

MENA CVA Community of Practice

Meeting #29 minutes

*The meeting #29th did take place in 8/05/2024 on teams COP series meeting.

Meeting Details & agenda:

Date:	Wednesday May 8th 2024- 11:00 to 12.00 (Beirut time)
Attendees:	<p>Facilitator: Nabeh Allaham, IFRC CVA thematic lead Co-chair: Elias Hazoury, Lebanese Red Cross</p> <p>Cash center of excellence: Reem Jawhari Lebanese Red Cross: Nour Hamadeh Egypt Red Crescent: Kholoud Tarek Yemen Red crescent: Hend Wosabi</p> <p>CVA Delegate Yemen: Chisomo Duncan Cash Hub: Azim Noorani Norwegian Red Cross: Michelle Interiano</p>
Agenda:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash and voucher assistance mentoring programme updates: (10 min). CCOE will provide COP members with updates on the ongoing process of the CVA mentoring project. • Cash counting exercise 2024 : (10 min) The CVA regional thematic lead will provide an update on the cash counting process. • Updates from the COP members (20Min). NS society focal points will provide an update on both current and future projects, pieces of training, and initiatives in 2024. • Updates from the Facilitator (15min). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVA component added to the updated Disaster management manual. • CVA with anticipatory action training in Uganda. • Access RC (self-enrollment registration APP) marketing documents. • AOB (5 min)

Meeting minutes:

This COP meeting is considered the fourth meeting in the series of COP monthly meetings in 2024. It was a good opportunity to cover different points and focus on ongoing activities nationally, regionally, and globally with MENA NSs focal points, and provide an update from the facilitator.

1. Opening the meeting:

Nabeh and Elias started by welcoming all COP members, and the new member Chisomo Duncan who joined the COP lately.

2. Cash and voucher assistance mentoring programme

Reem Jawhari provided updates on the CVA mentoring program that is ongoing with five practitioners from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq, each paired with a mentor in order to achieve certain CVA goals and objectives that were set at the beginning of the mentoring program. Over the past four months, they have been working towards the program's objectives focused on organizational and personal development.

Reem added that a new professor joined to assist with the final learning products. Each practitioner is now working on a specific learning paper that aligns with their objective's topic under the professor's guidance, aiming to produce valuable outcomes. These results will be published for broader access, particularly benefiting the MENA region.

3. Cash counting exercise 2024

Nabeh started the cash counting exercise for 2023 to track all CVA interventions from last year. This data will be displayed on the cash Hub website to show the total amount of money implemented through the cash modality.

Nabeh asked everyone to ensure they submit their inputs via the Kobo form. He added that if anyone has questions or needs help filling it out, to feel free to contact him to arrange a meeting to complete it together.

He also emphasized that this exercise is crucial as it highlights the national society's efforts in cash projects across various sectors. So far, only three out of nine NSs have submitted data.

4. Updates from COP members:

• Lebanese Red Cross:

Nour provided an update on the LRC CVA projects. There are currently four cash projects using ATM cards, with two in the North, one in the South of Lebanon, and one in Akkar and Baalbek El Hermel. All projects are in the assessment phase.

The EcoSec team is also implementing e-payment through Million Bridges, with projects in Keserwan and Aley. Beneficiaries were identified after conducting a multisectoral needs assessment. Preparations are ongoing with the hotline, Million Bridges teams, and volunteers to assist beneficiaries effectively.

Nour added that there was a winter storm response project. Despite procurement delays, they distributed 2,500 fuel vouchers worth \$40 each and 2,500 food parcels to households.

• Yemen Red Crescent:

Hened provided an update on new and ongoing projects:

- **New Project:** Supported by ICRC and BRC, it will be implemented in Saada and Al Daleh Governorates, providing multipurpose cash assistance in three rounds for 650 households in each governorate. Assistance amounts are 122,000 Yemeni Rial in Saada and 200,000 Yemeni Rial in Al Daleh. Needs and market assessments are completed and under review.

- **Ongoing Projects:** Two rounds of cash distribution have been completed in Sanaa, Lahj, and Shabwa Governorates for 465 households in each. Assistance amounts were 147,000 Rial in Lahj and Shabwa, and 122,000 Rial in Sanaa. The final round is scheduled for the end of May.
- **Trainings:** Two CVA program implementation tools training were conducted in March, supported by ICRC-BRC, and IFRC.
- **Voucher for Health:** Implemented in five governorates for 600 pregnant women, contracting with hospitals to provide services to pregnant women. This project is active in Lahj and Shabwa , Abian , Omran and Haaja

Elias asked about the delivery mechanism used in the ICRC-BRC cash project, and Hened answered that it is via counters.

Nabeh asked if there are plans for any training this year, and Hened replied affirmatively, stating that there is a training scheduled for all staff involved in the cash project, including individuals from finance and logistics. Chisomo added that this training is the cash support service training and is slated for 2024, and further details will be communicated during the next COP meeting.

- **Egyptian Red Crescent:**

Khouloud faced some technical issues and was not able to speak or hear well but asked about the cash counting exercise in the chat.

Nabeh replied that all Community of Practice meetings are recorded and will be accessible for review within 60 days. The minutes of the meeting will be shared via email and posted on the Community of Practice page on the Cash Hub website.

5. Updates from COP facilitator:

Regarding the updates, Nabeh begins with the first point concerning the disaster management model manual:

The manual has been updated for the IFRC MENA region. Previously lacking a CVA component, now cash and voucher assistance had been added to the basic manual. They have integrated basic explanations such as what cash and voucher assistance, delivery mechanisms, and feasibility studies, spanning around 3 pages. This move aims to advocate for cash and empower people to utilize it across sectors. It's important to note that there are two manuals, one basic and the other advanced. Upon finalization, he will share them for integration within the NSs departments and for individuals to mainstream and use them in training materials and toolkits.

CVA Workshop on Anticipatory Action:

Last month, a training workshop in Uganda covered CVA with Anticipatory Action. This proactive approach develops the capacity to respond to crises before they occur. Nabeh encourages collaboration with the CVA focal point and AA personnel in the NSs to explore integrating cash into contingency plans. He mentioned in the meeting that the following day, he would discuss with the Disaster Risk Management thematic lead which national societies have engaged in the Early Action approach . This workshop's content, driven by

training recommendations, is crucial in our diverse MENA region. Updates will follow, including the outcomes of the next day's meeting.

Elias highlighted that the Lebanese Red Cross has initiated an anticipatory action project. The EcoSec program includes a cash component and an AAP project. Initially planned for last year, implementation was delayed due to pending signatures and has been postponed to this year. This will be their first pilot of the anticipatory action initiative, and they hope for positive feedback on the intervention.

Nabeh highlighted that this information will be useful for the next day's meeting and that this is exactly what he was looking for, as different aspects are often handled separately without CVA focal point involvement. Nabeh added that it's better to sit together, advocate more, and integrate cash requirements from the planning and design stages. This will help the National Society incorporate cash into anticipatory actions and future responses.

Nabeh provided an update on the Access RC self-enrollment registration application. He reminded everyone of previous sessions where Steven and Arturo shared the latest updates on this application during our Community of Practice meetings. The marketing documents have been translated into Arabic and shared. If your national society is interested in using this application, please reach out to Nabeh, who can coordinate with colleagues in Geneva. The self-enrollment registration details are available on the IFRC website. If you need more materials or detailed documents, let Nabeh know, and he will provide practical information.

Lastly, Nabeh mentioned the Global Management Solution and the tendering process conducted by IFRC. The current contract ends in May, and a new FSP will be selected. Updates on the final FSP will be shared soon. He mentioned there are more than one or two FSPs in consideration, but the final selection is not yet known.

Moving to Azim Noorani, he introduced himself as the Cash and Markets Advisor with the Cash-Hub. He announced that next Monday after the meeting, there will be a webinar on advocating for CVA with governments. This high-level webinar will feature senior panelists, including David Deppiatt, representatives from the Cash hub , IFRC ,Turkish Red Crescent, and Bangladesh Red Crescent. He encouraged everyone to join and share the webinar details with their networks. The link for registration was provided in the chat. Azim thanked everyone and expressed hope that many would attend and share the event widely.

Meetings schedule

The CoP meets every second Wednesday of the month at 11:00 Beirut time until February 2025 – the frequency of schedules will be reviewed during the February 2025 meeting.

MENA CVA Community of Practice meetings schedule	
Meeting #	Date
1	1 st September, 2021
2	6 th October, 2021
3	3 rd November, 2021
4	1 st December, 2021
5	5 th January, 2022

6	2 nd February, 2022
7	2 nd March 2022
8	13 th April, 2022
9	11 th May, 2022
10	8 th June, 2022
11	14 th July, 2022
12	10 th August, 2022
13	14 th September, 2022
14	12 th October, 2022
15	9 th November, 2022
16	14 th December, 2022
17	11 th January, 2023
18	8 th February, 2023
19	8 th March, 2023
20	12 th April ,2023
21	10 th May 2023
22	14 th June 2023
23	12 th July 2023
24	9 th August 2023
25	11 th October 2023
26	8 TH November 2023
27	13 th December 2023
28	10 TH January 2024
29	14 th February 2024
30	13 th March 2024
31	10 th April 2024
32	May 8 th , 2024