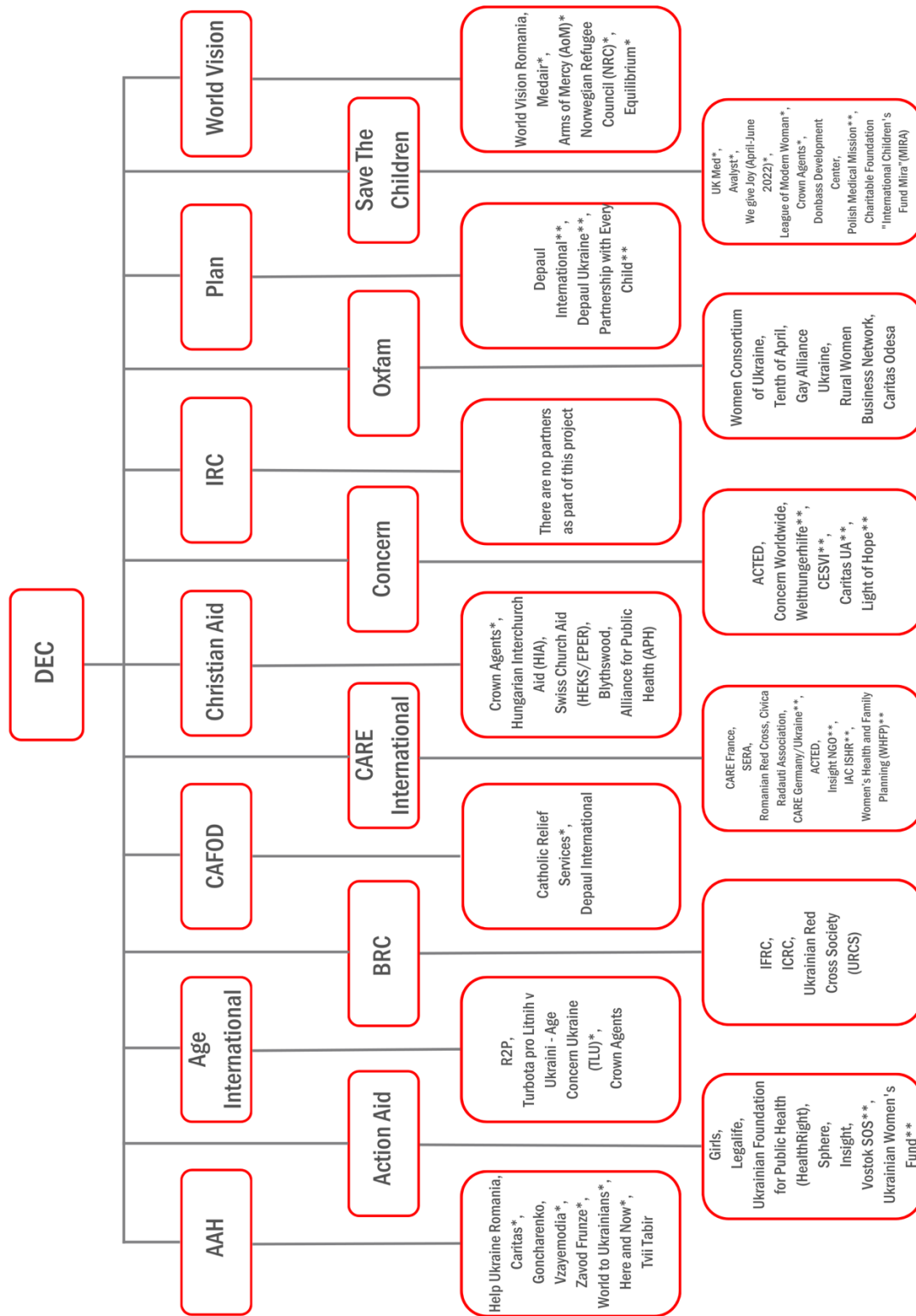
1. Please tell us about your experience thus far working with MPCA in Ukraine.
2. How does your organisation understand and evaluate “sustainability” within the context of MPCA in Ukraine?
3. How does your organisation understand and evaluate “shock-responsiveness” within the context of MPCA in Ukraine?
4. How, if at all, has your organisation’s approach to cash assistance changed since the start of the war? Could you elaborate on these changes?
5. How would you describe the relationship between your agency’s MPCA and existing SPS in Ukraine?
6. What mechanisms are in place to protect marginalised groups, such as the elderly and disabled?
7. Please tell us about the use of digital technologies in the distribution of MPCA, and the impact you think that has had.
8. Do you think there are any other major ‘lessons learnt’ from the Ukraine MPCA response so far, or anything else that you think is important for us and/or the DEC member agencies to know?

APPENDIX 7: List of Interviewed Organisations

Organisation/Actor	Interview Date
Action Against Hunger (2 interviewees)	21 February 2023
CAFOD (2 interviewees)	22 February 2023
CALP	13 February 2023
CARE International (2 interviewees)	6 March 2023
CCD (3 interviewees)	21 February 2023 and 26 January 2023
Christian Aid (2 interviewees)	22 February 2023 and 14 February 2023
Concern (2 interviewees)	1 March 2023
Conflict Management Consulting (CMC)	29 January 2023
Ground Truth Solutions	28 February 2023
HelpAge International	10 February 2023
Key Aid Consulting	10 November 2022
OXFAM	21 February 2023
Plan International (2 interviewees)	24 February 2023
Right to Protection (R2P)	8 March 2023
Save the Children (2 interviewees)	8 February 2023
World Vision	22 February 2023

APPENDIX 8: DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal: Delivery Chain for Affiliates/Partners in Ukraine

DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal: Delivery Chain for Affiliates/Partners in Ukraine



Source: Phase 1 Final Narrative Reports; Phase II Plan Reports

*Phase I only

**Phase II only

NB: Please be advised that this chart is for simplified visual purposes only. Organisational structures are much more complex than this