

MENA CVA Community of Practice

14th of May 2025

*The Fifth CVA MENA COP meeting took place on 14/05/2025 on teams COP series meeting.

Meeting Details & agenda:

Date:	Wednesday May14th, 2025- 11:00 to 12.00 (Beirut time)
Attendees: 12 attendances	Facilitator: Nabeh Allaham, IFRC CVA thematic lead CVA COP Cochair: Elias Hazoury Cash Center of Excellence: Reem Jawhari Lebanese Red Cross: Nour Hamadeh Iraqi Red Crescent: Rasha Younes Iranian Red Crescent Society: Abaas Mohammadi Yemeni Red Crescent Society: Yasmin Mohamad ICRC: Francesca REINHARDT, Chisomo Duncan Teputepu IFRC: Haitham Qoosa
Agenda:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 min).• Updates from COP Members (25 min).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Members will share updates on ongoing 2025 CVA activities.• Cash for Health Outcomes (from health leads perspective). (15 min).• Updates from the COP Facilitator / Co-Chair (10 min).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cash Counting Exercise 2024-2025.○ CVA intervention pictures.• AoB (5 min)

Meeting minutes:

This COP meeting marked the fourth session in the series of monthly COP meetings for 2025. It focused on discussing key developments and ongoing activities at the national, regional, and global levels. The agenda included updates from COP members, showcasing progress and experiences from various National Societies, Cash for Health Outcomes (from Health leads perspective, as well as updates from the COP facilitator on upcoming priorities and coordination efforts.

1. Opening the meeting:

The meeting began with a warm welcome to the COP meeting attendees, followed by a reminder of the meeting agenda.

2. Updates from COP members:

- **Lebanese Red Cross:**

Noor Hamadeh shared updates from the Lebanese Red Cross, highlighting the progress of the cash intervention following the recent conflict in Lebanon. In the first phase, assistance was provided to up to 10,000 households, each receiving a one-time payment of \$200. The program is now moving into its second phase, which aims to support approximately 2,000 households with \$200 per month for six months. If additional funding is secured, the target number of households will be increased accordingly.

The EcoSec team also launched the Cash and Voucher Assistance Preparedness (CVAP) process. The CVA self-assessment exercise was conducted in collaboration with the Cash Centre of Excellence, IFRC, BRC and NorRC. This assessment involved all relevant departments within the Lebanese Red Cross and was followed by a workshop that brought together key stakeholders to evaluate the organization's current cash response capacity.

- **Iraqi Red Crescent:**

Racha from the IRCS provided updates on ongoing projects in 2025 funded by GRC:

- Cash for Work: The project continued with 184 beneficiaries engaged for 20 days, each receiving 25,000 Iraqi Dinars per day.
- Vocational Training: Training continued for 93 beneficiaries over 25 days across several sectors, such as sewing, business management, and phone maintenance. Upon completion, participants received certificates and transportation cash assistance of 13,000 Iraqi Dinars.
- Micro-Economic Initiative: Grants of 1,400,000 Iraqi Dinars were provided to 93 beneficiaries following the signing of agreements.

Nabeh inquired about the DREF related to drought. Racha responded that under the DREF, 200 households will be assisted with cash. Once a new agreement will be signed with a Financial Service Provider to deliver the Cash assistance, introducing a new delivery mechanism.

- **Iranian Red Crescent:**

Abbass mentioned that the IRCS is implementing a Cash for Health project funded by the government. This year, they are working to secure additional funding for their projects, particularly for the Cash for Health component.

He also noted that IRCS is collaborating with UN agencies and is currently exploring partnerships in various fields.

A discussion was held with IOM (International Organization for Migration) regarding Anticipatory Action for floods, aiming to allocate a specific amount of funding to be used in the case of a flood as part of preparedness measures. Abbass added that support is needed from Nabeeh and other colleagues in advancing this component.

- **Yemeni Red Crescent:**

Mr. Chisomo, the CVA Delegate, provided an update on behalf of the YRCs, who currently have two ongoing projects.

The YRECS CVA team is responding to the impact of the recent airstrike in the North, with support from the ICRC, by targeting Sanaa Governorate and providing cash assistance to 100 households where the

Transfer Value is 130\$ (Full MEB). Each household is receiving a total of \$260 as a double payment , with banks serving as the financial service provider. The distribution is ongoing, given the emergency nature of the response.

In addition, regarding to the CVAP POA for 2025 under the emergency, the CVA team is targeting two governorates—one in the North and one in the South—supporting 650 households in each with the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) for three times. Distribution is expected to take place in late May or early June 2025.

YRCs are also working on new proposals focused on CVA for health outcome, by targeting Haja governorate, where YRCS has the functioning health facility already. With support from the German Red Cross, they are also aiming to expand their assistance to reach an additional 500 of the most vulnerable households.

- **Cash center of excellence CCOE:**

The Cash Centre of Excellence has been closely supporting the Lebanese Red Cross throughout the CVAP process. A self-assessment workshop was conducted in collaboration with the IFRC and BRC. As the next step, they are drafting the plan of action and finalizing the report.

Regarding the peer-to-peer exchange program, the Terms of Reference (ToR) are currently being updated. The team is in the final stages of coordination with Nabeeh to identify a host and finalize all preparations. Further updates are expected to be shared in the next meeting.

Reem mentioned that Nagham has been selected as the Co-Chair of the Cash Working Group. She also noted that five National Societies have completed the survey related to CVA patterns. The data is currently being analyzed, and the findings will be shared in a document once ready. This will allow everyone to gain insight into CVA trends across the region over the past few years.

3. The Cash for Health outcome

Elias introduced Mr. Haitham Qosa, the Health and Care MENA Thematic Lead with IFRC. Mr. Qosa expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to attend the meeting and present on the topic of Cash for Health.

He presented the Health and Care Strategic Roadmap 2025–2027 (annexed), focusing on the following topics: Major Health Challenges in MENA

- Role and Responsibilities
- Emerging New Trends
- The 6 Pillars of the Strategic Objectives
- Strategic Directions Overview – Special Considerations: Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for Health

Abbass asked about the best practices and approaches regarding CVA for Health, and whether MHPSS activities fall under Mr. Qosa's management and supervision. Mr. Qosa confirmed that MHPSS is indeed under the Health Department.

He added that the presentation was general, but he is able to go deeper into building the system and program, and to enhance discussions around the value, technicalities, criteria, and modalities—particularly targeting National Society management.

Francesca asked if there are any online resources or tools available, and how National Societies can reach out for more technical support. Mr. Qosa mentioned that there are many available resources online, including from the Cash Hub, WHO, and other sources. He committed to sharing some of these resources with Nabeeh, who will then distribute them to the COP group.

A concern was raised by Chisomo about the short-term nature of cash-for-health programs, noting challenges in linking them to long-term solutions and addressing root health issues sustainably.

Mr. Qosa acknowledged the concern and emphasized the importance of adapting cash-for-health programs to the specific context of each country, which often results in short-term interventions of two to three months. He noted the complexity of achieving long-term impact, especially in settings affected by displacement and natural disasters. While National Societies play a key role in addressing immediate needs, he highlighted that tackling the root causes of limited healthcare access requires coordinated, long-term investments that go beyond emergency programming.

Nabeeh thanked Mr. Qosa for the presentation and noted that five National Societies have shown interest in strengthening their cash for health systems. He highlighted the opportunity to improve coordination between health and CVA focal points and proposed a future meeting to connect CVA focal points from the MENA Health Community of Practice with those from the CVA Community of Practice. He also mentioned that some National Societies, such as Yemen and Syria, have already begun investing in Cash for Health.

4. Updates from COP members

Cash Counting Exercise: Elias mentioned that they reached out to the COP members to verify the data that are already submitted. He mentioned that some technical issues were faced by SARC colleagues and they are working on fixing the issues and resubmitting the data.

CVA intervention pictures: Elias encouraged the colleagues to share pictures related to the cash intervention to be used as documentation and for the reports.

Nabeeh emphasized the importance of using context-specific images from MENA region interventions in future CVA-related documents. He requested National Societies to share recent photos from their 2024 CVA projects that accurately reflect their work, and the needs identified during assessments. These images will be valuable for upcoming publications and should align with RCRC media guidelines.

Nabeeh also provided a brief update on the development of the new Global CVA Roadmap, which will be shaped by National Societies' priorities. He encouraged colleagues to share their priorities to ensure alignment with him as the MENA Cash Roadmap is currently under review.

Meetings schedule

The CoP meets every second Wednesday of the month at 11:00 Beirut time until March 2026 – the frequency of schedules will be reviewed during the March 2027 meeting.

Annexes



MENA Health & Care
Strategic Roadmap 2024-2027