

15 July 2020 Cash Hub & Livelihoods Research Centre Webinar Summary Points

Topic: Livelihoods and Household Economic Security

Speaker	Summary Takeaways
<p>Andra Gulei - Senior Food Security and Livelihoods Advisor, British RC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority 2 of the IFRC COVID-19 Emergency Appeal concerns addressing the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19. This concerns meeting the urgent food and basic needs of vulnerable households providing targeted CVA and restoring longer-term household economic security (HES), through livelihoods, asset recovery and diversification. • Household Economic Security (HES) is built around 3 pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Survival threshold – the food and water needs of the people and cooking costs including cooking fuel. – But this is not enough. So we often just include these in basic needs. ○ Basic needs – inclusive of the survival threshold (food, water, cooking needs), rent and housing costs, hygiene products and regular medicine costs, education, essential transport and communication. There may be other essential requirements for economic security which are based on the local context. ○ Livelihoods protection – people can not focus on Livelihoods if their basic needs are not covered. So, Livelihood protection includes supporting basic needs, since it prevents asset depletion. • Many national societies (NS) are supporting basic needs through Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) in response to COVID-19, to give flexibility to empower people to choose how best to support their basic needs. • Much discussion around social protection and linking humanitarian CVA, and many NS are doing this • Many NS are also asking about how we transition from supporting health to supporting livelihoods and supporting basic needs is one of the ways to transition. While NS undertake more assessments related to how to support livelihoods. • Basic needs and livelihoods are connected because if we are only supporting basic needs and not livelihoods we risk creating a dependency on humanitarian assistance. People can not meet their basic needs without support if they do not have livelihoods. • In the context of COVID19, we are seeing the projections related to food insecurity and those in extreme poverty greatly increase.
<p>Asadullah Sediqi – DRR and Livelihoods Coordinator, Afghan Red Crescent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afghanistan already had significant poverty rates related to continued conflict and the natural disasters. Now with COVID-19 we have increased needs especially related to food insecurity. • ARCS has been addressing the health and socio-economic impacts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have targeted 50,000 people for in-kind food, and 25,000 households for unconditional CVA. • ARCS has also been implementing Livelihoods Recovery and Development projects pre-COVID and after COVID. We are particularly working on a women’s empowerment project, and targeting 871 women which means 871 households. • One example of activities being undertaken by women in this project is the production of facemasks, implemented in Kabul and in the ARCS Marastoon compound. 30 women are the direct participants of this. • We will have a market linkage and we will expand out with other women’s groups supported by ARCS in other provinces being supported to run their own face-mask micro-business. • In all, we coordinate with the Ministry of Public Health, and the private sector (specifically training institutions and market actors).
<p>Buba Darboe – Head of Disaster Management & Food Security, The Gambia RC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have 64 positive cases and 3 confirmed deaths since March 17th, when the state of emergency was declared. This state of emergency restricted businesses, movement of people, access to markets. This has impacted liquidity (cash) with the loss of jobs, people can not go to work, or access the markets. The closure of education facilities has also impacted people. • Weekly markets (called Lumos here) over 805 are closed, 80% of the population is affected by this and it majorly limits livelihoods. The Gambian Red Cross is advocating with the government to open these weekly markets. • We have 2 ongoing projects, one specifically uses cash transfer and is related to COVID-19 to help households meet food and basic needs and targets 2000 HHs with basic needs, the targeting criteria includes those whose businesses have been impacted and persons depending on daily labour as well as women headed households, refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, and stateless people. Those with disabilities, chronic illness, those affected by windstorms, floods, windbreaks during the COVID-19 pandemic • We need to identify a financial service providers (FSP), to find a way to reach the targeted the households with cash and to transfer risk. There are 2 mobile money providers in the country who we could work with. • Pre-COVID-19 we had a livelihoods project running which related to strengthening the living standards of women cooperatives. This involved (determined by needs assessments) vegetable production, through the construction of 5 women vegetable gardens in 5 communities (fencing, seeds, tools and equipment, training and solar powered reticulation systems – provided in-kind). As part of this we can provide small ruminant animals. Also training on animal husbandry. • We also have a training of husbands to support their wives despite cultural gender roles. This has been a very interesting part of the project. • But COVID-19 has huge impacts on this project such as markets being closed and not being able to find buyers, both for

	<p>vegetables and small rudiments. Much vegetables have perished nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender based violence has increased – this is partly because of less cash in the household, couples are together for prolonged durations and women can not leave the house as easily due to the restrictions. Since schools are closed the food for children provided at schools now need to happen in the household. So there is more pressure on household heads related to food costs and limited income. • To adapt we looked at providing cash to support households to meet their basic needs including food. • We needed to scout for potential buyers of the remaining vegetables, and all the farmers agreed to reduce the price to get a buyer. • We are advocating to open the weekly market which particularly would benefit women to access the market and sell their produce. • In the medium and longer term we are considering training women farmers on transformation of the vegetable into other products (e.g. preserved vegetables, jams etc.), and to provide cold storage to prolong the life of vegetables.
<p>Mike Ovsianikov - CVA focal point of Ukrainian RC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockdown has been in place for 3.5 months and this has caused small and medium businesses to close because they did not have enough money to survive this time. • At this time movement restrictions have been lifted. • In our standard livelihoods programme, we make payments to IDPs to start/restore their source of income. This is also relevant in the times of COVID19. Our targeting criteria is based on socio-economic vulnerability and we make payments in 2 tranches, previously against a business plan. • In COVID-19 we will work with local authorities to better understand the impact on the local economy. This will assist with targeting. • Targeting the most vulnerable and who we can have an impact with is the most difficult task. We have 2 parts, the first relates to scoring of vulnerability, and the second relates to the business plan evaluation. • Due to COVID-19 we will not use the post-office because of queue creation risk (regardless of disbursement schedule), and we will not use cash-in-envelopes to avoid physical cash. So we may use mobile money, bank transfer and card. We may need to train staff and volunteer remotely in implementing the project. • We must communicate and coordinate with local authorities, and be as transparent as possible with communities. • We normally do 2 transfers asking for accounting related to 80% of the 1st payment to release the 2nd. We only ask for 80% because it can be hard especially in rural areas for the target household to get the documentation to justify their expenditure against their business plan.

<p>Adriana Estrada – Livelihoods Resource Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Livelihoods Resource Centre offers a helpdesk which can be accessed via the website and contacted through email. The Helpdesk working languages are English, Spanish and French. Some responses can be given straight away especially if pointing at existing resources. Some may take a few days to respond to.• Do not hesitate to contact us, we will be very pleased to support. There are no wrong or insignificant questions.• For COVID-19 we have produced some concise practical tip sheets dealing with many practical programming problems.• We are also launching a tool to help staff and volunteers consider different response options, considering different outputs and objectives. There are also tips on how to target and how to undertake the response options. <p>https://www.livelihoodscentre.org/</p>
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Prepared by David Dalgado based on what was said in the Webinar and the takeaways may not reflect the top takeaways of the speaker as they see them.