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# UN COMMON CASH STATEMENT

## PROGRESS REPORT | SEPTEMBER 2021

*This report outlines key progress and challenges under the UN Common Cash Statement (UNCCS) and the vision and priorities ahead. It builds on more than two years of implementation, the [UNCCS Q&A](#) and a number of surveys and lessons learned workshops conducted with countries in 2021. While the focus has largely been on implementation in the seven focus countries,<sup>1</sup> the UNCCS continues to grow globally, leveraging the experience gained in recent years, building on existing common guidance.*

<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Bangladesh, CAR, DRC, Ecuador, Niger and Yemen

# OVERALL PROGRESS

Since the launch of the UNCCS, the signatories have made significant progress in its three pillars:



**Harmonised Cash Programming**



**Collaborative Procurement**



**Systems Interoperability**

## Key Highlights

- Harmonized cash transfer mechanisms in 25 countries since 2019
- Progressive implementation of UNCCS plans in the seven focus countries in 2020-21
- Multi-country learning exchange event in April 2021
- 20-country survey on procurement to inform further harmonization in 2021
- UNCCS good practices and learning shared for cross-fertilization
- Common Procurement Registry, including FAO, IOM, UNFPA, identifying common procurement opportunities globally
- Strengthened coherence between UNCCS and country Cash Working Groups

### Joint guidance and tools since 2018:

⋮

Minimum Core Assistance Delivery Dataset for Affected Populations  
providing a basis for data collection and future systems interoperability

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⋮

Trilateral Data-Sharing Agreement for Cash Assistance (UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF)  
providing the basis for data-sharing

⋮

Guidance for Collaborative Procurement for Humanitarian Cash Transfers

## Country-Level Implementation

Collaborative procurement has been/ is being conducted in six focus countries<sup>2</sup> including through piggybacking, collaborative contract clauses and joint procurement. Informed by the Guidance for Collaborative Procurement, 25 countries have leveraged common procurement, inclusive of other

agencies beyond UNCCS, to simplify cash delivery from the perspective of people in need. UNCCS focus countries have also considered options for systems interoperability at country level, avoiding duplication and enhancing programmatic collaboration, in line with the Global Trilateral Data Sharing Agreement (DSA).

<sup>2</sup> Afghanistan, Bangladesh, CAR, Ecuador, DRC and Yemen



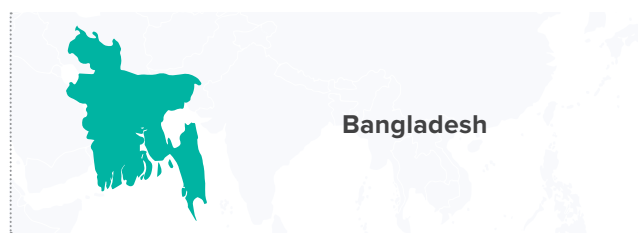
UNCCS signatories are also increasingly engaging in the harmonization of cash assistance, specifically joint feasibility studies, needs and market assessments, post-distribution and price monitoring, Minimum Expenditure Baskets (MEBs), mapping of complaints

and feedback mechanisms and common risks and data registries. Cash Working Groups (CWGs) have engaged throughout these processes with key activities planned to support collaborative approaches to cash.



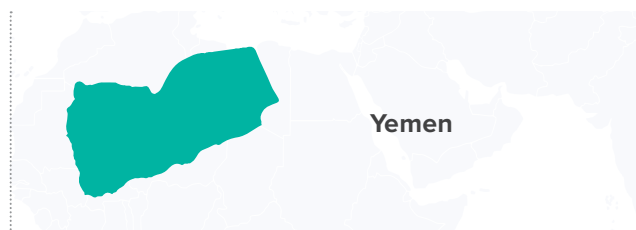
UNICEF, WFP and UNHCR conducted joint procurement and harmonized programming delivering seamless and complementary cash assistance for food, basic needs/ core relief items and education to refugee and migrant households. Systems interoperability and improved data sharing are also on-going.

Bilateral systems interoperability between WFP *SCOPE* and UNHCR *proGres*, linked with *Building Blocks*, allowed other agencies (e.g. UNICEF and IOM) to access beneficiary data to provide emergency cash and voucher assistance (CVA) for affected people. Agencies have also engaged in collaborative procurement through piggybacking on financial service provider (FSP) contracts.



Signatories have harmonized cash assistance through collaborative FSP procurement and working closely with CWGs and NGOs. UNHCR and WFP have piggybacked on existing Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) with FSPs and initiated discussions on joint procurement of new FSPs. The agencies have also mapped out data through the Minimum Core Assistance Delivery Dataset for Affected Populations.

Agencies have assessed entry points for systems interoperability through a comprehensive interoperability assessment including agencies beyond the UNCCS. WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF have kick-started the process for joint procurement of FSPs building on previous piggybacking arrangements. The signatories have also developed a joint risk framework for CVA.



The UNCCS agencies have harmonized joint feasibility assessments. Collaborative procurement is on-going, and opportunities exist to pursue joint advocacy on documentation for IDPs. WFP and UNHCR also delivered joint CVA in the emergency response for refugees from Central African Republic and developed joint targeting approaches for the relevant refugee contexts.



The operation engaged in joint feasibility assessment and harmonized monitoring. They also leveraged country-based pooled funding to pilot certain aspects of the UNCCS in collaboration with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Collaborative procurement is a priority going forward.



The team conducted joint feasibility assessments, MEB development and mapping of cash activities in collaboration with the CWG. UNHCR and WFP have piggybacked on each other's FSP contracts, using the same transfer mechanisms.



## Global Working Group: Procurement and Finance

The 2020 Guidance for Collaborative Procurement for Humanitarian Cash Transfers has been implemented in 25 operations. Globally, the UNCCS Procurement and Finance Working Group (PFWG) established a register of existing and up-coming contracts with FSPs to fast-track the identification of common procurement opportunities in operations. The register was extended to include agencies beyond the three operational UNCCS signatories, including FAO, IOM and UNFPA. UNCCS is keen to build bridges with the NGOs on procurement, including through leveraging the collaborative clause in current FSP

contracts which provides the opportunity for any partner – big or small – to benefit from the already negotiated fees and conditions. This can reduce parallel payment mechanisms while recognizing the different procurement procedures of the UN and NGOs. The PFWG engaged in several learning exercises with country offices to simplify and harmonize joint procurement. This included a survey of UNCCS agencies in 20 countries followed by a series of interviews on collaborative procurement. The feedback will guide the way forward and priorities for this group in 2021-2022.

### Survey and Interview Findings on Collaborative Procurement

- Findings from 20 countries identified piggybacking as the most frequently used and preferred collaborative procurement approach, followed by the systematic inclusion of a collaborative clause in individual agencies' contracts with FSPs and joint procurement.
- While operations highlight the usefulness, effectiveness and suitability of collaborative procurement, they emphasized the need for lighter processes and harmonized common tools for joint procurement.
- UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP are now working to harmonize their internal agency-specific request for proposal (RFP) documents (including terms of references, technical and financial assessments, etc.) and align processes to ensure they maintain standards required by each agency.
- UNCCS is keen to do the same with NGOs. Increased engagement between programme and procurement staff at country level is required to ensure ownership of the complex processes.

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