

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE  
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

60th Meeting

24-26 June 2015

NGO Statement – Innovation: Cash-based interventions

We commend UNHCR for ensuring that expanded and systematic use of cash-based interventions is an institutional priority. This is evidenced in UNHCR's efforts to expand its institutional body of evidence, policies and capacities to increase CBIs, doubling the number of countries where cash-based programming is used in the past five years, and developing an institutional strategic plan to ensure effective implementation of CBIs.

We call on donors to support UNHCR's efforts in this regard, including supporting any additional capacity needed for effective implementation. We also call on donors to track UNHCR's progress on these commitments through available oversight channels.

We encourage UNHCR and donors to continue rapidly and significantly expanding the number of people supported through unconditional cash transfers and expanding the proportion of their budgets allocated to this intervention. Specifically, UNHCR and donors should critically examine using cash instead of non-food item (NFI) distribution and food assistance where beneficiary preferences, markets and security allow. Additionally, we urge donors to invest in building and strengthening the financial infrastructure to enable greater use of unconditional cash transfers. Finally, we call on donors to boost their own operational capacity to program unconditional cash interventions and align their strategies to implement CBIs.

The EU "10 Common Principles for Multi-Purpose Cash-Based Assistance to Respond to Humanitarian Needs" is an excellent framework for situating CBIs in the landscape of humanitarian intervention. Other donors should seek to adopt it as their guiding principles.

Cash-based interventions have proven to not only be an effective support mechanism for displaced people, but have a positive impact on the local economy benefiting states and communities hosting the displaced. NGOs will work with host states bearing the brunt of the impact of displacement on aligning the use of CBIs with their targeting of support to the vulnerable and social assistance frameworks.