



# Cash for protection



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## *Cash transfer programs can promote child protection outcomes*<sup>☆</sup>

Cash Transfer Programs (CTPs) use cash or vouchers as a means of enabling households to have access to their basic needs for food and non-food items or services or to buy assets essential for survival and recovery. Broadly speaking, CTPs can be either conditional or unconditional in nature. In unconditional cash transfer (UCT) programs, individuals or households identified as highly vulnerable are given money as a direct grant with no conditions or work obligations. There is no requirement to repay any money, and people are entitled to use the cash transfer however they wish. According to Alain de Janvry and Elisabeth Sadoulet, the distinguishing feature of a conditional cash transfer (CCT) is that it imposes a behavioral condition on transfer recipients. Often these conditions, especially in non-emergency settings, set minimum

requirements on beneficiaries' attention to education, health, and nutrition of children and family members. CCTs also include cash or vouchers in return for certain work or services on behalf of the recipient. Referred to as Cash for Work (CfW), these program in particular have been growing in popularity. There are various perspectives on the purpose of these CCTs, and some people feel that to be defined as a CfW program, it needs to benefit the community, be part of a public project, contribute to early recovery efforts post-emergency, or result in the creation of public or community assets.

Although often perceived as a new and innovative way of delivering assistance, CTPs have been used in various forms since 1870. Harvey (2007), in "Cash-Based Responses in Emergencies," provided examples of cash-based responses to crisis situations. He described

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the use of cash grants for refugees from Bosnia following the Franco–Prussian War of 1870–1871, the distribution of cash to famine-affected populations in Sudan by the British colonial administration in 1948, the use of cash as part of a relief response in Tanzania in 1960, and cash-for-work (CfW) programs used to provide employment to 74,000 people in Botswana between 1985 and 1986.

The past two decades have seen a rapid expansion in the use of cash transfers – especially CCTs – both as part of social protection schemes and in humanitarian assistance settings. CCTs have been used since the 1990s by governments as part of social protection schemes and, more recently, by government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as emergency relief intended to meet basic needs and for recovery of livelihoods.

Evidence is mounting that CCTs can address the multidimensional causes of poverty and vulnerability in a cost effective way. Large multilateral donors such as the World Bank, the Japanese government, and the European Commission have provided support to national cash transfer schemes to put into place safety nets in countries such as Afghanistan.

In addition to the existence of CCTs in more than 30 countries as part of ongoing social protection schemes, national governments in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand relied heavily on cash-based responses following the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004. In 2005 and 2006, NGOs such as Oxfam, Horn Relief, Norwegian People's Aid, and Concern Worldwide piloted CCTs in countries such as Zambia, Malawi, and Somalia.

CCTs are not the only way of addressing economic vulnerability. In certain contexts other interventions, such as insurance provision and increasing access to credits and loans, offer better value for money. However, in many settings,

CCTs work better than the alternatives, especially for the poorest households. In particular, CCTs have been viewed as an effective means for improving basic education and health outcomes for children. Only recently have CCTs been evaluated for their effectiveness in child protection in the context of emergencies.

## What Is Child Protection in Emergencies?

The Child Protection Working Group (an interagency body coordinating child protection activities in humanitarian settings) has defined child protection in emergencies as “the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation of and violence against children in emergencies.” An emergency is defined as a situation where lives, physical and mental wellbeing, or development opportunities for children are threatened and local capacity to cope is exceeded or inadequate. Emergencies can result from a natural disaster (e.g., flood, earthquake), the actions of human beings (e.g., conflict, civil unrest), or a combination of both.

Child protection in emergencies includes specific activities established by child protection actors with the aim of ensuring the prevention and response to child protection concerns. It also includes collaboration with humanitarian actors to ensure that activities improve children's safety.

The first stand-alone programs for child protection in emergencies involved family tracing and reunification activities during the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Early child protection programming in emergencies focused mainly on working with separated and unaccompanied children, but over time, interventions have grown to address other issues of concern, including but not limited to physical and sexual

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