

Asia-Pacific Cash Strategy 2023

For discussion with Partners / [IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office](#) / January 2023

Section 1: Summary

Project name:	Enhanced Cash and Voucher Assistance Readiness and Operational Capacity in Asia-Pacific
Project locations:	<u>Asia Pacific Region</u>
Donor:	For discussion
Project duration:	18 months, commencing 01 January 2023
Project goal:	National Society capacity to support community-based disaster risk reduction, response, and preparedness is strengthened.
Project outcome:	National Societies and IFRC will have increased ability to deliver timely, accountable, and scalable cash and voucher assistance response reaching 50 per cent of humanitarian assistance delivered through CVA by 2025

Section 2: Background

Implementing Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) to the benefit of people affected by disasters and crises is a growing and critical part of humanitarian action, with the potential to drive transformational change in the architecture and programming approaches of humanitarian organizations including Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies. CVA enables people affected by disasters and crises to receive more appropriate and effective support, giving them greater choice, dignity, and control over their lives, and enabling communities through efficiency gains and better support to local markets and economies.

Since the introduction of various cash preparedness interventions in late 2017, the latest data shows that a significant increase in the usage of cash and voucher assistance (CVA) has been reported. And this can be attributed to the efforts of the National Societies and IFRC with the investments made in CVA preparedness. In 2022, APRO developed a revised Asia-Pacific Roadmap 2022-2025¹ reflecting one of the IFRC Global Flagship Initiatives – Global Cash Leadership – on an ambitious target of delivering 50 percent of humanitarian assistance through cash and voucher by 2025.

¹ [Asia-Pacific Cash Roadmap 2022-2025](#)

In 2022, over 60 per cent of the national societies in Asia-Pacific are implementing various forms of CVA or are supported with a cash preparedness process. In 2022 alone, a total of 439,333 people have been supported with CVA through 30 DREFs and EAs². The data shows an increase of 188 per cent from the 2021 data. The volume of total cash disbursed also increased to 300 per cent with 9.8 million Swiss Francs distributed. A significant accomplishment has also been achieved with the establishment of longer-term framework agreements of financial service providers in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, and significant support to the approval of service agreements in Myanmar.

With the increase in demand for the utilization of CVA, there will be a need to even strengthen the technical cash competencies both with the IFRC Secretariat and National Societies – to ensure the quality of humanitarian response and programming. While sustained growth in the utilization of CVA has been noted, an even stronger direction and support, including at the senior leadership level, is needed to enable greater use of cash and voucher – where appropriate – by the IFRC Secretariat and National Societies to further drive the transformation of how the Red Cross Red Crescent delivers assistance to people affected by disasters and crises.

The cash and voucher assistance readiness will leverage the ability of 12 National Societies to deliver appropriate cash and voucher assistance accountably and quickly and three National Societies (Afghanistan Bangladesh and Philippines) at scale. This project will also aim to further diversify and increase the multisectoral utilization of CVA beyond basic needs.

Section 2: Project Details

The Cash and Voucher Assistance Readiness Project started in the third quarter of 2017 and has, to-date, focused on National Societies supported through the Red Ready Project³ complemented by cash preparedness initiatives projects supported by the Australian Red Cross⁴, American Red Cross, and British Red Cross⁵, and the Netherlands Red Cross⁶. The support provided to date has brought the National Societies to various levels of Cash Readiness. The programme follows a standardized Red Cross Red Crescent Movement model with five areas: 1. leadership commitment, 2. processes, systems, and tools, 3. financial and human resources capacities, 4. community engagement and accountability, partnerships and coordination, and 5. test, learn, and improve.

² Preliminary cash data analysis from completed and active DREF and EAs in 2022

³ Lao Red Cross, Malaysian Red Crescent Society, Myanmar Red Cross, Viet Nam Red Cross Society

⁴ Fiji Red Cross Society, Vanuatu Red Cross Society

⁵ Bangladesh Red Crescent, Myanmar Red Cross, Nepal Red Cross Society

⁶ Lao Red Cross, Philippine Red Cross, Timor-Leste Red Cross Society

Enhanced Cash and Voucher Assistance Readiness and Operational Capacity in Asia-Pacific

Project Goal, Objectives and Outputs

Project Goal: National Society capacity to support community-based disaster risk reduction, response, and preparedness is strengthened.

Project Outcome: National Societies and IFRC will have increased ability to deliver timely, accountable, and scalable cash and voucher assistance response reaching 50 per cent of humanitarian assistance delivered through CVA by 2025

Objective 1: National Societies are supported with increased investment in institutional CVA preparedness

Objective 2: National Societies and IFRC operational capacities are strengthened to be able to implement quality and scalable cash and voucher assistance in emergencies

Objective 3: National Societies and the secretariat have improved cash coordination and sharing of CVA learning and the best practices

Objective 4: National Societies' CVA impact is measured, evaluated, and shared

What Success Will Look Like

- Target National Societies will respond with speed using CVA to meet humanitarian needs as well as to deliver longer-term support to vulnerable people, respecting their choice and promoting their dignity.
- IFRC Secretariat will have increased technical resources in supporting National Societies to advance CVA.
- Target National Societies will enhance coordination and collaboration with donors, governments, and other humanitarian actors active in CVA.
- Target National Societies will share knowledge and best practices across the IFRC network to promote peer-to-peer support and foster better utilization and optimization of Federation-wide technical capacities and resources CVA.

Section 3: Resources mapping

Each National Society has its own unique stage of and plans for Cash and Voucher Assistance Readiness, and as such has its own pathway of change. This project will support each National Society's growth and progression based on a baseline to be done at the start. Once a National Society determines where it lies in the Cash preparedness

scale, specific measures to support them through key steps towards becoming Cash Ready.

Chart 1: Cash Readiness Level of Asia-Pacific National Societies



The **IFRC Asia-Pacific Regional Cash team** currently is composed of two technical advisers at the regional level: 1 CVA coordinator based in the IFRC Asia-Pacific Regional Office and 1 Cash-Logistics Officer reporting under the regional logistics unit, out-posted in Viet Nam. At the Country Delegations, three CVA dedicated officers are in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Jakarta Office.

In 2022, **Partner National Societies** supporting CVA preparedness include the American Red Cross, Australian Red Cross, British Red Cross, and the Netherlands Red Cross. National Societies supported through the Red Ready Project are also able to access funding for CVA-related preparedness. Please see [Annex 1. Gaps Analysis and Partner supporting Mapping](#).

Cash Hub supported IFRC APRO through various initiatives. In 2022, APRO hosted Cash School participants. Several collaborations with AP National Societies have been conducted with global webinars, a global cash forum, and publications of National Society CVA accomplishments and sharing of learning.

Section 4: Proposed activities

The project activities proposed to be supported under this plan cover the National Society Cash Preparedness and key technical support required that includes human resources and capacity-strengthening activities:

On Cash Preparedness, this project will aim to complement the existing initiatives on cash readiness. Efforts will be made to ensure that the cash readiness initiatives are

aligned with the National Society Development maximizing the Preparedness of Effective Response (PER) approach. National Societies proposed to be supported with cash preparedness projects are the following:

1. National Society Cash Readiness

Priority National Society for cash preparedness support are the following:

- a. **Develop Pacific Cash Readiness**, leveraging from the cash experiences and further developing the capacities in Palau, Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu. New National Societies to include Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands
- b. **Develop Cash Readiness in South Asia**, leveraging from the scale of response in Sri Lanka, peer-learning to develop cash capacities in Maldives and advocacy requirements and pilot test in India
- c. **Strengthening cash capacities in Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste**
- d. **Institutionalized Cash and Voucher Assistance Programming** for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, and Viet Nam

2. Capacity-strengthening Initiatives

- a. **Regional CVA Training of Trainers – Level 2 regional ToT** especially for new NSs
- b. **Regional Training for Support Services** on CVA- IM/IT, Logistics, Procurement, Finance, Admin, and Legal

3. Strengthen Cash Surge Capacity

- a. **Practical Cash in Emergencies Training (PECT) for Pacific**
- b. **Support to shadowing/learning deployments in emergencies** – support in the promotion of women empowerment in emergency operations

4. Reinforcement AP Cash Community of Practice

- a. **Annual regional Cash Roadmap Reflections/CoP face-to-face meeting**

Section 5: Technical Support

At the country level, Technical Working Groups (TWGs) comprising personnel from different departments of the National Societies will be convened to promote an organization-wide understanding of CVA. Country-level TWGs will be led by the CVA Focal Points, whose costs may be covered by this project.

At the regional level, the IFRC Regional CVA Coordinator will facilitate overall technical support to the National Societies. As much as possible, the Regional CVA Coordinator will broker the provision of required technical support required by National Societies to the best-placed CVA practitioners across the IFRC network to foster better utilization and optimization of Federation-wide technical capacities and resources.

The Regional CVA Coordinator will also monitor and review progress across the countries, facilitate regional strategic cash advocacy engagements, and work closely with the Regional Information Management (IM) Coordinator and Regional Information Technology (IT) Manager in undertaking measures for enhancing IM in CVA. Linked to this, the Regional Cash Assistance Coordinator will coordinate streamlining of ‘counting cash’ so that the collective CVA work of Red Cross Red Crescent is documented and disseminated. Coordination with the regional cash logistics officer will be strengthened in ensuring framework agreement for financial services providers will be in place. The Regional CVA coordinator will be supported by two CVA advisers/delegates, one for Pacific based in Suva and an additional CVA delegate for South Asia either based in New Delhi or Colombo.

In 2023, it is envisioned that the regional cash team will expand with the inclusion of a regional CVA in emergencies officer and cash regional cash preparedness officer based in countries where IFRC has a legal status. The two officers will then report to the operations team in APRO.

Section 4: Budget in CHF

Activities	Unit	UoM	Total
Objective 1: Cash preparedness Investments			
1.1 Support to NS Cash preparedness	12	NS	230,000.00
Objective 2: Strengthening NS and IFRC Operational Capacity			
2.1 Practical Cash in Emergencies Training (PECT)	1	training	80,000.00
2.2 Regional CVA Training for Support Services	1	training	50,000.00
2.3 CVA Training of Trainers	1	training	50,000.00
2.4. Shadowing/learning deployments support	1	event	10,000.00
Priority 3: Improved coordination and learning			
3.1 Regional Annual Cash CoP meeting/Annual Reflections	1	training	50,000.00
Priority 4: NS CVA Impact			
4.1 Regional CVA Research/Study	1	study	50,000.00
Human Resource Costs			
Regional CVA Coordinator (international)	6	months	96,000.00
Regional Cash Logistics Officer (national)	2	months	10,000.00
Regional Cash in emergencies Officer (national)	12	months	40,000.00
Regional Cash Preparedness Officer (national)	12	months	40,000.00
South Asia CVA Advisor (international)	12	months	150,000.00
Grand total			806,000.00

Annex 1. Gaps Analysis and Partner supporting Mapping

Note: **Red**- Top priority, will require extensive support, **Orange** – Mid priority, will require thematic support, **Green**- Minimal support required, **White** – least priority, no support required, **Cash** not yet a priority

National Society	Priority	Remarks
Afghan RC	Orange	Partially covered by Emergency Appeal and IFRC Annual Plan
Australian RC	White	
Bangladesh RC	Orange	Bilateral support from American and British RC, some training covered under ECHO PPP
Bhutan RC	White	
Brunei RC	White	
Cambodian RC	White	
China RCS	White	Technical assistance supported by the Hong Kong Red Cross Branch
Cook Islands RC	White	
DPRK RC	White	
Fiji RC	Red	Cash Readiness Plan in-place Australian RC covered
Indian RC	Orange	Advocacy requirements
Indonesian RC	Orange	Cash Readiness Plan in-place covered by Australian RC, other bilateral DM readiness projects
Japanese RC	White	
Kiribati RC	Red	
Korean National Red Cross	White	
Lao RC	Red	Cash readiness plan in place, CVA training from Red Ready
Malaysian RC	Red	Cash readiness plan in place, partially covered. CVA training from Red Ready
Maldivian RC	Red	Cash Readiness Plan in-place
Marshall Islands RC	White	
Micronesia RC	White	
Mongolian RC	Green	Partially covered thru other DM readiness initiatives
Myanmar RC	Orange	Bilateral support from American and British RC
Nepal RC	Orange	Bilateral support from American and British RC
New Zealand RC	White	

Pakistan RC		Partially covered by Emergency Appeal and IFRC Annual Plan
Palau RC		
Papua New Guinea RC		
Philippine RC		Partially covered by Emergency Appeal and IFRC Annual Plan
Samoa RC		
Singapore RC		
Solomon Islands RC		
Sri Lanka RC		Partially covered by Emergency Appeal, Cash readiness plan in place
Thai RC		
Timor-Leste RC		Cash Readiness Plan in-place
Tonga RC		Partially covered by Emergency Appeal/ IFRC annual plan
Tuvalu RC		
Vanuatu RC		Cash Readiness Plan in-place Australian RC covered
Vietnam RC		Red Ready covered

Annex 2. AP Cash Roadmap 2022-2025 M&E, HR, and Budget