



CASH & EDUCATION IN SOMALIA

6th October, 2017: Cash programming has become a significant part of the current drought response in Somalia. Conditional and unconditional cash grants or vouchers, that are either restricted or unrestricted, are being used by a large variety of partners for food or multi-purpose transfers to affected people. In the month of May 2017 alone, more than USD 48 million was channelled through cash programming reaching more than 3 million people. With the increase in cash programming as part of the response, more and more focus has been given to sectors which are not traditional cash sectors to capture and better understand how cash is being used in the different sectors. Indicators on cash transfers is increasingly being captured in 4Ws across the different clusters. Cash elements in education responses is not entirely new, but in a Somali context it has not previously been captured as 'cash response' per se. Increasingly education partners are introducing cash transfers or vouchers in the education response and testing different modalities. In this note, some of these examples from ongoing response programmes are highlighted.

GIRLS

Several partners are implementing projects with a specific focus on increasing and sustaining girls' enrolment, attendance and retention in school. As part of the DFID funded Girls Education Challenge, Relief International are waiving off the school fees for marginalized girls. The targeted girls are identified using an agreed upon selection criteria by the Community Education Committees (CECs) and the Ministry of Education (MOE) and once the schools submit attendance records of the girls funding equivalent to their school fees based on a minimum attendance criteria are transferred to the school's bank account operated by the CEC representatives and Head Teacher. As part of the drought response Norwegian Church Aid in collaboration with WFP are providing conditional unrestricted cash vouchers to families of girls enrolled in schools. The entitlement is registered through the mothers of the girls and upon completion of 18 full days of attendance per month the voucher is given. All girls in the targeted schools are provided the grant upon 18 days' attendance.

CROSS-SECTOR INTEGRATION

In Somalia, the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF) is putting more and more emphasis on emergency responses being delivered through an integrated approach. The aim is to increase the quality and effectiveness of the response. During the drought response World Vision International has piloted an integrated response including food security, health, WASH and Education. In addition to establishing schools for drought affected IDP children, the project is targeting families who enroll their children in the schools and are providing them with conditional cash transfers. In addition, selected parents are targeted with Cash for Work (CfW) where they work on improving the school environment incl. establishing recreational spaces. The unconditional cash transfers as well as the CfW is done through mobile payments. Save the Children is also implementing a cross sector project where they as part of their Food Security response target drought affected families with children enrolled in schools to receive conditional unrestricted cash transfers. Parents must produce attendance records for the cash transfer to be done. The transfer is done through mobile payment to the family.

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE ECO-SYSTEM: Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH) has piloted a cash response to IDPs with funding from SHF and the German Government. The project includes vouchers for school fees and vouchers for learning materials. The guardians/parents of learners receive vouchers for school fees and vouchers for learning materials. The vouchers for school fees are redeemed with the Teacher Associations (TAs) in the schools. The vouchers for the learning materials are redeemed at contracted local shops in the IDP settlements. DKH gives the conditional and restricted vouchers to parents with children from vulnerable households. Where existing, Camp self-management committees (CMC) are involved in the targeting. The Teacher Associations are trained on Income Generating Activities (IGA) skills (mostly business administration for small scale business) to support themselves. The income generated through IGA is used to pay their incentives. Vouchers for learning materials are also restricted and conditional and will only be handed out to the parent/guardian when the child's school attendance is fulfilled. The vouchers or learning materials can only be redeemed in nearby stationary shops that have a MoU with the local partner of DKH.

ENGAGING (SCHOOL) COMMUNITY



Engaging the local community in the operation and maintenance of education is essential to strengthen ownership and sustainability throughout a crisis. Relief International is providing conditional restricted cash grants to CECs based on a competitive review and their commitment to match the grant with community contributions in kind or cash. The CEC determines how the grants should be used against their School Development Plan and the grant is transferred to the school's bank account. A similar approach is adopted to support schools to establish income generating activities to generate financial resources for future. UNICEF with support from a number of donors, has included conditional restricted cash grants to CECs as a central part of their drought response. The CECs conduct a needs assessment in the school and are spending the cash grant against the assessment outcome. The grant is transferred to the school's bank account through mobile money payment and used on a variety of initiatives incl. rehabilitation/set up of water storage, support to teachers, school feeding, water, access for vulnerable and marginalized children.






RETURNEES

In 2016, large numbers of Somali refugees based in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya was supported to return to Somalia. As part of the reintegration package families with school children are being supported to enroll their children in schools in Somalia. Mercy Corps and INTERSOS in partnership with UNHCR, are providing conditional restricted cash grants to cover the cost of school fees and school materials. The school fee grant is paid to the school's bank account monthly upon attendance records, invoice documentation and joint monitoring missions. For Mercy Corps, the school supply grant is paid to the family, and for INTERSOS the total amount allocated to school supplies is pooled and materials are bought in bulk to ensure a lower cost and that all children receive a full package of education supplies.

LESSONS LEARNT

Education and cash programming is not entirely new in the Somali context, but the variety of cash elements have increased and a number of lessons learnt are emerging.

-  The beneficiaries should be identified through a consultative process by involving CEC and parents. The process of identification must be transparent with clear criteria for identification of beneficiaries. If there is requirement of changing the beneficiary due to any reason the same mechanism must be followed.
-  To address challenges related to changes in beneficiary lists the frequency of payment should be done on a monthly basis rather than quarterly for identification of changed beneficiaries well in time

-  Cash interventions can be creatively used in education to achieve both immediate access e.g. enrolment, retention, as well as medium term quality outcomes e.g. transition, teachers' motivation.
-  For successful completion of academic year and to appear in exam there is need to include examination fee in the cash grants along with school fees to address transition barrier
-  Some of the remote schools do not have bank accounts for transfer of funds. The disbursement of cash by staff is risky as well as expensive. This challenge has been addressed either through consultation with the local bank or by using mobile money transfers. The banking system in Somalia is more of money transfer mechanism than a fully functional banking institution
-  The account managed by the MOE is not official and many schools are not within administrative jurisdiction of the MOE. CECs don't have bank accounts and are often not well equipped to maintain the books
-  The motivation of parents for their children to learn should not be based on money/cash as there is a high risk of offloading their sole responsibility on care and nurture of their children to third parties

EDUCATION CLUSTER CHALLENGES

For the Education Cluster in Somalia, the increased focus on cash has posed several challenges. Being a sector which does not traditionally have large cash elements, engaging with cash programming as part of an emergency response is a whole new world. The overall response strategy for the Education Cluster does not include a strategic approach to cash in education response and there is currently no specific guidelines or minimum standards for partners to use. In addition, the Education Cluster does not have strong technical capacity in cash programming and is therefore limited in supporting partners in developing solid cash programmes. This is especially a limitation in support of partners who do not have the in-house cash programme capacity e.g. a food security section. This also means that the reporting on cash elements of the education response is still rather limited. Another challenge related to reporting and monitoring is to capture when e.g. school fees are included in cash programming by non-education cluster partners implementing multi-purpose cash. The challenges of fully understanding and integrating cash in the education response is not only within the Education Cluster. The donors also seem to not include Education when they are funding cash programmes. This is a two-way challenge where donors have to prioritise education in cash programmes, and education partners and the cluster have to be able to show how education can be included in a meaningful way.