



GROUP CASH TRANSFERS

Guidance and Tools

February 2021

Prepared by Key Aid Consulting for DCA and CaLP



About the Group Cash Transfers guidance, tools and report

The package consists of several related materials:

- 1) Guidance for group cash transfers (GCTs);
- 2) GCT tools;
- 3) GCT glossary;
- 4) A report on Leveraging the Potential for Group Cash Transfers; and
- 5) A tip-sheet on engaging beyond CVA actors.

Authors

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Frontpage image

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Abbreviations

BoQ	Bill of Quantities
CaLP	Cash Learning Partnership
CAP	Community Action Plan
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CHS	The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability
CoP	Community of Practice
CTL	Counter Terrorism Legislation
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
CfW	Cash for Work
CWG	Cash Working Group
DCA	DanChurchAid
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FS	Financial Service Provider
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCT	Group Cash Transfer
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interview
L2GP	Local to Global Protection
LGBTQI+	An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex; the “plus” is intended as an all-encompassing representation of sexual orientations and gender identities
LNA	Local and National Actors
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
MRCS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
MPC	Multipurpose Cash
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PALC	Participatory Action Learning in Crisis
PVCA	Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
SADD	Sex and Age Disaggregated Data
sclr	survivor and community led response ¹
SHG	Self-Help Group
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
VRC	Village Resilience Committee
WRC	Women’s Refugee Commission

1. As actors developing and working with this approach does not want to term sclr as a universal term, but generally want facilitating agencies s to term ‘sclr’ as fitting to their context, the preference is to not capitalise ‘sclr’ as a fixed abbreviation.

Group Cash Transfers (GCTs) as a term was decided upon based on a brainstorming with review group members for this guidance, and through discussions with the relevant CaLP TAG Working Group. While the GCT approach is also referred to as community cash, this term led to discrepancies in understanding who the grants targeted.

GCTs consist of resource provision in the form of cash transfers to a selected group of people from an affected population to implement projects that benefit either a subsection of the community or the community at large.

Actors engaged in the GCT approach are free to call GCTs whatever term they find most relevant to their context. The term “GCTs” will however be included in the Cash and Learning Partnership’s (CaLP) Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) glossary. (there is an ongoing revision of CaLP’s glossary).

GCTs as an emerging practice –pilot guidance and tools

The current version of the guidance and tools have not been tested in practice. Therefore, the guidance is considered a pilot that facilitating agencies are encouraged to try, fine-tune, contextualise and update. The varying existing practices around GCTs and actors engaged in it are expected to lead to continuous improvements through learning by doing.²

Updates, inputs and reflections can be shared with Christer Lænkholm, lead on the CaLP TAG GCT working group: chl@dca.dk.

2. Throughout 2021, the sclr CoP is looking for contributions on: optimal scale of GCTs, GCTs for livelihoods recovery, GCTs and group formation, GCTs for community-level peacebuilding and social cohesion, and GCTs and local resource mobilisation. Follow the [L2GP website](#) for updates.



Photo credit: Unbound

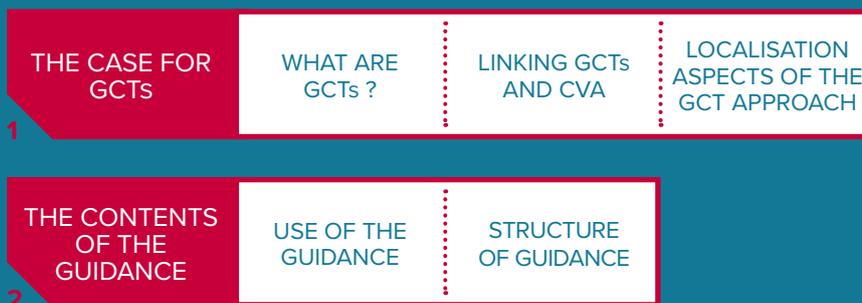
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Introduction to Group Cash Transfers

The purpose of this document is to provide practical guidance and tools for humanitarian actors to implement Group Cash Transfers (GCT). This introduction chapter highlights the benefits and components of the GCT approach, as well as the contents of this guidance.

The guidance is developed on the basis of existing and emergent practices.

Figure 1: Focus of the Introduction Chapter



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The guidance is for:

- Humanitarian and development practitioners that want to transfer decision-making power and agency to crisis-affected populations
- Actors engaged in cash and voucher assistance (CVA)
- Actors engaged in community-led responses
- Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), local and national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), other local and national actors (LNAs) including faith actors, International NGOs (INGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, and donors

The guidance refers to *facilitating agencies* throughout. The term is used to emphasise that GCT approaches can be led by LNAs who have direct funding or are supported by INGOs and UN Agencies to act as intermediaries. GCTs can also however be facilitated directly by international actors. There is a general consensus that the GCT approach should shift away from a “top-down” process to ensure that crisis-affected populations are leading the response, with other actors engaging in supportive roles (see [Section 2.1.1](#). Assessing the capacity of GCT facilitating agencies).

1.1 | The case for GCTs

WHAT ARE GCTs?

In its essence, the GCT approach seeks to transfer decision-making power and agency to affected communities (typically delimited by geographical location) or community groups³ to enable them to better respond to their own needs and priorities. The primary transfer modality for GCTs is cash transfers for selected groups to implement projects that benefit a sub-section of the affected population, or the members of the supported groups and their families, depending on the context of implementation.

The approach is most thoroughly developed and documented by a Community of Practice (CoP) centred around ‘survivor and community-led crisis response’ (sclr) led by the [Local to Global Protection](#) (L2GP) initiative. This CoP considers GCTs/group microgrants⁴ to be one component of sclr.

When can GCTs be used as a response option?

GCTs have been used by various humanitarian and development actors globally as a response to sudden and slow onset natural disasters, in conflict and post-conflicts, and in development and non-emergency programming. This guidance is useful in a variety of settings:

- As part of emergency programming, including sudden-onset and protracted crises; conflict, and natural and climate disasters

3. E.g., self-help groups, CBOs, community committees and other formal and informal structures.

4. GCTs are called ‘group micro-grants’ in the sclr CoP.

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- As part of development and nexus programming including resilience and disaster-risk reduction projects
- As part of peacebuilding projects or to strengthen social coherence
- Within both long-term and short-term programming
- During preparedness and response activities
- As stand-alone interventions to support groups and communities with cash assistance or alongside other activities, including individual or household level CVA support
- In host community, internal displacement, refugee and migrant settings

Practically GCTs are:

- Smaller grants typically set within a range of \$200 - \$7,000⁵ with average values between \$2,000 and \$3,000
- Usually transferred as a one-off payment, but could also be provided in multiple instalments depending on the project and amount
- Unrestricted and largely unconditional cash transfers
- Available to unregistered, emerging, self-mobilising groups that have formed to respond to a crisis or challenge
- Distributed to groups based on simple project proposals
- Provided to one or several groups within the target area(s)
- Used to respond to priorities that members of affected populations identify – either through formalised assessment processes or more informal processes of idea generation

The impacts of using GCTs

- The GCT approach recognises that crisis-affected communities (conflict, natural disasters, health-crises, etc.) are themselves usually the first responders and that strong elements of activism, self-help, and mutual support already exist within these populations. Both the processes around GCTs and the actual cash transfers aim to support these first responders in initiating and/or continuing community-led actions and responses.
- Overall, the goal of the GCT approach is to enhance community-led responses for immediate survival and recovery needs. However, documented learning and research on both sclr and other community-led initiatives suggest that GCTs are also effective in promoting real participation through the explicit transfer of decision-making power; strengthening social cohesion; increasing the sense of dignity, psychosocial benefits, self-protection, self-reliance and resiliency, and gender equality; and improving groups' institutional capacities to respond even more rapidly to crises.⁶ Furthermore, GCTs allow people to start thinking about and planning for recovery.
- The GCT approach is not a fixed package – even with the use of this guidance, alterations to the approach are encouraged, and there will be significant variations in outcomes across – and even within – contexts.

5. GCT is different from both small grant programmes (e.g., \$10,000-\$40,000) and micro-loan programmes.

6. See this report's [Bibliography](#).

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In some contexts, GCT may be used effectively as a stand-alone approach to support groups and communities with cash assistance, however designing GCTs in isolation is not the aim of the approach. In fact, GCTs have proven to be most effective when used complementarily and implemented alongside other activities, including individual or household level CVA support.

Importance of community-led response

The GCT approach is structured around community-led responses where affected populations are empowered, have access to inputs, and take the lead on responding to community needs. The key is for facilitating agencies to function as enablers and technical advisors, and to facilitate “bottom-up” approaches. For this, facilitating agencies will need to adopt new ways of working, such as shifting the leadership of analysis processes away from themselves and to the members of crisis-affected communities.

Community-led response refers to interventions and initiatives that are designed and implemented by a group of people who have a common goal or shared problem(s) they want to tackle together either on behalf of their community or the group members. The concerns to address may range from responding to sudden onset crises to building long-term resilience.

The table below highlights what the differences are between “community-led”, “community-based” and “community informed responses”.

Community-led response (GCTs fall within this category)

The primary role of facilitating agencies is to help people from affected areas take the lead in responding to their own needs.

Processes and decision-making are completely led by people from affected areas through consensus of either a group or the larger community.

Community-based response

Facilitating agencies support people from affected areas to respond and provide them with the necessary inputs.

Processes and decision-making are done collaboratively by people from affected areas and facilitating agencies

Community-informed response

Facilitating agencies systematically engage with people from the affected areas, but still lead the response.

Processes and decision-making are largely led by facilitating agencies.

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LINKING GCTs AND CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE (CVA)

The CaLP glossary defines **Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)** as: all programmes where cash transfers or vouchers for goods or services are directly provided to recipients. In the context of humanitarian assistance, the term is used to refer to the provision of cash transfers or vouchers given to individuals, household or community recipients, not to governments or other state actors. (Emphasis added by report authors)

In its definition of CVA, the Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) includes ‘community recipients’ as a potential category of CVA recipients. Yet, there is limited literature, guidance, or evidence available on the provision of CVA as group or community cash grants. The key link between the GCT approach and CVA is the largely unrestricted, unconditional transfer of cash, although in the case of GCTs the primary recipients are not individuals or households, as further discussed below. This guidance will show where processes between CVA and GCTs overlap or differ.

There is no requirement for actors who are interested in engaging in GCTs to have pre-existing CVA expertise. However, a basic understanding is considered relevant, and several **online courses** are available to support learning.⁷

Unlike conventional CVA, the primary purpose of GCTs is not to respond to household or individual needs for all members of targeted populations. Instead, its goal is to work alongside mainstream humanitarian interventions to complement activities that focus on the affected populations’ priorities. Hence, the GCT approach is qualitatively different from individual and household cash transfers, and therefore cuts back on some of the programmatic steps required for CVA (and to some extent, assumes that many of the steps have already been followed in developing the main humanitarian responses).

The differences between unrestricted household cash transfers captured in the table below:

Community-led response (GCTs fall within this category)

Unrestricted cash transfers are made to individuals and/or households without any restrictions on their use. Recipient selection is often made by facilitating agencies, based on need and with transfer amounts calculated according to a (Survival) Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), and depending on the size of households.

For example: Cash transfers to meet basic household needs, cash for livelihood activities, cash intended to increase people’s access to services, etc.

7. For general trainings on CVA and Markets, see CaLP’s free online training catalogue on [KayaConnect](#) with several trainings available in multiple languages. For more resources on gender and GBV in CVA, see available resources and trainings from [Women’s Refugee Commission](#).

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Community-based response

These transfers are made to a group of people within an affected population, who have organised themselves to implement a project that meets commonly identified short-term and/or long-term challenges. Transfer amounts for GCTs range from \$200 to \$7,000 depending on the scale of the groups' proposed projects.

The average amount distributed to groups is typically between \$2000 and \$3000.

For example: Cash transfers made to a group to respond in the aftermath of an earthquake by repairing infrastructure.

LOCALISED AND COMMUNITY-LED: GCTs TRANSFER POWER TO THE GRASSROOT LEVEL

Facilitating agencies who are engaged in GCTs, generally appreciate GCTs as a transfer modality that can be used to deliver assistance effectively while pushing the localisation agenda forward. However, unlike the more general understanding of localisation that focuses on transferring the control of resources to local actors, GCTs go even further by empowering citizens at the grassroots level.⁸ GCTs create space for the critical step of allowing facilitating agencies to rethink how they 'do aid' – in other words, to understand that GCTs are about engaging with crisis-affected communities differently, and not just about LNAs stepping into the roles international agencies traditionally hold and using the same ways of working. Transferring power all the way to crisis-affected populations does not mean that facilitating agencies should completely "let go," as the GCT approach still includes checks and balances to ensure that everything goes well.

What is a "community"?

This guidance is cautious in using "community" as a stand-alone term to represent a wider group of people in an affected area, as this term has a tendency to group different people in homogenous "communities". Therefore, with respect to the heterogeneity of crisis-affected populations, the guidance and tools mostly refer to 'supported groups', i.e. groups that have received a GCT. When talking about groups and people who have not yet been supported, the guidance uses 'communities' or 'affected populations.' These terms are to be understood to describe sub-sections of a population who are either delimited by a geographical area or by common attributes and/or purpose. These common attributes can focus on, for example, livelihoods groups (e.g., fishermen) or other characteristics that bestow a sense of shared identity for a group of people (e.g. intersecting identities, such as gender or disability). GCT projects are often implemented by multiple groups within an affected population that may itself comprise several different communities.

8. For more details on the localisation agenda, see [Grand Bargain Workstream 2: Localisation](#).

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1.2 | The content of the guidance

This guidance highlights key steps and considerations to take to be able to design, implement and monitor GCTs. The guidance is accompanied by a set of tools, as well as references to existing tools, to help facilitating agencies and GCT-supported groups with implementing the approach. Furthermore, this guidance document includes five small case studies to highlight some of the existing practices around GCTs. Lastly, this guidance is supported by a short report on “Leveraging the Potential for Group Cash Transfers” by Key Aid Consulting that highlights critical challenges, as well as enablers and opportunities for GCTs.

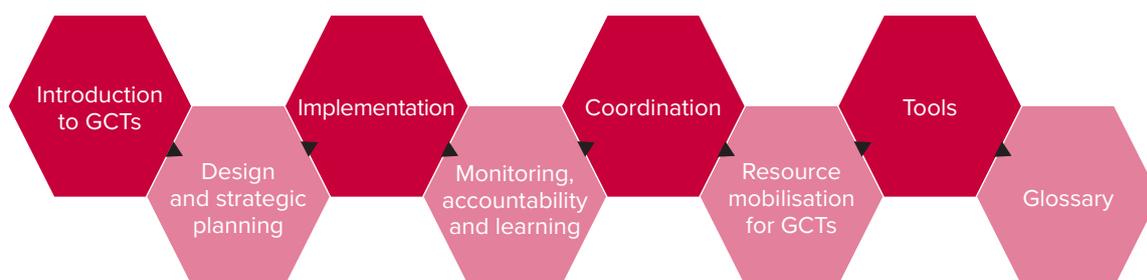
WITH THE USE OF THIS GUIDANCE, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO:

1. Understand the capacities facilitating agencies need to implement GCTs
2. Understand the type of support and guidance facilitating agencies may need to provide to groups
3. Start to introduce and advocate for GCTs within your organisation/agency, for example engaging senior management, and finance and procurement staff
4. Rapidly pilot and implement GCTs as part of an emergency response
5. Implement GCTs as part of longer-term responses
6. Continuously advocate within organisations/agencies and to donors for GCTs as an effective response option

STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDANCE

While this guidance document follows the humanitarian programme cycle, it should be noted that most of the processes included significantly differ from the usual ways of working, particularly in how crisis-affected communities are engaged for collecting data and implementing activities. Some of the processes presented for facilitating GCTs may be engaged alongside activities that occur in the humanitarian programme cycle, for example a household-level needs assessment, financial service provider (FSP) mapping, and establishing accountability measures. Other GCT processes, particularly those related to implementation, differ in their goal of transferring agency to, and ways of engaging, groups. However, it should be stressed that GCTs can be used alongside and synergistically with individual and household interventions. Where relevant, the guidance makes references to external tools that can be applied to GCTs.

Figure 2: Structure of the guidance document



As a foundation for a successful GCT approach, and to avoid doing harm, it is suggested to follow the steps outlined in this guidance. The accompanying tools are standard tools that should be adapted to the facilitating agencies' needs and the context of the response.



Photo credit: Nils Carstensen / L2GP

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Design and strategic planning

The following three sections detail the key steps of designing and planning a GCT project. The initial phase of Preparedness is covered in [section 2.1.](#) and can be engaged in at any time throughout the humanitarian programme cycle. This is followed by [section 2.2.](#) on Situation analysis and [section 2.3.](#) on Response analysis and programme design.

Figure 3: Focus of the Chapter 2



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Despite having built-in steps in the GCT approach to maximise project success, a key element in the design and strategic planning phase is for facilitating agencies to agree upon a ‘safe-to-fail’ approach with all stakeholders. It is critical that financial risks are not transferred to community groups. The sclr CoP considers the safe-to-fail approach experiential learning⁹ with a general recognition that things do not always go according to plan, and that facilitating agencies should plan for a period for adaptations where things may not work. Different facilitating agencies that have already engaged in GCTs have seen constant changes to project activities for multiple reasons but have managed to build in a level of staff support and other steps (inspiring this guidance document) that help to manage such changes, adaptations and mitigations.

2.1 | Preparedness

Note: for further guidance on this step see the [CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox on Preparedness](#).

Once an organisation or agency makes the decision to use GCTs, it should engage in a preparedness process that includes both programme and support staff. For example, finance, procurement and logistics, and MEAL teams should be engaged starting from the preparedness and design stages to ensure buy-in and agreement on which compliance structures can be “softened.” It is critical that facilitating agencies affirm that there is organisational willingness to delegate responsibilities and decision-making powers as well as resources to crisis-affected populations, and that the transfer of power and agency is supported at the strategic level. The preparedness stage does not have to be a long process and can happen alongside programme design and implementation.

2.1.1. ASSESSING THE CAPACITY OF GCT FACILITATING AGENCIES

Facilitating community-led responses: The key focus in preparedness for GCTs should be on developing or strengthening facilitating agencies’ capacities to engage communities in leading and learning from responses, and to manage challenges that arise. It is critical that facilitating agencies build their confidence for conducting such activities, which often occurs through strong engagement with crisis-affected communities, and through having a core belief in, and passion for empowerment and a readiness to transfer power. The following section provides a background on the various roles of GCT-related actors to inform how to best engage them. Roles and responsibilities may change according to the context and the type of partnership between the donor and facilitating agency. The following list outlines some considerations that the facilitating agencies may include in a simple self-assessment prior to their engagement in GCTs.

9. See [sclr Training Package, Day 4, Handouts – “Experiential Learning”](#).

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Key capacity assessment considerations for facilitating agencies include:

- How has the actor engaged in GCTs or similar transfer modalities in the past?
- Does the actor have any experience in cash and voucher assistance?
- Does the actor have experience in community-based or community-led responses?
- Does the actor have existing orientation on equality and equity?
- What is the actor's capacity to facilitate community-led responses and how can capacities best be strengthened?
- Do the actor's organisational structures - including finance, procurement, logistics and senior management - support the GCT approach and processes?
- How has the actor already engaged with relevant stakeholders? What efforts are needed to strengthen its network and coordination with those stakeholders?

Roles and responsibilities of actors engaged in GCTs

Please note that the following information does not focus on the supported groups, but rather the facilitating agencies and funding partners. The role of supported groups is mainly described in [Section 3](#). Implementation.

The role of LNAs: Global commitments on localisation encourage donors to engage directly with LNAs as the facilitating agencies. LNAs are often better suited to manage GCTs in a crisis response and able to respond more quickly than international agencies, especially in sudden-onset crises, as they are often embedded within the communities, understand the inherent dynamics, and are trusted. In reality however, many national and local NGOs are continuously engaged as **downstream partners**. In such partnerships, the LNAs should advocate for supporting partners (INGOs, UN agencies, etc.) to support them with relevant capacity strengthening and to ease any controls that may act as barriers to GCTs.

The role of international agencies: International agencies engaged in GCTs may be either **funding partners** for LNAs or directly engaged in facilitating GCTs. In cases where international actors fund LNAs, it is critical that the international agency is committed to adjusting its own organisational practices, expectations and restrictions to support community-led responses and hand over responsibilities and decision-making power to LNAs/the facilitating agencies. The international agency should recognise where it adds most value to GCT projects, i.e. through strengthening capacities, facilitating networking, and incorporating wider lessons learned into specific projects. It is possible for international agencies to directly facilitate GCT projects, although this guidance recommends that they first explore options of engaging interested LNAs. In line with requirements of LNAs, any international agency engaged in direct implementation must also have the capacity facilitate community-led responses.

Sustained engagement through community facilitators: Irrespective of who the facilitating agency is, GCT actors are encouraged to explore ways to sustain engagement with groups to implement the community-led response. Facilitating agencies could, for example, hire

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community facilitators who are embedded in the projects and locations throughout the design, implementation and monitoring phases. Other facilitating agencies may have strong volunteer networks that can facilitate continuous engagement with groups.

Collaboration with local authorities and private sector actors: Establishing relations with local authorities and private sector actors is an important part of the GCT process, regardless of who is the facilitating agency. These actors are key to developing and implementing successful GCT projects, as creating such linkages increases the likelihood of projects connecting to existing local structures, for example, health clinics. Engaging local authorities helps to increase their understanding and acceptance of the GCT processes, which ultimately may lead to local authorities (by way of the national government or local departments) funding or contributing to the projects. Similarly, there is the potential that engaging private sector actors will lead them to act as local donors.

Existing presence in targeted locations

There is no requirement for facilitating agencies to already have a presence in locations where they will implement a GCT project. More importantly however, they must have the drive to transfer power to the targeted communities and groups. However, contextual and cultural knowledge is essential to ensuring successful coordination and engagement with communities and an appropriate response. Initial meetings with clearly recognised community structures (where these exist) are important, as is a consideration of the power dynamics at play within these structures (since in most cases, these are likely to be dominated by able-bodied adult males).

If a facilitating agency has an **existing, longer-term** presence providing other assistance in a given context, it is critical to properly communicate to the communities how the GCT processes are different to previous assistance they may have received. Otherwise, there is a risk that affected populations will have difficulties understanding the change in processes and power relations inherent in the GCT approach.

2.1.2. CAPACITY STRENGTHENING EFFORTS FOR FACILITATING AGENCIES

The key to a successful GCT project is ensuring that the facilitating agency has the capacity to properly carry out community-led responses.¹⁰ Facilitating agencies are not required to have a basic understanding of CVA and markets, but it can be advantageous to understand the benefits and technical details of transferring cash to crisis-affected populations.

Facilitating agencies should be proactive in seeking out capacity strengthening activities, as well as resources for such activities. Design elements of capacity strengthening can consider:

- ▶ Directly budgeting-for in a project's design/proposal (i.e. in the budget component held by the facilitating agency)

10. See for example, [UNHCR Manual on a Community Based Approach](#), March 2008; Action Aid [Safety with Dignity - Women Led Community Based Protection manual](#) (the manual provides practical guidance for NGO staff on the integration of a community-based protection approach putting women's leadership at the centre).

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- Provision of training by a funding partner or other relevant actor outside of project budgets
- When funded directly, LNAs can even sub-contract international agencies to support their capacity strengthening
- Activities can be supported by people with various expertise areas, including staff of other local and national NGOs, INGOs, government departments, and private sector actors.

GCT training/co-design workshop: No generalised GCT training is currently available. Instead, a range of training and workshop materials are available from existing practices of the [sclr](#) in French and English, with some of tools also being available in Arabic and Burmese. In addition, the sclr CoP has several facilitators that can support a sclr co-design workshop,¹¹ and an online sclr training module is currently being developed.¹² The aspect of co-designing relates to the workshop format creating an opportunity for facilitating agencies to contextualise the GCT/sclr tools directly in the workshop with the support of the workshop facilitators/trainers. Facilitating agencies are highly encouraged to set-up an initial co-design workshop for both programme and operational support staff, including finance, procurement and managers. Such initial workshops can also include representatives of other LNAs (including local authorities where relevant) and international agencies that are present in the target areas.

The purpose of a co-design workshop is five-fold:

1. Create awareness of, and commitment to, the benefits of GCTs and their inherent transfer of power (use this guidance document and accompanying report)
2. Create an understanding of GCT processes and their CVA components (use this guidance document)
3. Contextualise and co-design GCT tools (use this guidance document and accompanying tools)
4. Justify and agree on operational parameters (e.g. cash flow, reporting requirements etc.)
5. Define the roles and responsibilities of facilitating agencies and funding partners

Cross-cutting issues in capacity strengthening

Among the priority topics for capacity strengthening efforts are primarily protection mainstreaming, gender and inclusion, accountability, and disaster preparedness. While the GCT approach seeks to take a step back from a top-down enforcement of minimum standards. Therefore, the following list highlights recommendations for topics that should at minimum be discussed in facilitating agencies' capacity strengthening activities.

Do-no-harm and protection mainstreaming: In line with Sphere Standards and other humanitarian commitments, facilitating agencies should maintain an internal focus to consistently ensure no-harm is done during GCT programmes, and that protection concerns are mainstreamed throughout all activities. Training staff on protection mainstreaming should thus be part of capacity strengthening, and all facilitating agency teams engaging with groups (community facilitators, volunteers) should have female and male representatives.

11. Training and general support from the sclr CoP can be requested via [Local to Global Protection](#) initiative.

12. January 2020. See updates on the training development via the [Local to Global Protection site](#) dedicated to sclr

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Gender and inclusion: GCTs are a way to enable women’s empowerment and engagement in decision-making. However, there may still be gender gaps and specific risks to women and girls, as well as to other groups and individuals at risk, that facilitating agencies should pay attention to. If the facilitating agency does not have capacity to address these risks, they may want to consider collaborating with women-led and women’s rights groups, for example. To ensure gender and inclusion are properly accounted for when facilitating GCTs, facilitating actors should:

- Ensure that they have the capacity to assess and analyse specific risks for women, girls and specific marginalised groups (LGBTQI+, elderly, married girls under 18, individuals living with disabilities, etc.)
- Create a safe/confidential space to discuss sensitive topics with communities around gender and gender-based violence (GBV)
- Make sure that communications and information about GCTs reaches women, girls and specific vulnerable groups
- Ensure that support is available for low-literate/numerate groups who are interested in participating in the GCT project
- Link GCT projects to existing initiatives for women, girls and specific vulnerable groups, including referral services (and train staff on how to make referrals)
- Connect GCT projects and groups to organisations implementing activities on gender and GBV, including ensuring that frontline staff are trained on referral pathways and existing services
- Make sure that safeguarding measures, such as preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, are part of accountability structures

CASE STUDY 1 | National facilitating agencies training across countries

Actors engaged	Judy Organization for Relief and Development (JORD), Iraq Young Men Christian Association (YMCA), Palestine DanChurchAid (DCA), Iraq and Palestine
Purpose of project	Training of JORD staff in preparation for the project “survivor and community-led response through Community Participation and Engagement”
Timing	December 2020
Location	Erbil, Iraq
Participants	17 staff from JORD and DCA Iraq (8 female and 9 male)

The following case study showcases capacity strengthening efforts of a facilitating agency and a supporting partner in Iraq.

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Setting up peer training for facilitating agencies: In 2020, actors in the sclr CoP supported to establish a relationship between DCA partners working in Palestine and Iraq. YMCA, Palestine had extensive experience in facilitating sclr and JORD, Iraq had an interest in piloting the approach. A remote briefing was first set up between YMCA and JORD, facilitated in Arabic to increase the JORD staff's inclusion and understanding.

Training conducted by community facilitators: In December 2020, two community facilitators from Palestine conducted a five-day face-to-face training in Iraq. The facilitators shared their experiences of conducting sclr, with a particular emphasis on the Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (PVCA) tools and how to use GCTs.



Training outcomes: At the end of the training, the participants stated that they were ready to use the PVCA tools in the planned project and that they felt prepared to design and facilitate community-led responses, including the use of GCTs.

Added Value: The added value of having staff from another facilitating agency conduct the training, instead of an international funding partner, was indisputable, as it allowed YMCA's community facilitators to share their experiences of having been directly involved in facilitating sclr activities for several years in the West Bank. In this scenario, having the training in a language that all JORD staff understood further strengthened the quality and outcomes of the training. Lastly, YMCA staff remain available to provide online support and coaching to JORD while they implement their project.

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2.1.3. CONSIDERING A PILOT PROJECTS

Piloting is not considered a pre-requisite to engaging in the GCT approach. Many of the benefits of piloting a project may be harnessed from just “starting small”, or engaging in a longer preparedness phase, depending on the context.

Testing the GCT approach in hazard-prone areas can potentially enable a more rapid response when a disaster strikes and allows facilitating agencies to get accustomed to the GCT approach. In other crisis settings, piloting may be a way to test how GCT can best be implemented before being scaled. Piloting can also be a way to document and collect evidence on the outcomes of using GCTs, which can be used with donors, in coordination spaces, and internally in organisations to advocate for using the approach. Peer-to-peer learning is valuable in the pilot stage; see Section [4.2.1.2 Learning and sharing learning across groups](#).

This guidance can be used either for piloting or for establishing GCT projects.

2.2 | Situation Analysis

Note: for further guidance on this step see the [CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox](#) on **Situation Analysis**.

The Situation Analysis in the GCT approach should be a simple analysis. Most importantly, while the facilitating agencies may lead some components of the analysis to update existing contextual information, the overall process should be led by crisis-affected communities. If GCTs are implemented alongside other humanitarian activities, most of the basic data will likely already be available, so make sure not to duplicate any data collection efforts. Using secondary information is an effective and efficient way to create a basic understanding of socioeconomic and political dynamics of the targeted context.

To ensure the facilitating team has an effective understanding of gender equality, inclusion and GBV risks, the facilitating agency should seek to engage gender and protection experts,¹³ and train all team members on gender and GBV considerations.¹⁴

This chapter outlines the most relevant parts of the Situation Analysis for GCTs. As is the case with other sections of this guidance, **facilitating agencies are encouraged to simplify processes as much as possible**. Due to the complementary nature of GCTs with other humanitarian activities – and hence existing data that will likely already be available, many of the following steps can likely be skipped.



Facilitating agencies should recognise that many of the following elements occur organically, as a result of the GCT approach that creates a space for gender and protection ‘mainstreaming’ measures to occur more naturally.

13. Gender and protection experts could be a staff member embedded in the team or could be ensured through regular support from other actors, e.g., local women led groups or women’s rights organisations.

14. See for example, the [CVA-GBV Compendium \(2019\)](#).

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2.2.1. UPDATING THE CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The following table highlights some of the mainstream considerations that are relevant to GCT projects (as well as other humanitarian programmes):

Geographical target area	Define the GCT's intended area (most likely based on contextual knowledge and presence). For more information on the role of agencies' pre-existing geographical presence, see Section 2.1.1. Assessing the capacity of GCT facilitating agencies
Coordination	Coordinate with other actors (e.g. other agencies and local governments) to avoid duplication. See Section 5. Coordination of GCT
Target groups	Gain an understanding of the population density, community relations/structure, power dynamics, and sex, age and ability distribution. Map existing groups and their activities, such as self-help groups and women's groups as well as spontaneously formed groups in response to a crisis. See Section 2.3.1. Engaging groups
Social cohesion¹⁵	Consider social cohesion by, for example, including a mix of villages and camps, or mixed ethnic and religious groups. Inherent in social cohesion efforts is the creation of trusting relationships between humanitarian actors, affected populations and local government actors.
Do-no-harm	The do-no-harm principle refers to minimising the inadvertent harm that may be caused as a result of providing aid. Facilitating agencies can, for example, proactively avoid and reduce harm by engaging volunteers and community facilitators who are embedded in the community. They should then be able to detect and react to any form of harm that may have arisen out of a GCT process or group project.
Gender equality, risks and social inclusion	Pay attention to the different impacts of the crisis on women, men, children, youth, adults and elderly people. Within these population groups, also be attentive to disability status, sexual/social identity and citizenship status (refugee, Internally Displaced Person (IDP)). Various well-tested and comprehensive toolkits are available to support gender and protection analysis, if such level of analysis is deemed necessary. ¹⁶ See examples of relevant questions in the Participatory Action Learning in Crisis (PALC) tool in Section 2.2.2 . Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis.

15. If actors have the capacity they can conduct a [Conflict Sensitivity Analysis](#), but it is not a requirement (a conflict sensitivity analysis should not be attempted without existing capacity, support or training).

16. See for example, the IRC Safer Cash Toolkit– [\(1.2\) FGD level needs assessment, Women's Refugee Commission tools and DCA's GBV, Gender and Protection Analysis toolkit](#) (the latter requires a sign up with an email, but is free).

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Gender equality, risks and social inclusion

Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD)¹⁷ (see also Tool 1 on Sample Outcome Indicators): Data collection processes need to be able to determine differences with respect to sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, age, and other social markers of exclusion. One way to do determine these differences is to use SADD to inform the response. In the context of GCTs, SADD can be done by noting the sex and age of consulted members of the affected population at minimum (other factors can also be noted).

GBV risk analysis¹⁸

GBV prevalence is high in every humanitarian setting and facilitating agencies should assume that GBV is happening even if they have little access to data on the issue. Facilitating agencies should assess and monitor the GBV risks that may occur or be exacerbated as a result of an intervention. Associated GBV risks can be related to women who participate in supported groups, or any changing gender dynamics that may happen throughout, or as a result of, the project.

2.2.2. STRENGTH, NEEDS, AND VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS

This section refers to experiences of the sclr approach.

In line with the [The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) (CHS) (for more information see [Section 4.1. Accountability](#)), the GCT approach is based on the understanding that affected communities already know what their needs are, and that as the first responders they have often already set up systems to attempt to address crises and perceived challenges.

The GCT approach follows a **strength-based approach** by starting with an **appreciative inquiry** that builds on existing opportunities and local capacities. In essence, a strength analysis entails looking at crisis responses that groups within the affected communities have already initiated, and asking how they are implementing their responses, as well as the skills and networks they are drawing on in doing so (see points on “[appreciative inquiry](#)” below).



The added value of the GCT approach is in offering an analysis process that reverses traditional relationships between aid actors and affected communities in determining needs and priorities. Hence, crisis-affected communities are encouraged to take the lead on collecting information and prioritising actions based on their existing understanding of the context, the crisis, and the needs; a process which in turn strengthens their empowerment, psychosocial benefits, resilience, and dignity.

17. IASC. (2018). The gender handbook for humanitarian action. IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action, see for example, a practical tool in the IRC Safer Cash Toolkit – [Disaggregating data by sex, age and disability Guidance Note](#).

18. Consult the [CVA-GBV Compendium \(2019\)](#) for detailed guidance.

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Holistic perspective: The strength, needs and vulnerability analysis for GCTs shifts the focus away from sectorial silos and adopts a holistic perspective that is cross cutting across sectors.

Context: The type and depth needed for the strength, needs and vulnerability analysis depends on the context, the actors engaged and the nature of the crisis:

- ➔ **In projects directed at strengthening the resilience of communities or taking place in protracted crisis settings**, it is recommended to use a Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (PVCA).¹⁹ PVCA is a methodology that uses participatory tools to enable communities to identify their own capacities and vulnerabilities in relation to disaster management, develop mitigation strategies, and build resilience to cope with future hazards.²⁰
- ➔ **In sudden onset emergency responses**, the **PALC** approach from the [sclr](#) package is recommended. It is particularly relevant for GCTs to assess the strength, needs and vulnerabilities within a community. The details of the PALC documented below can easily be incorporated into VCA processes.

The following text is taken from sclr PALC format #1²¹

PALC seeks to establish information systems²² that are owned, managed and used by communities in crisis themselves. It aims to rapidly enable crisis-affected communities (and facilitating agencies) to better understand the community-based capacities and opportunities for self-help and for collaboration with others. In doing so PALC seeks to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency, accountability, inclusiveness, and conflict sensitivity of and through community-led responses. Ideally PALC processes can likewise be used to inform the planning and interventions of external actors (Government, NNGOs, INGOs, UN, private actors).

An overview of the possible components of a PALC process included in [sclr](#) are:

- 1°- Formation of a **community-based group of PALC volunteers** for information collection, documentation and dissemination.
- 2°- Rapid identification and **mapping of active self-help** agents: e.g. existing CBOs, informal traditional institutions, new Self-Help Groups (SHGs), key individuals – who are already helping others in the community beyond their immediate extended families and could do more.
- 3°- Supporting crisis effected communities to rapidly improve their understanding of the opportunities for self-help by undertaking their own **appreciative inquiry**²³ (rapid identification and dissemination of successful coping mechanisms, initiatives and ideas).

19. For example, IFRC's VCA guidelines and tools, IFRC 2007: <https://www.ifrc.org/vca>

20. (Gough, n.d.)

21. See sclr Training Package, Day 2 – “PALC”

22. I.e. the means of gathering, analysing, and communicating information within communities.

23. Appreciative Inquiry is an approach towards change that focuses on strengths rather than weaknesses.

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- 4°- **Stimulating SHGs & CBOs** from within affected population to develop their ideas for expanding self-help and **informing** them how to apply for additional support if needed (funds, skills, contacts and linkages)...this links directly to rapid application for emergency micro-grants.

- 5°- Identifying optimum local systems of **accountability and transparency** that can be used to strengthen screening and monitoring of community proposals and 'protect' local groups from negative impacts of grants.

- 6°- Monitoring for any aspects of interventions inadvertently **doing harm** (whether related to wider conflict issues, security and protection issues, community cohesion and solidarity, negative power-shifts) as well as the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures.

- 7°- Improving understanding of **inclusion** issues and who is falling between the gaps in on-going self-help (and how marginalisation is related to intersecting aspects of identity including age, gender, ethnicity, economic or social status, ability etc) and needs extra help.

- 8°- Increasing awareness of **psycho-social** issues and opportunities for local response.

- 9°- Sharing local ideas and facilitating discussion on opportunities for **addressing root causes** of marginalisation, vulnerability and crisis.

- 10°- Helping local stakeholders to rapidly capture and share lessons (**experiential learning**) from completed and ongoing interventions to inform further autonomous action by communities (i.e., based on what works, what doesn't).

- 11°- Supporting crisis affected communities to clarify what they cannot achieve through self-help (gap-analysis) and **prioritising key roles of external actors** (Government, NGOs, private sector).

- 12°- Exploring options for strengthening local **coordination** systems where relevant, that can complement and inform Government and cluster coordination systems.

Based on sclr, some of the core issues that PALC teams/volunteers may investigate to inform GCTs are

The following text is taken from sclr PALC format #3²⁴

Appreciative inquiry – assessing opportunities for maximising self-help

- 1°- What are the different initiatives that community members are already undertaking to successfully meet priority needs? Are there any examples of effective actions that could be scaled up to help others?

24. See [sclr Training Package](#), Day 2 – “PALC”

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2° Who and where are the active groups and individuals who are already carrying out initiatives to help those in need from their wider community (i.e. outside their immediate families)?

3° What sort of support do they need to scale up their self-help and make it more effective: Funds? Skills? Connections and alliances?

Mechanism of accountability, transparency and avoiding harm

4° What are best means of making sure that providing GCTs do not cause problems by provoking confusion, misinformation, jealousies, gossip, local tensions, or even conflicts?

5° What are the best means to ensure local accountability and that all the GCTs are used properly according to approved plans?

6° Are there any tensions, conflicts, or cases of increased insecurity being inadvertently provoked by the interventions? And if so, what can be done to address these and avoid them from occurring in the future?

Gap analysis and social inclusion [some questions added to the original PALC tool as considered relevant to GCTs]

7° Are any particular parts of society who are in need of help being left out? E.g. women, children, elderly, disabled, ethnic groups? And if so, what more needs to be done to support them? (Alternative: Who are the groups that are the most marginalised or the most often excluded from community activities, and why are they excluded? How can they best be included?)

8° What are the potential attitude barriers, social stigmas, or tensions that prevent some people from participating in group or community-level activities?

9° Are there particular needs that cannot be met locally and that require external interventions? Are there any key relief or recovery items that cannot be obtained from markets at reasonable prices and in the quantities needed?

10° Is there evidence of psycho-social problems and mental trauma resulting from the crisis? Are there sections of the community suffering more than others? Is local self-help for psycho-social issues enough, or is additional outside help needed?

Gender [added to the original PALC tool as considered relevant to GCTs] (the list is only considered inspirational and organisations should further adapt and expand as needed):

11° Are women allowed to participate in activities taking place in the public sphere?

12° What are the existing barriers to women's access and participation in the public sphere/ community structures? What are the barriers preventing women from participating in decision-making and leadership roles? How can these barriers be addressed?

13° Would women participating in or leading GCT groups be safe, both in the community and at home?

14° How would women's participation in groups impact their household burdens? Are they able to manage both workloads, or how can the risk of overburdening best be mitigated?

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Coordination and sharing information with other actors

- 15°** - What are the priorities for local coordination that communities are requesting? What are the options for establishing or supporting local coordination mechanisms to meet these needs?
- 16°** - What are the opportunities to strengthen positive collaboration between external interventions (authorities, NGOs, INGOS, UN) and community-led interventions?

Longer-term resilience and addressing root causes

- 17°** - What are the ideas for building back better?
- For reducing vulnerability to similar disasters in the future.
 - For beginning to address root causes of the crises and the identified vulnerabilities?

Documentation of findings

The following text is taken from sclr PALC format #4²⁵

Findings of the PALC investigation should be documented by using some or all of the following (these can also be merged with VCA tools):

- ➔ A **large-scale map**²⁶ of the target area/sub-division, with key information regarding the effects of the crisis and ongoing group interventions, including:
 - The population movements and population dynamics (e.g., IDPs, refugees, host-community integration)
 - The areas most affected by different aspects of the crisis²⁷
 - On-going/planned/completed interventions (locally and external), indicating the type of activity, coverage and implementer
 - Accessible markets
 - Specific risk areas in the location (e.g. dark streets) community members have identified
- ➔ A list of the **existing capacities to build on** (e.g. local knowledge, expertise, skills, resources, SHGs, CBOs) within the affected community and local government, which could be further supported to allow local groups to scale up their response to the crisis.
- ➔ A list (qualified and quantified to the extent possible) of the different types of **prioritised support** (for the affected community) that would allow the GCTs to fulfil their potential (scale of GCTs/funds needed, specific materials or equipment not available from markets, types of skills training needed, advocacy efforts needed, relevant contacts and networks).
- ➔ A list of **interventions external actors has identified** to fill gaps in the local response – i.e. the pressing needs that the local community cannot cover, even with GCTs or training. The supported groups and facilitating agencies can use this list in advocacy efforts and networking to advocate for further support.

25. See [sclr Training Package](#), Day 2 – “PALC”

26. The map can be drawn up as a simple drawing on paper if maps are not available.)

27. Extreme care should be taken to register individual households as keeping this level of detail on individuals may be a cause of social stigma or tensions.

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Training: Information for training PALC volunteers can be found on the L2GP/sclr website – [Training Package \(Day 2\)](#).

CASE STUDY 2

Situation Analysis in conflict and natural disasters

Title	sclr in the Philippines ²⁸
Facilitating agency	Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Inc. (ECOWEB)
Type of supported group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDPs that have come together for self-help initiatives • A SHG responding to an earthquake • CBOs implementing recovery activities in response to floods
Period	2016-2017
Location	Marawi, Agusan river basin, and Surigao, Philippines
Number of people who benefitted	<p>Marawi: 47,900 individuals</p> <p>Surigao: 63 targeted household</p> <p>Agusan: 745 households</p>

This case study highlights how different Situation Analysis approaches were used in various contexts in the Philippines, as the national facilitating agency (ECOWEB) adjusted and adapted the analysis process to the crisis scenario. In each of the respective contexts, the approach to conducting needs assessments with the communities were adjusted to account for accessibility, the nature of the disaster, security, local and cultural contexts, and the capacities of targeted groups. The Situation Analyses were based on the assessment activities that crisis-affected communities had already conducted to understand the impact of the disasters. They utilised a participatory assessment process, where facilitating staff and volunteers from ECOWEB and local partners engaged in newly formed and existing groups.

Marawi conflict and displacement - PALC volunteers: In the case of Marawi where the population was displaced as a result of conflict, ECOWEB rapidly mobilised its networks, supporting existing CBOs and new volunteers to initiate their own needs assessment process through a PALC approach. The networks were used to efficiently inform displaced persons of the available services and their rights to

28. Antequisa and Corbett. (2018). Learning from Survivor and Community-led Crisis responses in the Philippines. For more information see, (ECOWEB, n.d.)

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access them, including the availability of GCTs. Even in the context of conflict and displacement, SHGs led the process of identifying their own food and non-food needs, as well as livelihood activities. SHGs and volunteer networks then used the assessment's findings to apply for ECOWEB support. ECOWEB later convened the assigned leaders of the SHGs in a leadership workshop to reflect on methods of identifying and resolving emerging problems in their communities in the future.

Surigao earthquake – self-assessments by SHG: In the case of Surigao, members of the earthquake-affected community had organically organised themselves into a SHG and identified how they could rebuild their homes to become more resilient to future earthquakes. A local engineer, together with other local residents, consulted the most affected households on what they needed. With ECOWEB organised volunteers to help create a clearly articulated project proposal and a resulting GCT, the SHG then supported 63 individual households to purchase what they needed.

Agusan floods – Community volunteer network of an established CSO: When Agusan was flooded, a local CBO's existing volunteer network allowed the Situation Analysis to access remote areas that were inaccessible to the facilitating agency both before and after the disaster. The CBO and its volunteers were the only frontline responders to the floods in Agusan. The needs and strengths identified through the Situation Analysis were a basis for decision-making on which groups and activities to support with GCTs. For example, one village applied together for support to move their village permanently to a new location; an activity highlighted by the village members and ECOWEB as likely not to have happened with traditional humanitarian assistance.

Similarities: All three approaches focused on communities' strength and self-identified needs, and used this information to create simple but effective project plans. As a result, the supported groups were able to prioritise their needs as they saw fit and plan for actions that were aimed at reducing their respective longer-term vulnerabilities.

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2.2.3. UNDERSTANDING THE MARKETS

Associated tool: [Tool 8 | Market sampling table \(intended use for groups\)](#)

Market analysis: Unlike household or individual-level CVA, market functionality is not a prerequisite for GCTs. There is a high variance in what GCT-supported groups require from the markets and hence, facilitating agencies cannot use a standard market analysis to determine GCTs' appropriateness. A basic awareness of the market is useful however, and can likely be obtained through secondary sources and consulting the supported groups (see: [market access and awareness](#)).

Market impact: When deciding which groups to support, facilitating agencies should consider whether proposed activities may impact the markets. If there is a likelihood of market impact, facilitating agencies will want to provide a minimum level of monitoring and help adapt activities to ensure that markets are not harmed.

See more information in [Section 3.2.2. Procurement by groups](#).

2.2.4. ASSESSING TRANSFER OPTIONS

Associated tool: [Tool 6 | Assessment of transfer options](#)

Community access and preferences: The assessment of transfer options for GCTs should be based on community access and preferences, as well as an examination of safety concerns. The decision on transfer options should be jointly made by facilitating agencies, other relevant stakeholders, and the affected communities.

The selected delivery mechanism may be later changed in coordination with the supported groups, and different delivery mechanisms may be selected for different groups. See more information in [Section 3.2.1. Transferring and management of funds](#).

2.2.5. ENGAGING RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

Associated tool: [Tool 7 | Stakeholder analysis](#)

The Stakeholder analysis: Like any other project, the facilitating agency (ideally together with community volunteers) should conduct an analysis of relevant stakeholders when working with GCTs. In this context, the term "stakeholder" can include formal or informal structures, local actors, and organisations within the community.

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A stakeholder mapping can be used as a basis for supported groups to network and partner with different actors. Groups should be supported to continuously engage with the most relevant stakeholders for their projects. See more information in [Section 5. Coordination](#).

The main steps to conducting a stakeholder analysis are:²⁹

- **Engage with individuals and groups** that may be able to influence, benefit, or have a stake in the issues that have been identified
- **Prepare a list of potential stakeholders** within the private, public and civil society sectors. The stakeholders should be identified in discussion with representatives of the crisis-affected population, reflecting a diversity of perspectives
- **Map the stakeholders** according to their level of influence and interest in the issues to be addressed

The relevant list of stakeholders should be updated throughout the project.

[Tool 7: Stakeholder Analysis can support](#) in determining the level of stakeholder analysis and engagement needed.

CASE STUDY 3 | Community action plans for crisis-affected populations in Myanmar³⁰

Title	Community Resilience Programme (CRP)
Facilitating agency	Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Type of supported group	Village Resilience Committees (VRCs)
Type of project	Support to livelihood, DRR and WASH activities
Period	2017 - 2019
Location	Central Rakhine, in Sittwe and Minbya Townships.

29. More guidance can be found in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Cash in Emergencies Toolkit: [M2_1_4_1 Key stakeholders matrix template](#).

30. Myanmar Red Cross Society. (2020). Community Resilience Programme (CRP) Phase I (January 2017 - June 2020) Programme Completion Report.

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Size of GCT	Up to 3000 CHF (1000 CHF x 3 instalments)
Number of people who benefitted	29,079 individuals

The following case study seeks to illustrate how groups or committees supported with GCTs can engage the wider crisis-affected population in establishing and implementing community action plans (CAPs).

CAP development: The MRCS with support from the IFRC, largely through local volunteers, supported existing Village Resilience Committees (VRCs) to develop projects that benefitted their wider population in their communities. The intention was to develop CAPs based on the needs of different groups in the affected communities, as identified through consultations with men, women, boys and girls and other marginalised groups. Following the consultations, the CAPs were organised by ranking sectoral priorities (livelihoods, disaster risk reduction and WASH) through participatory community meetings. The community action plan then formed the background for proposals the VRCs submitted to receive GCTs.

Capacity strengthening for VRCs: Prior to the development of the CAPs, MRCS provided trained the VRCs on community engagement, establishing links with government authorities and other relevant actors, leadership, mentoring support, and skills strengthening related to the multisectoral focus of the programme. Simple templates were also prepared in the local language to facilitate the VRCs' proposals to address their communities' identified priorities.

Community ownership: The result of the process was an increased sense of ownership among the community members, with the VRC serving as custodians for the CAP and its implementation.

2.3 | Response Analysis and programme design

Note: for further guidance on this step see the [CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox](#) on **Response Analysis and Programme Design**.

The following section focuses primarily on programme design. Due to the strong connection between GCT Response Analysis and the programme design however, they are presented under one heading here.

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The Response Analysis takes place at the intersection between the Situation Analysis and the programme design, where facilitating agencies compare and identify the best response options for a given situation. If a facilitating agency is using this guidance, it is assumed that the decision has already been taken to use GCTs. However, the Response Analysis can still be used to determine whether the facilitating agency needs to engage in other humanitarian activities or services alongside the GCT project. The CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox provides more information and resources on how to conduct the Response Analysis steps. The logic of the Response Analysis related to the GCT approach is primarily to inform the programme design.

The following programme design features focus on selecting:

- 1) the types of groups to support in a given context,
- 2) how to deliver support to those groups, and
- 3) the approaches for targeting specific locations for GCTs.

Some essential, general points to consider throughout the programme design are to:

- ➔ Encourage groups to develop action plans based on the [Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis](#). Groups can be encouraged and supported to turn their ideas into action plans. Ideally, targeted groups are already engaged in the community in which their project will be implemented. Group action plans can thus help limit the inputs needed from the facilitating agency for facilitation and technical support.
- ➔ Give special attention to supporting women in leading their own initiatives, and encourage groups to engage women in decision-making and leadership roles.
- ➔ Allow for flexibility on the type of interventions and potential project adaptations.
- ➔ Create space for resilience and nexus approaches, even in emergency responses.
- ➔ **Protection mainstreaming:** As previously discussed, all humanitarian actors, including those facilitating GCTs, should ensure protection is mainstreamed throughout all activities. Hence, the facilitating agency should commit to the Protection Principles and ensure that teams understand and follow them. [The Sphere Handbook \(2018\)](#) can be consulted for more guidance on protection mainstreaming.

2.3.1. ENGAGING GROUPS

Associated tools: [Tool 2 | Detailed criteria for groups thinking about applying for GCTs](#)
[Tool 3 | Applicant Details Format](#)

Other associated tools for this section also include [Tool 4: Checklist for reviewing applications for GCTs](#) and [Tool 5, Record of Proposal Review Panel Decisions](#) (see [Section 3.2.1 Transferring and managing funds](#)).

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Group criteria and selection: Setting criteria for and selecting which groups to support should be a process of different steps:

- ➔ The facilitating agency creates a list of its own basic criteria, which can be done in advance.
- ➔ Other inclusion considerations should come out of the [*ngth, needs, and vulnerability analysis](#).
- ➔ Identifying the types of groups to support should occur in collaboration with a representative³¹ group of people from the targeted localities, to ensure the selected criteria are contextually relevant.
- ➔ Groups should have locally-recognised integrity and legitimacy, and an intention to contribute to wider well-being and to do-no-harm.
- ➔ Groups should be able to deliver GCT projects. Facilitating agencies are advised to identify areas to build the capacity of supported groups during the initial engagement, rather than to limit the scope of the intended outcomes.

Types of groups: It is generally understood that GCTs are not provided to formally-established organisations such as NGOs and CBOs, but should instead focus on grassroot-level groups.³² Some examples from actors engaged in GCT include, but are not limited to:

- ➔ SHGs, livelihoods groups (e.g. fishermen) or neighbourhood groups that are either already formed, or have organised themselves in the wake of a disaster
- ➔ Existing community structures e.g. village committees; women's groups, youth groups, savings groups, and other structures that may already be working with the facilitating agency.

Inclusion in supported groups: While it may be tempting to set criteria for representation in the supported groups (e.g. gender, ethnic diversity, age, people living with disabilities, etc.) at the proposal stage, setting criteria can limit the group selection. A better practice is to ensure that the facilitating agency has the capacity to engage in discussions on inclusion with affected communities to assist the supported groups in considering inclusion in their projects. Supporting multiple groups in the target areas can also help ensure inclusivity in the GCT process, including potentially marginalised groups. Embedding local volunteers in the stage of engaging groups can especially help inclusivity as local populations have stronger knowledge of potential exclusion errors and marginalised groups than external actors.

How many groups should receive support:³³ The number of groups to support will vary across contexts and depend on the type of crisis.

Supporting multiple groups with varying priorities is the most common, creating an enabling environment for working with a more diverse set of projects, which will likely also target a wider group of rights holders. Collaboration between groups is encouraged and highlighted as a good practice that can lead to new and interesting activities even with limited funding available per group.

31. A representative group in the context of GCTs refers to a smaller number of people who are reflective of the characteristics of a larger group in terms of age, sex, vulnerability, livelihoods, etc.

32. Requirements to formalise groups would prevent certain groups from being considered, and in particular ones that are more likely to have marginalised segments of the community as members. As the expected financial value of a GCT is low, the group will not be managing significant amounts of cash, and so formal registration is not necessary.

33. The sclr CoP is developing a guidance note on the optimal number of groups and budget allocations. The guidance note can be found on their website in the second or third quarter of 2021.

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Scale in the number of supported groups is important – too few grant opportunities can have a negative effect on inclusivity, disfavour those who may not be active immediately after a crisis, and miss out on the GCTs' significant multiplier effects.

Some facilitating agencies may choose to work with one group that is considered to be representative of a wider collective, such as a village committee. If working with one group, the facilitating agency should make sure that the intervention is widely agreed upon and that the planning and design of project is inclusive.³⁴

A checklist for reviewing applications is available to support facilitating agencies in setting group criteria and choosing which groups to support. This checklist should be developed and/or contextualised.

Associated tool: **Tool 4** | Checklist for reviewing applications for GCTs

2.3.2. DESIGNING APPROPRIATE GCTS

At this stage of the process, the facilitating agency should have a clear enough picture of the context and the feasibility of implementing GCT. Based on the situation and response analyses, it is possible to start making decisions about various details of the project. The following topics are examples of such decisions that facilitating agencies should be focusing on in this stage of programme design.

Minimum standards in humanitarian response projects³⁵

As the GCT approach empowers communities to decide on how to meet their own needs, adherence to the Humanitarian Charter/the Sphere Standards may not be easy or not as essential. Easing the requirements of adhering to the standards does not equal ignoring quality and accountability, but rather shifts these concepts to focus on quality based on standards the affected populations set, and downward accountability.

Integrated, non-sectoral projects

Facilitating agencies should consider how best to support an integrated approach where GCT projects are based on the [Strength, needs and vulnerability analysis](#), and can work across different sectors. Some facilitating agencies may prioritise projects according to specific thematic areas such as peacebuilding or livelihoods if required by donors or specific organisational mandates.

34. In communities with high gender inequality and gender gaps in participation, facilitating agencies should pay attention to whether women have a space in the supported groups; especially considering women's access to mixed gender groups and more public spheres. If it is not possible to engage women in groups, facilitating agencies should consider a set-up that is more conducive to supporting several groups, where some of these could be women's groups.

35. The Sphere Handbook. (2018). <https://handbook.spherestandards.org/en/sphere/#ch001>

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The key recommendation is to take an open approach to organisational or sector standards, to ensure that GCT projects are solely based on the community needs, priorities and opportunities that were determined in the [Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis](#).

Setting indicators

Associated tool: [Tool 1 | Sample outcome indicators](#)

With a potentially high variety in the type of GCT projects being implemented - even in the same locality - it is not possible to set standard indicators at the programme design stage. This guidance's associated [Tool 1: Sample outcome indicators](#) suggests some potential indicators, however. The suggested indicators mainly reflect outcomes for the participating groups, rather than for individual community members.

Modality choice

Modalities, restrictions and conditions³⁶

Unlike traditional CVA, the choice of modality and whether to impose restrictions and/or conditions to GCT is more straightforward:

- ➔ **Modality:** The modality is by default a cash transfer.
- ➔ **Restrictions:** As a starting point, GCTs are unrestricted in nature. The GCTs can be used however the supported group prefers, as long as it is in line with the needs and priorities of the affected populations. Once awarded a GCT, groups are expected to spend the transfer according to their plan, or to agree on changes with the facilitating agency.
- ➔ **Conditions:** There are typically no conditions for GCTs. Some interventions may impose conditions in the form of multiple instalments where the supported groups must implement the first tranche of their project before receiving additional funds to continue. Conditionality on expenditures would typically only apply to larger GCTs.

For more information on delivery mechanisms, see Section 2.2.4. Assessing transfer options, which is related to selecting the delivery mechanism.

Cash for Work (CfW): In some GCT projects, groups may engage in CfW as one of their activities.³⁷ It should be noted that not all existing actors engaging in GCTs agree that CfW should be part of GCT projects as CfW is considered an individual cash transfer. The key difference in a GCT-funded CfW scheme from regular one is that the entire process of designing, coordinating, selecting recipients, overseeing the work, and paying the cash

36. See the [CaLP Glossary](#) for definitions.

37. In most cases, groups will not specifically request for CfW but will allude to it by suggesting certain services be undertaken by group members or contracted to members of the wider community in return for payment. The facilitating agency can offer additional support to supported groups in designing the CfW modality.

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transfers to workers should be led by the GCT-supported groups. Facilitating agencies can support groups in assessing relevance and appropriateness of CfW in line with relevant standards and existing guidance.³⁸ This guidance's associated tool is an example of how the MRCS defines CfW in its GCT projects.

Associated tool: **Tool 19 | Cash for Work**

Household or individual CVA: Typically, household or individual cash transfers are not part of GCTs, but rather are seen as CVA transfer modalities that can be implemented alongside GCTs. If facilitating agencies engage in household or individual cash transfers, they should follow CVA standards (see for example CaLP's Programme Quality Toolbox).

If groups want to distribute household or individual support (e.g. to extremely vulnerable persons not supported by other actors):

- The group should handle all the related processes, including targeting and distributing the cash.
- The facilitating agency can advise on how to conduct quality CVA and ensure protection (for example, ensuring safe access to markets and FSPs, ensuring the protection of individual beneficiaries' identities if relevant, etc.).

The core principle is that the facilitating agency does not sub-contract a group to deliver household or individual cash transfers, but rather that the supported group leads the process of prioritising needs and deciding to directly support individuals or households.

Rapid emergency transfers

While the processes for GCTs are generally considered to be more rapid than conventional CVA or in-kind programming, there may still be situations where some steps need to be foregone to be able to deliver in a matter of hours or days. If facilitating agencies work in areas that are prone to multiple and sudden-onset disasters, they should consider developing systems for more rapid cash transfers, e.g. having even fewer requirements on group proposals, being able to transfer cash rapidly, etc. Processes for delivering GCTs rapidly should be internally agreed. Overall, GCTs are largely considered feasible in any scenario.

2.3.3. SETTING THE TRANSFER VALUE AND FREQUENCY

Flexible amounts: The most common practice for setting the GCT transfer amount is to set a range within which groups can apply for funding. Having flexibility in the group transfer amounts/value allows for the most variation in terms of the type of activities that supported groups engage in.



The most common transfer value range that actors already engaged in GCT approaches reported is between \$200 and \$7,000 per project. Average amounts distributed to groups are \$2,000-3,000.

38. See for example the Cash for Work toolbox in the [CfE toolkit](#).

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Transfer value:³⁹ Several factors influence the transfer amount, including the facilitating agency's budget size, ambitions for how many groups and geographical areas to target, type of response, length of the project, and do no harm considerations.

Co-design value and frequency: As with all other steps, facilitating agencies must ensure that setting the transfer amount and frequency is led by representative community members in targeted locations (in collaboration with facilitating agencies).

39. **Minimum expenditure basket (MEB):** As GCTs are generally not distributed to households or individuals (see above), the MEB is not relevant to consider in GCT projects. Facilitating agencies may still need to have an awareness of the MEB in a given locality however, which can be obtained through participating in coordination efforts.



Photo credit: Nils Carstensen / L2GP

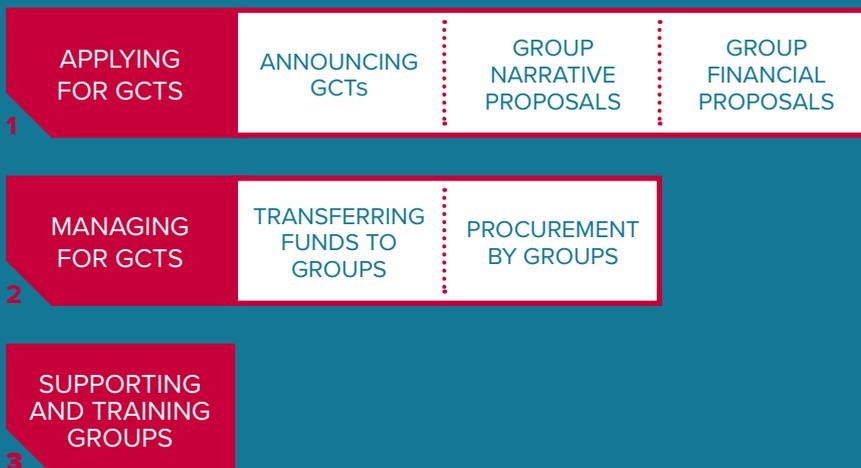
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Note: for further guidance on this step see the [CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox on Implementation](#).

This chapter of the guidance details the recommended processes for implementing the GCT approach.

Figure 4: Focus of the Chapter 3



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3.1 | Application process for GCTs

3.1.1. ANNOUNCING GCTS

After the possible group criteria have been set, the facilitating agencies should ensure that there is a public announcement and sensitisation process about the possibility to apply for GCT. These should include information on:

- When the funding will be available
- How much funding will be available
- The purpose of the available GCTs
- Criteria for groups and projects to apply for funding

Public announcements should be made using offline and online mediums that are easily accessible to community members and/or advertised in locations that are accessible to all. Access to information differs based on power dynamics, gender norms, age and ability, hence various methods should be used simultaneously to be inclusive, for example:⁴⁰

- Tap into existing local networks
- Verbal announcements, mouth-to-mouth, and community meetings
- Mass media such as tv, radio, social media, and potentially SMS announcements,
- Information shared in central locations through posters/flyers such as municipal offices, schools, markets etc.

The facilitating agency in association with volunteers should conduct sensitisation sessions to make sure that members of the affected population understand the purpose of the GCTs and the requirements for applying for them.

3.1.2. GROUPS' NARRATIVE PROJECT PROPOSALS

The following information focuses primarily on the role of supported groups. At this stage, the facilitating agency has set-up screening processes, see [Section 2.3. Response Analysis and programme design](#).

Associated tool: **Tool 10** | *Group narrative proposal*

Narrative proposals should stem from the groups having a basic understanding of the communities' needs and priorities – and ideas on how to respond to them. It might be inspired by the findings of a [Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis](#), or designed more spontaneously. Groups are encouraged to make action plans that potentially engage the wider community intended to benefit from their projects. Trained community volunteers (if

40. In certain situations where public announcements might not be possible or have the potential of doing harm, it is best to channel messaging on GCTs through word of mouth, facilitated by community volunteers and/or facilitating agency staff.

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any) can support the process where necessary.⁴¹ **The process of proposal development should be simple and non-burdensome for the groups.** The facilitating agency can support group proposals by providing simple forms that can easily be filled out (see associated tool).⁴²

Literacy: In cases where some group members are illiterate and thus unable to fill out the proposal templates, a group member or supporting volunteer who is literate should be charged with preparing the proposal. In line with GCTs' inherent flexibility however, supported groups may also propose their own method(s) of presenting their proposal, whether it be through audio-visual mediums or a mix of pictures and text in discussion with the facilitating agency.

To ensure objectivity, the facilitating agency and/or a community committee made up of local representatives should develop [criteria for groups and projects](#) (including for budgets) in advance to be used to select which groups and related projects to support.

3.1.3. GROUPS' PROPOSED BUDGETS

The following information focuses primarily on the role of supported groups. At this stage, the facilitating agency has set-up screening processes, see [Section 2.3. Response Analysis and programme design](#).

Associated tool: [Tool II | Group budget guideline](#)

In the same manner as the narrative proposals, the process of preparing a budget for the project proposals has to be intuitive and not overly burdensome for groups. A pre-set, simple format can be provided to the groups. Where necessary, the facilitating agency should provide assistance, either through training the group members or having volunteers help the groups fill out the template. Volunteers can also advise the groups on the feasibility of the proposed budget and more/less costs to consider.

CASE STUDY 4 | Multiple GCT proposals in Gaza⁴³

Title	Gaza community-led action in practice (sclr pilot)
Facilitating agencies	MA'AN Development Centre and the Culture and Free Thought Association (CFTA)
Period	July – December 2019

41. Supporting group action plans and proposals should only be provided directly when it does not create an unfair advantage for specific groups over others.

42. Note that the templates provided should be adapted to the local language when possible to improve their understandability.

43. Jarar et al. (2020). Learning Brief: Gaza Community led Action in Practice.

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Locations	7 communities/neighbourhoods in Ezbet Abed Rabbo (Gaza north), Al Tuffah (Gaza city), Al Sawarha (Middle Governorate), New Camp (Middle Governorate), Al Naser (Rafah Governorate), Al Mawasi (Khan Yunis) and Al-Yabani (Khan Younis), Palestine
Size of GCTs	Ranging from \$2,500 to \$7,100 per project
Direct beneficiaries	73,700

The following case study illustrates the potential of the GCT approach to inspire crisis-affected populations to initiate self-protection and resilience activities.

Targeting in an urban area: Given the largely urban setting of Gaza MA'AN and CFTA, who were facilitating the GCT approach there, had to strategically choose the most vulnerable neighbourhoods to support. MA'AN worked in five neighbourhoods, while CFTA targeted three (one of which overlapped with MA'AN's area). In the end, CFTA did not support groups with cash transfers, but rather helped them directly implement activities. Therefore, the following information only focus on the process that MA'AN supported.

Multiple initiatives and GCT proposals: MA'AN engaged the members of the neighbourhoods through public sessions where it announced the availability of GCTs and explained the procedures for groups to apply. MA'AN then provided technical assistance to groups, as needed. The inclusive process resulted in an impressive number of 244 applications from groups made up of people living in the five targeted neighbourhoods.

Screening of proposals: MA'AN staff conducted the initial proposal screening based on pre-agreed criteria. Further selection was handed over to a selection committee of five people: one from MA'AN, a local CBO member, a community activist, a technical expert on GCTs, and a representative from a volunteer committee in Gaza.

Selection of projects: Eleven initiatives were subsequently selected by the committee to receive a GCT to support their project. The decision on the final selection was announced via public meetings. When the results were disputed, MA'AN, together with the selection committee, explained the process and gave reasons as to why some were not selected.

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Diversity of projects: The variation in the selected projects offers some indication of how wide a scope the 244 initial applications represented, thus demonstrating the potential of GCTs to meet multiple needs and priorities. For example, the selected projects ranged from those aimed at improving community infrastructure and amenities such as streetlights, street rehabilitation, and provision of garbage cans, to desalination plant filters, establishing a community park, and healthcare and health awareness services.

Diversity in groups: Gender representativeness within the groups was key. Among the 8-15 members in each group, women on average represented 40% of the total. The thorough selection process, as well as the community volunteers' strong engagement throughout, contributed to the diversity in the group members' gender, employment status, age and ability.

3.2 | Managing GCTs

3.2.1. TRANSFERRING AND MANAGING FUNDS

Recording decisions: The facilitating agency should establish a tool to record how group proposals are assessed. This guidance's associated "[Tool 5 Record of Panel Review Decisions](#)" can be used as a template. The recorded decisions can also be used to increase transparency when communicating the reasons why certain projects were selected and others were not (see: [public feedback on proposals](#)).

Associated tool: [Tool 5 | Record of Proposal Review Panel Decisions](#)

Delivery mechanism: [The transfer options assessment in Section 2.2.2.](#) should be able to provide information to make the selection on which delivery mechanism to use, and which delivery mechanism is the most accessible and poses the least amount of risk.

Recipients: Each group should nominate at least two of its members to receive/withdraw cash and sign-off on budget expenditures. For maximum transparency, groups should select these members by vote, in a setting where all group members have had a chance to express their opinion.

Many GCT groups will want to select representatives and divide some responsibilities between members. Facilitating agencies can draw on previous learning and existing practices to support these processes, for example from Savings Groups.⁴⁴ Facilitating agencies must ensure that

44. See: [Formation of Saving Groups](#).

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the group members themselves determine the level of delegation and formalisation.

This guidance generally includes limited information on group formation and set-up. However, some information is available under [Section 3.3. Supporting and training groups](#) and [Section 4.1. Accountability](#) – Setting a leadership structure. See [Section 2.3.1. Engaging groups](#), for more information about the considerations of types of groups to support.

Counter terrorism legislation (CTL): There are no specific issues related to CTL in the GCT approach. Overall, the recommendation is to avoid vetting individual group members (similar to CVA for households or individuals). This guidance does not unpack CTL measures further, as facilitating agencies and potential supporting partners should consider their organisational policies for CTL compliance and internal risk management measures that can be applied to GCTs (e.g. setting an upper boundary on the GCTs value per group).

3.2.2. PROCUREMENT BY GROUPS

The following information focuses on the role of supported groups.

Associated tools: [Tool 8 | Market sampling tool for groups](#)

[Tool 9 | Procurement guidelines to support groups in documenting their expenses](#)

“Market assessment” by groups: Not all group projects will require extensive procurement. If larger procurement is required, supported groups should only be required to collect price and quality information from a few vendors as a “market assessment.” The goal is to not force these groups to conduct a lengthy market assessment and procurement process.*



When markets are functional, it is recommended that facilitating agencies refrain from procuring material or services (such as labour) on behalf of the supported groups.⁴⁵

Letting go of top-down control: For the GCT approach to be successful, it is critical that facilitating agencies are willing to soften specific internal requirements and procedures. For example, groups should not be required to follow the facilitating agencies’ procurement guidelines, as imposing procurement regulations will create an added a layer of complexity that risks impacting both the process and the outcomes of GCTs. This guidance’s tools provide suggestions on how groups can ensure basic documentation, while also making sure that the process is as simple as possible (i.e., have documentation to ensure primarily horizontal accountability).

45. **Procurement by facilitating agencies:** while it is beneficial if there is a functioning market within the context of the project implementation, it is not a strict requirement. In certain cases, facilitating agencies may help procure items that are not available in local markets, or in cases where local markets are not functional. However, procurement led by facilitating agencies is only encouraged when support is specifically requested by the supported groups, and never as a top-down measure. Facilitating agencies should never lead procurement as the default solution; groups can instead be supported in accessing non-local markets or in advocating with traders in local areas to supply what they need for their projects.

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Accountable procurement: While a procurement committee is not required, there may be advantages in either establishing a small community-led procurement committee or for the groups to facilitate village meetings to enhance their accountability to the wider community. The established procurement committee should be in charge of taking stock of relevant goods and services, selecting service/goods providers, and providing quality assurance of the procurement. Groups are expected to obtain the receipts for their larger purchases (see [Action aid's Accountability in Emergencies Reference Book – community-led procurement](#)).

Quality control of materials: For some projects, it may be relevant for the facilitating agencies to provide a level of quality control prior to groups initialising procurement. For example, MRCS engaged an engineer that can support groups in drawing a up a Bill of Quantities (BoQs), and advises them in which materials to purchase. The actual procurement is still done directly by the groups. The community-led procurement committee can take on the responsibility of material quality control.

Market access and awareness: Even during the proposal stage, groups are expected to have a basic awareness of the availability of necessary items in nearby markets, where they will be able to acquire such items, and what is an acceptable distance for them to access markets. In cases where groups have limited market awareness, the facilitating agency can support the groups' procurement processes through coaching and guidance.

Further coaching and guidance may be necessary for groups engaging with structures, for example municipal authorities, for the first time. The need for coaching could be related to getting permits for specific projects, for instance.

3.3 | Supporting and training groups

Priority trainings: Part of the GCT implementation process is to provide continuous support to the selected groups. The priorities for what types of capacity support to provide should be in line with the findings from the [Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis](#), as well as the focus of the selected projects.

Keep it simple and optional: As with all other steps, it is critical to keep training and support simple so that it is easy for the group members to digest, and that it does not take up too much of their time that could otherwise be spent implementing their projects. Some trainings for example could be optional.

Community facilitators and volunteers: Community facilitators and volunteers with consistent presence are able to engage with groups on contextual changes and the consequential project adaptations, and provide general advice. Volunteers can be specifically assigned to support groups that have low literacy and numeracy skills. Members of groups that have previously implemented GCT projects would be excellent to include in trainings, information exchanges, or as volunteers for new groups.

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Including capacity needs in proposals: Groups should be encouraged to include capacity strengthening activities in their projects. For instance, they should budget for trainings a government department can provide.

Technical trainings: Due to GCT projects' multisectoral nature, facilitating agencies are not expected to be able to provide support on all technical matters, but they should create linkages to other actors who can provide the needed support. Supporting actors could include INGOs, UN agencies, NGOs, CBOs, private sector companies, individuals, and local government departments.

Project and financial management: Facilitating agencies should train all supported groups on both project and financial management, as such training should be included in the GCT project budget from the onset. These types of trainings can support the groups to become more functional, and consequently more eligible for funding from other sources. However, it is important that these trainings remain grounded in using simplified processes and tools, and do not become a gateway for the facilitating agency to impose its conventional project and financial management requirements.



4

Accountability, Monitoring and learning⁴⁶

Note: for further guidance on this step see the [CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox on Monitoring](#).

This chapter details recommended processes for accountability, monitoring and learning. Throughout these stages, facilitating agencies should continuously remind stakeholders (and themselves) to let go of control to encourage a bottom-up approach to monitoring, accountability and coordination.

Figure 5: Focus of the Chapter 4



46. This guidance does not expand on external evaluation.

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4.1 | Accountability

Associated tool: Tool 13 | Accountability

Similar to other humanitarian programmes, the GCT approach should incorporate various mechanisms for accountability. As previously discussed, the GCT approach is considered an enabler for putting people at the centre, as is key for CHS. When using CVA, all nine CHS Commitments should be adhered to – using the CHS is therefore also valid for the GCTs.

Horizontal or downward accountability: The GCT approach generally prioritises horizontal or downward accountability mechanisms over upward accountability to donors. Horizontal accountability means that supported groups are accountable to their own communities/the wider collective, rather than towards the facilitating agencies. Horizontal accountability is best obtained through strong transparency and information sharing (see [Section 4.1.1. Transparency and information sharing](#)).

If transparency measures are strong, affected populations are likely to react to any suspected misconduct such as misuse of funds by supported groups. Such transparency measures help to make clear who is engaged in the misconduct, and how misconduct impacts the wider community.

Upward accountability: Facilitating agencies cannot completely avoid upward accountability requirements, but should strive to bear the brunt of this level of accountability, rather than passing the burden onto the supported groups. They should thus advocate for donors to accept information obtained through simple community-led reporting and monitoring structures, combined with the facilitating agencies' monitoring. Simple [group reporting](#), as well as [narrative](#) and [financial proposals](#), can be used for upward accountability but it should not be the primary purpose of those steps.

In case misuse is discovered: While it depends on the type of misuse, the GCT approach aims to not penalise people, as that can create an environment of group members hiding discoveries of misuse. Groups and the affected communities should instead be encouraged to take democratic steps to address the issue. First, the facilitating agency must investigate the reported misuse to understand the extent of the issue, and who is involved. It is important to utilise the experience as an opportunity for learning, where the facilitating agency organises sessions with groups to address mistakes in a way suggested by the group members themselves.⁴⁷

Setting a leadership structure: As previously discussed, allow the supported group to decide its own structure and whether to assign members specific roles. For instance, selecting a leader can be done by a vote, either just among the group members or the wider community. The group members should all confirm that they trust the established structure and feel that it allows for accountability both within the group and towards other community members. For more information see [Section 2.3.1. Engaging groups](#).

47. See for example, "When things go wrong", [sclr Training Package, Day 4, Handouts – "Experiential Learning"](#).

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Complaints and feedback mechanisms: Communities should always have the opportunity to safely and confidentially provide feedback on activities that impact them or their peers, and should receive timely responses to such feedback or complaints. In GCT projects, complaints and feedback mechanisms can be established at different levels, for instance at both the facilitating agency as well as the supported groups and/or volunteer levels.⁴⁸ Processes for identifying relevant and preferred mechanisms must be participatory, and can be part of the Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis. The facilitating agencies need to ensure that a confidential mechanism for sensitive complaints (corruption, sexual harassment, etc.) is in place and accessible for all members of the affected population.

The set-up of accountability mechanisms can be organised in the form of a checklist, where the facilitating agency and the group themselves can monitor the completion of each activity.

4.1.1. TRANSPARENCY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Public announcements on GCTs availability: For information on this, see [Section 3.1.1. Announcing GCTs](#).

Public feedback on proposals: Facilitating agencies are encouraged to set up public meetings led by community volunteers and/or use transparency boards to provide feedback on which projects and groups were selected or not, and to give constructive feedback as to why.

Use of social media: When there is sufficient access to technology and literacy levels, the use of social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp can serve as key information channels. For instance, these can be used to upload photos of receipts of expenditures, activity records, and photos of the project if relevant. The use of social media should always be complemented by other mechanisms to ensure that the information is available to all members of the affected population.

4.1.2. GROUP REPORTING

The following information focuses primarily on the role of supported groups.

As for the group narrative and financial proposals, group reporting should aim to gather information on the activities undertaken in a manner that is not overly burdensome. For both the narrative and financial reporting, it is recommended to prepare a simple format that the groups can then adapt.

Narrative reporting

Associated tool: [Tool 14 | Group narrative reporting format](#)

48. These mechanisms do not necessarily have to be administrative burdens but can be simple set-ups like suggestion boxes, having a community focal person or volunteers, or setting up a hot line that can be used in emergencies. The mechanisms at different levels do not need to be identical but should be complementary to each other.

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The purpose of the group narrative reporting is for the groups themselves to reflect and learn from their project, rather than for the facilitating agency to use the information as an evaluation or accountability tool. The report can also enable groups to be accountable to the intended project beneficiaries and to share information with other stakeholders if the groups wish to do so.

Holistic focus: the facilitating agency's reporting format should have a holistic focus that allows supported groups to clearly express their progress, challenges, risks and changes. The simple reporting format can include open-ended questions that broadly inquire about the GCT-supported projects. Options to attach photos to the report also makes it easier for the groups to demonstrate their progress, challenges, etc.

Digital reporting: When time and the availability of digital equipment permits, facilitating agencies can experiment with having groups present their report verbally or through video. Using digital reporting has the potential to address gaps in literacy levels that may prevent supported groups from fully articulating themselves in writing.

Support: For both narrative and financial reporting, the facilitating agency may help groups prepare their reports through local volunteer networks or dedicated staff.

Financial reporting

Associated tool: **Tool 15** | Group financial reporting form

The purpose of the financial reporting is to compare differences in planned and actual expenditures in order to be accountable to other group members and the wider community first, and then to the facilitating agency. The idea is not to have the approval of the facilitating agency on how the GCTs have been used, but rather to dissuade or track any potential misuse.⁴⁹ Furthermore, experience with financial reporting can develop budget planning and management skills, and help groups better engage in future projects.

The financial reporting should be accessible to all members of the supported group, and the group should lead on investigating any points of contention through reviewing the available documentation on expenditures.

CASE STUDY 5 | Downward accountability in GCTs

The following case study has been anonymised and therefore neither the country nor facilitating agency are mentioned

49. As mentioned in [Section 4.1. on Accountability](#), the goal of the financial reporting is not to dissuade misuse through oversight, but rather to facilitate learning and to encourage supported groups to take their own appropriate measures to correct any perceived misuse of the grants.

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Title	Community Pilot Cash Project
Type of supported group	Community Committee representative of the different interests in the city (elected for the community pilot cash project)
Type of project	Purchase of a three-wheel motorcycle dump truck ⁵⁰ to transport waste to a waste incinerator
Period	November 2015 – March 2016
Size of GCT	\$3,000
Supported beneficiaries	90,000 individuals

The following case study shows an example of how members of a committee representing host and displaced communities independently addressed concerns of fraud related to a GCT project.

GCT project selection: For the project, a community committee of 15 people was selected through a voting process. The committee was tasked with developing and implementing a \$3,000 GCT project to benefit the wider community. A total of nine proposals were initially submitted by each of the committee members on behalf of their constituents. Committee members made their decision based on criteria that had been previously defined and agreed upon by all. Through a voting process, the committee decided to invest in a three-wheel motorcycle dump truck to transport waste, especially from the markets, to a waste incinerator that was constructed nearby.

Accountability measures: In the meeting where the voting took place, as well as the others that followed, the committee invited journalists to attend, and reports were transmitted through local news media. Therefore, the local population was aware about the project through radio programmes. When the procurement of the three-wheel motorcycle dump truck was made, a public exhibit and demonstration was conducted, along with a handover ceremony. However, through this public demonstration it was discovered that the purchased three-wheel motorcycle dump truck was second-hand, while the committee's procurement reports suggested that it should be new. The members of the wider community protested this, and the community committee called an emergency meeting and invited the facilitating agency to attend.

50. I.e. a three-wheel motorcycle for cargo.

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Corrective action: The meeting revealed that the procurement process had been fraudulent, and consequently, the responsible committee president and vice president were removed from their posts. The committee also managed to exchange the used three-wheel motorcycle dump truck for a new one. The case proved that the downward accountability mechanisms that were put in place to keep the wider community informed of the project were effective, and the wrongful actions were discovered and corrected in time.

4.2 | Monitoring GCT projects

Associated tools: [Tool 16 | Peer monitoring of GCTs](#)

[Tool 17 | Process and post-distribution monitoring](#)

[Tool 18 | Outcome Harvesting](#)

The purpose of monitoring humanitarian programmes is to ensure that programme activities are carried out according to a desired project objective. For GCTs, standard monitoring practices may present challenges as GCT projects are likely to be adjusted several times over their lifetimes. However, it should be possible to monitor the project's overall objectives and processes to assess whether resources were used effectively and if the affected communities consider the GCT approach to be successful in responding to their needs. The monitoring processes described below should produce the appropriate levels of analysis and information to use for both upward and downward accountability, as well as for learning and adaptation purposes.

In a GCT project, core monitoring questions should centre on:

- 1) What type of projects were implemented by groups supported with a GCT?
- 2) Did the supported group projects address self-identified priority needs in the targeted locations? If not, how was the failure to address priority needs impacted by the GCT processes and how could GCT projects ability to meet needs be improved?
- 3) Who benefitted from GCT projects? Were GCT projects inclusive of different members of the community, and how could inclusivity be improved?
- 4) What changed as a result of the GCT projects and what was the significance of the changes? (see details in [Section 4.2.1. Outcome Harvesting](#))
- 5) What types of capacity strengthening activities did facilitating agencies provide to the supported groups? Were there other needs for capacity support that were not met?
- 6) What are the groups' perceptions about the GCT process overall (in terms of effectiveness and efficiency)?

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- 7) How were supported groups able to link up with other local actors and existing structures relevant for the GCT project? Could linkages be supported differently or more effectively?
- 8) Which new networks and collaborations was established as a result of the GCT project?
- 9) How flexible are/were facilitating agencies to adjustments and adaptations in the group projects?

Different levels of monitoring can be applied to answer the questions above.⁵¹ Priorities from actors already engaged in GCTs include:

- Outcome harvesting processes and a general focus on outcome-level monitoring (see [Section 4.2.1. Outcome Harvesting](#) and [Tool 18: Outcome Harvesting](#) detailing this methodology below)
- Post-distribution monitoring by both the facilitating agency and representative community members/the supported groups (see [Tool 16: Peer monitoring](#))
- Process monitoring linked to the accountability measures in place, such as tracking and cross-checking GCT disbursements, or focus group discussions (FGDs) with community members rating elements of the GCT project and the services provided (see [Tool 17: Process and post-distribution monitoring of GCT](#))
- Sharing and publicly discussing monitoring results to jointly improve GCT approaches and processes in the given context (See [Section 4.2.2. Learning and sharing learning across groups](#))

Market monitoring: The relevance and depth of market monitoring will depend on how the supported group projects will engage the market. As previously discussed, the facilitating agency may step in for this role either if the supported groups face issues in terms of accessing items (quality, quantity, or price), or to understand wider impacts of GCT on local markets. Market monitoring is not a requirement for GCTs, and the decision to carry it out should be decided in collaboration with local actors, including the supported groups and other members of the affected communities.

Who should be engaged in monitoring?

Monitoring conducted by peers (other groups and members of crisis-affected communities):

It is strongly encouraged that supported peer groups and representatives of the wider community benefitting from the GCT projects are engaged in leading monitoring and data collection efforts. Supported groups can for example be engaged to conduct peer monitoring for other supported groups, while volunteers who took part in the [Strength, needs and vulnerability analysis](#) can also be part of monitoring teams. Local authorities can likewise be directly involved in data collection and monitoring, or alternatively be engaged as informants. Monitoring can also be outsourced to a CBO or other local actor that is not directly benefitting from the GCT project to add a layer of objectivity.

A simple peer monitoring tool has been developed to support the process of engaging crisis-affected populations in monitoring groups supported with GCTs.

Associated tool: Tool 16 | Peer monitoring of GCTs

51. Household-level monitoring is generally not considered the most relevant for GCTs, but may be applied to other elements of a wider programme

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Monitoring conducted by facilitating agency: The facilitating agency should also engage in monitoring. As previously discussed, community mobilisers/facilitators are expected to be involved throughout project implementation. Community facilitators are thus able to conduct real-time monitoring and to support adaptations to projects as necessary. Furthermore, facilitating agencies can benefit from using their M&E staff in particular to conduct outcome harvesting (see [Section 4.2.1. Outcome Harvesting](#)) and to capture lessons learned.

Associated tool: [Tool 17 | Process and post-distribution monitoring of GCT](#)

Methods and informants to collect information from should include:

- 1) FGDs with supported groups, community members benefitting from GCT projects, and, if relevant, community members considered to not be benefitting from GCT projects, and
- 2) key informant interviews with community facilitators and volunteers, as well as other actors and stakeholders.

Timing and frequency

Monitoring should be done throughout the GCT process, especially to inform any needed adaptations to the projects. If community facilitators are engaged, monitoring can be done through their consistent contact with the groups. Facilitating agencies are encouraged to establish monitoring plans with the supported groups at the project's outset. Considerations on timing may include seasonality and the anticipated length of the group projects. In cases of multiple cash instalments, monitoring should take place between instalments, based on criteria from the facilitating agency and an expenditure plan the supported group developed. For longer-term projects (12 months or more), monitoring can occur every three months, whereas for shorter projects (less than 12 months) it should occur monthly or bi-monthly.

Course correction/adaptive management

Accountability and monitoring processes should help identify necessary adjustments that both the facilitating agency and the supported group should implement. As previously discussed, facilitating agencies (and funding partners) should be committed to flexibility throughout the GCT process, and be ready to support project adjustments.

4.2.1. OUTCOME HARVESTING (LIGHT TOUCH)

Associated tool: [Tool 18 | outcome harvesting](#)

Due to the nature of GCTs and the differences across projects, it is difficult to capture standard or generalised data on GCT outcomes. Therefore, it is recommended to use a **light touch version of outcome harvesting**.* Outcome harvesting is a participatory approach that can be used to assess the contribution of GCTs to project-specific outcomes as well, as overall impacts such as strengthening resilience or behaviour change. Outcome harvesting is in line with the overall GCT approach, as it is user-centred and captures qualitative indicators of

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changes in actions, relationships, practices and policies. The supported groups should be part of defining what success means and how to monitor outcomes.

**This guidance document refers to light-touch outcome harvesting because evidence will mainly be collected through primary data collection with limited secondary data available. Furthermore, the recommended process for outcome harvesting in GCT is simplified.*

The outcome harvesting process always needs to be customised to the specific project.

”Unlike some evaluation approaches, Outcome Harvesting does not measure progress towards predetermined objectives or outcomes, but rather, collects evidence of what has changed and, then, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention contributed to these changes. The outcome(s) can be positive or negative, intended or unintended, direct or indirect, but the connection between the intervention and the outcomes should be plausible.”

Text from, Wilson-Grau, R. (2015) Outcome Harvesting. BetterEvaluation: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting

Depending on the length of the programme, outcome harvesting should be done a few times throughout the project’s implementation to identify changes over time.

Steps for outcome harvesting in GCT

- ➔ Identify who takes the lead on harvesting outcomes, for example the M&E staff of the facilitating agency
- ➔ Identify primary users and the intended use of outcome harvesting: for example, to be able to report back to communities, for re-design and/or learning purposes
- ➔ Identify key informants/change agents: for example, community mobilisers closely engaged with the project, local authorities, group members, and community representatives who are knowledgeable about the activities
- ➔ Work with each supported group to first understand what they think their project has achieved to date
- ➔ Go back and design harvesting questions for the relevant actions based on the perceived achievements (examples of harvesting questions are available below)
- ➔ Collect evidence from the groups and other members of the affected populations to track how achievements were reached (i.e. inquire about the significance of the change and how GCT contributed to that change)
- ➔ **Feedback loops with communities** are strongly recommended throughout the process, and results of the outcome harvesting and key learnings should be shared with affected populations, authorities, other humanitarian actors, other communities etc.

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Figure 6: Key features for harvesting questions



Examples of harvesting questions⁵²

A. Identified outcome: Streetlighting has created a safer environment at night.

Harvesting question: *What has been the GCT's effect on making streets safer at night with streetlighting, and what has it meant for women's movement at night, for instance?*

Harvesting question: *What else besides the GCT has contributed to creating a safer environment at night?*

B. Identified outcome from the supported group: Female group members feel more engaged in decision-making structures [specify which structures]

Harvesting question: *What steps of the GCT process best helped to increase women's participation in decision-making?*

Harvesting question: *Which initiatives might have impacted women's role in decision-making structures?*

C. Identified outcome from the supported group: The group's activities have a lifesaving effect for [identified group/individuals]

Harvesting question: *What was the effect of GCT on implementing these life-saving activities?*

Harvesting question: *What was the key enabler to implementing these life-saving activities?*

4.2.2. LEARNING AND SHARING LEARNING ACROSS GROUPS

As in any other humanitarian project, the facilitating agency should incorporate lessons learned into ongoing and future GCT projects. Meanwhile, there is an increasing demand in the GCT approach to share lessons with the supported groups and communities benefitting from the project.

Sharing learning between groups: Facilitating agencies are encouraged to budget and plan for encouraging learning to be shared between different supported groups in different localities. Setting up learning between groups could be done for instance by transporting representative group or community members from various communities to a central location

52. While these are all positive changes, groups may also report negative outcomes or changes that should also be included in outcome harvesting.

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and facilitate a joint learning workshop. Such experiences would allow them to share experiences and verify wider research findings.

Learning between facilitating agencies: Facilitating agencies are encouraged to discuss and learn from each other as well, both within and across different contexts. In addition to ongoing coordination efforts, facilitating agencies could also include actors that are not yet engaged in GCT in their learning events as a method for advocacy.



Photo credit: Nils Carstensen / L2GP

5

Coordination of GCTs

This section includes recommendations on coordinating GCTs at various levels.

While facilitating agencies are expected to engage in general coordination as part of their humanitarian response programmes, the GCT approach can support new linkages and help strengthen the synergy between initiatives undertaken by local populations, other actors and groups supported with GCTs.

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Coordination on GCTs is encouraged at different levels:

- ➔ Support **networking between groups** implementing GCTs within and across communities to enable learning and networking. The facilitation of reflection and experimental learning by local communities is highly important to create gains in lessons learned and connections.
- ➔ Support **collaboration between groups** to strengthen complementarity between projects.⁵³
- ➔ Help **connect groups to existing networks and platforms** at the local and national levels.⁵⁴
- ➔ **Link groups to other NGOs** for collaboration, funding and/or capacity strengthening opportunities.⁵⁵
- ➔ **Connect groups to relevant government institutions**, especially for projects where these institutions are regarded as key stakeholders.⁵⁶
- ➔ **Coordinate programme activities with the local government** to avoid duplication. Working with relevant local and national government departments can also help mitigate risks of bureaucratic delays or political interference.
- ➔ **Coordinate programme activities with other LNAs and international agencies** to avoid duplication and increase support for complementary actions. When using GCTs in a humanitarian response, it may not be obvious where this approach should sit in the existing coordination structures, due to the multiplicity and diversity of the supported group activities. Solutions to where to place GCTs in coordination structures can be found by consulting with, for example, cash working groups (CWGs) or other relevant cluster/sector leads.

Area-Based Humanitarian Coordination (ABHC): In addition to ongoing coordination efforts, the GCT approach also offers a space for local, area-based, demand-led coordination mechanisms to emerge. As aligned with the global localisation discussion, GCTs support shifting coordination to the most local level of possible, by recognising that the people and existing local networks are the primary vehicles of change, not NGOs. Inspiration for supporting new and emerging local coordination can be found in Area-Based Humanitarian Coordination models, for instance.⁵⁷

53. Collaboration does not have to be limited to other GCT-supported groups but can also include disaster management committees, mothers' groups, saving cooperatives and associations, which can cultivate cross learning.

54. For example, [the START Network](#).

55. Collaboration could also be encouraged with market actors, FSPs, remittance and insurance companies, which can aid activities.

56. Examples could be if a group wants to rehabilitate a road or construct a health clinic.

57. See for example, resources published by [Center for Global Development](#) (2020), [ODI on Network Humanitarianism](#) (2018) and the [Sphere Standards in Urban Settings](#) (2020).



Photo credit: Christer Lænkholm

6

Funding/resource mobilisation for GCTs

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Associated tool: **Tool 1** | Sample outcome indicators

When designing and fundraising for GCTs, it is key to ensure that appropriate resources are available to successfully implement the approach. Thus, facilitating agencies may need to conduct advocacy efforts with donors in advance, (for more information see the report “Leveraging the Potential for Group Cash Transfers”). Important costs to consider include:

- ➔ **Staff costs:** Particularly for community facilitators, where at least one should be embedded in each geographic locality the project covers.



When markets are functional, it is recommended that facilitating agencies refrain from procuring material or services (such as labour) on behalf of the supported groups.⁴⁵

- ➔ **Costs of training and coaching:** Consider at least one training for facilitating agencies, ideally including other stakeholders. Setting up a training may require training costs for external facilitators, including national or international travel. Training budgets may include costs or facilities that cover protection and inclusion issues, such as transport costs for participants or caretakers for children (whose parents are participants).
- ➔ **Volunteer costs:** Depending on the location and type of actor, costs for volunteers may include small incentives, but ideally should only be for snacks, food, drinks and meeting venues.
- ➔ **Costs for GCTs:** While the amount of funding groups will request is not predictable, facilitating agencies should determine what they will be able to manage and set a balance for the total value of funding going to groups, operational costs and support costs for the project in general (e.g., 60% - 20% - 20%). This overall amount will depend on whether the GCTs are integrated into a larger project as some operational costs may be covered by other project components. In contexts with high inflation, actors may need to include contingency funds for GCTs.
- ➔ **Monitoring and learning costs:** Facilitating agencies are encouraged to budget for sharing learning activities, e.g. transporting group members to locations where they can share learnings with groups from other areas, preparing the learning materials etc.

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Tool 1 | Sample outcome indicators

Examples of outcome indicators – see the Group Cash Transfers (GCT) [guidance section 4.2. Monitoring GCT projects](#) for definitions and a description of the GCT monitoring process.



Phase

Design

How do you set indicators for your response?

There will be a large variety of the types of GCT projects, depending on the context, needs, and types of groups supported. Therefore, it is difficult to develop standard indicators. However, this tool suggests some overall outcome indicators that facilitating agencies engaging in GCTs can use or further adapt.

Who monitors and reports on the indicators?

The following indicators are tracked by the facilitating agency through regular post-distribution monitoring (PDM) or outcome harvesting methods (see [Guidance section 4.2.1. Outcome harvesting \(light touch\)](#) for a definition of outcome harvesting). Ideally group members, as well as other community members, are invited to participate in drafting the monitoring tools, collecting the data, and discussing findings. The indicators mainly reflect outcomes for the supported groups, rather than for individual community members.

Overall objective*: To enhance the resilience⁵⁸ of crisis-affected communities in [location] To enable communities to rapidly implement emergency projects to save lives in [location]
*The overall objective will further depend on whether GCTs are part of a broader project.

Indicator: Percentage of supported groups self-reporting increased preparedness and capacity of community members to respond to community priorities in acute/protracted crisis.

Indicator: Percentage of supported groups self-reporting increased community resilience through GCT projects.

Outcome: To enhance affected-populations' capacities to implement collective action to reduce risks and threats/to respond to emergencies

Indicator: Percentage of supported groups reporting an increase in the capacity to design and successfully implement activities according to the communities' priorities.

Indicator: Percentage of group members reporting that capacity strengthening activities benefitted the group (in turn benefitting the project and the wider community).

Protection mainstreaming⁵⁹

Indicator: Percentage of beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex, age and disability) reporting that assistance is delivered in a safe, accessible, accountable and participatory manner.

Indicator: Percentage of sampled community members reporting that the process of delivering the assistance to supported groups was accountable and participatory.

58. Resilience refers to the ability of affected communities to recover quickly from shocks or challenges.

59. These indicators are in line with ECHO's final protection mainstreaming indicator.

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Gender equality/women's empowerment indicator*

* It may be relevant to add an indicator on gender equality, if the project has a strategic goal of enhancing women's participation in groups or community structures through GCTs. This should be the case for longer-term projects, but is likely not appropriate for shorter-term, stand-alone projects unless linked to a broader project.

Indicator: Percentage of group members who are female.

Indicator: Percentage of female group members reporting to actively be part of decision-making about how to use the GCT.

Sector-specific indicators are not included in this document. If the project has a primary sectoral focus, the [Multi-Purpose Cash \(MPC\) Outcome Indicators](#), [Indikit](#) and [Sphere Standards](#) might be able to provide examples of relevant indicators.

Disaggregation of indicators by sex, age, disability, or contextual vulnerability criteria may be difficult to capture for GCTs. It should be possible to register the diversity of members in the supported groups. Furthermore, depending on the type of project, it may also be possible to capture disaggregated data on the population that benefits from the group projects (as included in the table above). While it is unlikely that disaggregated data will be available at the design stage of the project, groups should be encouraged to make some estimations in their GCT proposals. Strengthening the groups' capacity on inclusion during design and implementation can help them achieve these estimations. In circumstances where the collection of Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD) may be difficult, facilitating agencies should note the absence of this data and provide an estimation on the proportion of men, women and different ages and ability groups based on data gathered by other humanitarian actors or small sample surveys.⁶⁰ Furthermore, facilitating agencies can refer to their own previously gathered data on the target population, if SADD collection had been previously conducted for other activities.

60. [Gender-Age Marker Toolkit, European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, \(2014\).](#)

Tool 2-5 | Setting criteria for groups and GCT projects

The following set of tools from the survivor and community led crisis response (sclr) package can be used for setting criteria to assess groups and their GCT proposals. The facilitating agency should always contextualise and amend the criteria in collaboration with representatives of the context they are working in (for example, the volunteers that were engaged in the Strengths, needs, and vulnerability analysis). Public announcements about the GCTs should be done in local languages.

A review panel of 3-5 individuals will be involved in the following steps. Its members can include representatives of: the facilitating agency, community volunteers, traditional community leaders, school principals, faith-based leaders, relevant associations or Civil Society Organisation (CSO), and/or local government officers.

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Tool 2 | Detailed criteria for groups thinking about applying for GCTs

The detailed group criteria should be based on the Strengths, needs and vulnerability analysis (see [Guidance Section 2.2.2. Strength, needs, and vulnerability analysis](#)). The following list is an example of criteria for assessing groups applying for GCTs. Criteria may differ depending on the context and specific crisis. The criteria should be established by the facilitating agency, ideally in coordination with community volunteers. A compressed or simplified version of the criteria may be used in a public announcement about the possibility of applying for a GCT.



Phase

Response Analysis and Programme Design

Examples from sclr micro-grants form #2

For internal use (i.e., this list is not to be published, but is an internal checklist for the facilitating agency to establish criteria prior to creating a public announcement about the GCTs available). A few amendments have been made to this list.

- As an existing group or institution – or a new self-help group – they are well trusted and respected by the community and the relevant authorities.
- The group has a name and at least three individuals who have the capacity to successfully implement their initiative. (At least one of these individuals should be literate/numerate.)⁶¹
- The group has already organised and carried out self-help activities without any external assistance to assist a sub-section or their wider community.⁶²
- The group has a clear and realistic idea for an initiative that aims to contribute to the overall security and well-being of their members,⁶³ a sub-section of their community, and/or the wider community.
- The group will not only depend on GCTs to implement their initiative - they are also ready to seek contributions from their communities, whether as cash, volunteerism or in-kind contributions.
- The group is ready to implement their plans immediately, but needs some support (whether funds, skills building, equipment, information or connections) to be able to do so.
- The groups have capacity to manage the cash – or are willing to use mechanisms and get support from facilitating agencies to manage the cash safely and transparently.

61. It is debatable whether there should be a requirement for groups to have a literate member if they are able to get this support elsewhere, for example from a family member of a group member who is literate/numerate.

62. This is in part to avoid groups forming only as a result of GCTs being announced.

63. In case the GCT is intended to only benefit group members, it should be noted that grants cannot be awarded to benefit only individual families or small groups of families.

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- ❑ The intervention will not provoke any problems, divisions or bad feelings in the community (internal problems can include: disadvantaging marginalised groups within the community or creating/exacerbating social tensions among ethnic or displacement groups), or any political and security problems for the community (external problems can include: creating tensions against local policies, or triggering attention from violent groups outside the community).⁶⁴
- ❑ Encouraged initiatives are those that:
 - Are submitted by groups in which women have clear leadership positions
 - Target the most vulnerable, marginalised, and/or discriminated groups in the community
 - Are also supported (with funding or resources) from other sources – for example, from the community, government, or other organisations or donors.⁶⁵
- ❑ Proposals should be approved by a minimum of two respected and knowledgeable third-party observers (e.g. a traditional community leader, a school principal, a faith-based leader, a relevant association or CSO representative, a respected local government official, etc.), or through triangulated community feedback.
- ❑ Any submitted proposal should be posted and remain in a public place that allows the community to access the information, and should include clear steps for providing comments to [the facilitating agency].
- ❑ Grants can be awarded for a value from up to a maximum of(currency).

64. Consider how this can be formulated in a sensitive manner, particularly in locations with ethnic and religious divisions, a high presence of IDPs or refugees, and in areas affected by conflict.

65. These qualities should not be viewed solely as they are presented in the project proposals, but also with the potential of how they can evolve after the proposed projects are implemented. Hence, these elements and their potential should be considered throughout the proposal, design and implementation stages rather than solely during the proposal stage.

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Tool 3 | "Applicant Details Form"

This form should be used for the application stage.

Some interaction with the group whose proposal is being reviewed may be necessary to get all the relevant details.



Phase

Implementation

Examples from sclr micro-grants form #3

For internal use (i.e. this form is not to be published, but is an internal checklist for the facilitating agency to use to review groups and proposals).

To be filled in by the fund manager for internal use

1. Name of the group or organisation

2. Type of applicant group

3. Location

4. Name of 3 senior members (with positions if relevant) and contact details for each

-

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5. When did the group come into existence

(NB it is possible that it is brand new, informal and emergent)

6. Briefly describe any prior experience or proven capacity for:

6.1. Developing action plans and implementing them:

6.2. Developing budgets and managing funds:

6.3. Reporting on activities or expenditures:

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7. Briefly describe the specific activities that the group has already undertaken (without getting external support) to help the community cope with this current crisis/challenge

8. Does the group have experience of responding to other crises/challenges in the past? If so, describe briefly what and how (include specific details)

9. Reputation for integrity (very positive, reasonable, weak, don't know)

9.1. Do you know the applicants?

Yes No

9.2. How would you rate them?

Very positive Reasonable Weak Don't know

9.3. How do applicants describe their reputation with the wider community?

Very positive Reasonable Weak Don't know

9.4. Does a cross-check with other community members verify this?

Yes No

9.5. How do applicants describe their reputation with local authorities?

Very positive Reasonable Weak Don't know

9.6. Does a cross-check with local authorities verify this?

Yes No

10. Additional key information about the applicant group (priorities and focus for the group in general; gender, age, ability, ethnicity, affiliations of group members)

11. Supported groups' preferred transfer modality if stated (cf. [Tool 6, Assessment of transfer options](#))

If the applicant group has been supported by the facilitating agency through other interventions, provide the following additional information:

What was/were the main interventions the group was supported with?

Is the new proposal by the group complementary to previous interventions, or is it completely new? Provide a brief explanation

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Tool 4! Checklist for reviewing applications for GCTs



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Implementation

Examples from sclr micro-grants form #5

For internal use (i.e. this form is not to be published, but is an internal checklist for the facilitating agency to use to review groups and proposals; this should be based on the established detailed criteria for groups).

For each question rank your assessment according to the following scale: strongly positive (3); reasonable (2); weak (1); very negative (0); don't know (?); or not applicable (n/a)

1. Organisational Issues (section 1 can be copied from information captured in tool 3)	Score
a) How does the locality/wider community/the facilitating agency staff or partners/reputable third parties judge the integrity and legitimacy of the applicant?	
b) Does the applicant seem to have the necessary capacity to implement and manage its project effectively?	
c) What is the applicant's experience in receiving and managing funds (financial management capacity)?	
d) How is the balance of gender/age/ability/ethnicity/other factors in the leadership of the applicant group?	
e) Does the applicant have previous connections and/or experience with the target group and area?	
f) Specify other indicators if any	
2 Proposal issues (see also GCT Guidance Section 31. Application process for GCTs)	Score
a) Relevance of the intended intervention and objectives (i.e. is it responding to the target groups' prioritised needs)?	
b) Are the proposal's intended beneficiaries clear and justifiable?	
c) How robust is the implementation plan (i.e. is it the best way to meet the objectives)?	
d) Are the proposal's transportation plans related to project activities well thought through (economically and practically, e.g. do the necessary transport services exist and are they safe to use)?	
e) How realistic and accurate is the budget?	
f) Does the proposed expenditure represent an effective use of limited funds?	
g) How significant and relevant are the proposed local contributions to the project (volunteerism, cash or in-kind)?	
h) Are mechanisms for local accountability/transparency/complaints/communications adequate?	

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	Score
i) Is the project sufficiently coordinated with relevant initiatives by other actors in the same area, whether local authorities or other NGOs or INGOs?	
j) Is the intervention likely to strengthen community solidarity and cohesion (e.g. there are no risks of generating internal community divisions)?	
k) If the project will be implemented in a conflict area, is the intervention sufficiently sensitive to security and political considerations? Will the intervention contribute to preventing further conflict in the targeted area?	

3 Additional follow-ups

Do you recommend any further checks about the legitimacy of this group? If so, please explain:

Is further technical advice needed to approve the proposed intervention? If so, please explain:

Can the facilitating agency or partners respond to any additional requests for non-financial assistance if needed?

Can the facilitating agency or partners respond to any additional requests for non-financial assistance if needed?

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Tool 51 Record of Proposal Review Panel Decisions



Phase

Implementation

Examples from sclr micro-grants form #6

For internal use (i.e. this form is not to be published, but is a tool for the facilitating agency to record the review of groups and proposals).

Date of meeting:

Members of Review Panel participating (see introduction to tools 2-5):

(name and signature)

A:

B:

C:

(Note that in emergency contexts, meetings can be conducted virtually through phone conversation, Skype, WhatsApp etc.)

Proposals being reviewed (give name and ref no.)	Decisions of individual panel members with reasons if rejection is decided*			Additional Comments
	A	B	C	
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
Etc.				

Decisions are made based on the collective use of the Review Checklist. Panel members can make one of the 4 following decisions (see also Guidance [Section 3.2. Managing GCTs](#)):

- a. Immediate approval of proposal as submitted
- b. Tentative approval of proposal on condition that either suitable clarification is made of any uncertainties and/or small changes are made either to the action plan or budget
- c. Rejection of proposal, but with invitation for the applicant to take the reasons for rejection on board and to rapidly develop a new proposal for resubmission
- d. Rejection of the proposal, with no encouragement for the applicant to try again.

Normally the panel should discuss until a consensus decision is reached. However, if this proves impossible, the decision will be based on a majority vote.

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Tool 61 Record of Proposal Review Panel Decisions

Questionnaire sample



Phase

Preparedness/Situation Analysis

The tool presented here is a hybrid of multiple other tools⁶⁶ that are used to assess cash transfer options, and has been adapted to a group setting.

The questions presented here are intended to be used by groups that are recipients or potential recipients of GCTs. They are intended to assess the feasibility of possible cash transfer options. The template can be used before the groups to support are selected by skipping most of the general information category.

General information

Name of the Group:

Location:

Type of group (Self-Help Group, Community-Based Organisation, Committee etc.):

Total number of group members:

Total number of female group members:

Total number of male group members:

Date of group establishment: (dd/mm/yyyy):

Is the group formally registered as an entity with local authorities? * (Yes/No)

* Please note that registration is typically not necessary

Based on past experiences or the intentions of your group, would you prefer a more frequent or less frequent cash transfer to attain your group's desired goals? Please explain why.

66. The UNHCR Cash Delivery Mechanism Assessment Tool, IRCRC Cash in Emergencies toolkit - Community access to and use of financial services and IRC - Safer Cash Tools.

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1. Access to financial service providers

1.1. Which would be the most preferred formal (e.g. banks, post offices, mobile money, remittance agents) and informal (e.g. cooperatives, savings groups) financial service providers? Please only list available FSPs, in order of preference (most preferred option first).

How many of the group members have access to these services?*		
	%W	%M
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

* Number/percentage All (100%), many (75%), half (50%), few (25%), none (0%), women/men

1.2. How do people most commonly identify themselves to access these financial services? (e.g. passport, identity card, with help of guarantor, etc.) Note the identification for each relevant service.

	E.g. bank account	E.g. passport, formal ID
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

1.3. Depending on the delivery mechanism, it may not be possible to register more than one person as the recipient of the GCT. Will the group accept having one group representative receive the funds? If not, what other solution is available for transferring the GCT?

Follow up action for facilitating agency to understand if more than one person (from different households) can be registered on the same delivery mechanism (e.g. a group bank account).

1.4. Have group members had any difficulties in accessing these financial services in the past? Are there any current difficulties? If yes to either question, please explain what was the cause for the difficulty.

1.5. Are there any particular safety risks that you would like to point out in relation to local financial service providers?

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In the following tables, assessments should only focus on the delivery mechanisms that are available to, and preferred by, groups (e.g. not all transfer option's tables have to be completed).

2. Access to financial service providers

2.1. Are there enough bank branches that are accessible to the group?
Note down the locations.

--

2.2. Do group members feel comfortable with opening a bank account?

Number/percentage of the group members who feel comfortable*
* All (100%), many (75%), half (50%), few (25%), none (0%), women/men

	%W	%M
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

3. Cards (prepaid, smartcards that can be used at ATMs)

3.1. Can group members safely access the ATM? Note down the locations.

--

3.2. Are group members comfortable with using cards as a method of receiving cash transfers? If not, why not?

--

4. Mobile money

4.1. How many group members own and/or use a mobile phone?

Number/percentage of the group members who feel comfortable*
* All (100%), many (75%), half (50%), few (25%), none (0%), women/men

	%W	%M
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

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4.2. Are group members comfortable with using mobile money as a way of receiving cash transfers? If not, why not?

Provide answers separately for men and women in the group.

5. Agents/over the counter (e.g. remittance)

5.1. Are agents able to safely access the locality of the group and its members? If not, what is the closest locality they can access?

5.2. How confident are group members of agents' ability to continuously provide services during a potential crisis (natural, social, economic)?

6. Direct cash⁶⁷

6.1. Is the security environment conducive to direct cash transfers? If not, what are the potential risks?

6.2. Is there a designated place for groups to store the cash safely? If not, what action does the group need to take? (e.g., buy a safe). If yes, please explain how cash can be stored?

6.3. Does the group structure have adequate accounting capabilities to manage a direct cash transfer? If not, what competences need to be strengthened?

67. The facilitating agency will need to assess the appropriateness and safety of this transfer modality for itself as well.

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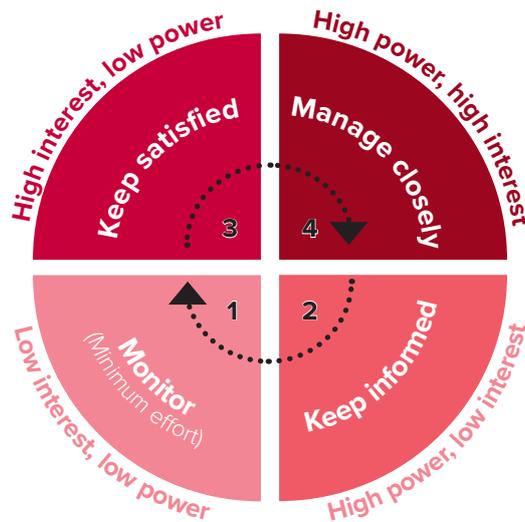
Annexes

Tool 7 | Stakeholder analysis

Power versus interest grid

On a scale of 1-4:

- How much power (both formal and informal) does the stakeholder have to influence the project?
- How much interest does the stakeholder have in the project?



Note that stakeholders can change position on the grid throughout the GCT process and as projects and activities change. One stakeholder may also be placed at different levels on the grid depending on the group engaging with him/her/them.

Stakeholders can be added in the following matrix:

Manage closely 4
Name of stake-holder
Actions of facilitating agency and supported group, and who is responsible

Keep satisfied 3
Name of stake-holder
Actions of facilitating agency and supported group, and who is responsible

Keep informed 2
Name of stake-holder
Actions of facilitating agency and supported group, and who is responsible

Monitor (Minimum effort) 1
Name of stake-holder
Actions of facilitating agency and supported group, and who is responsible

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Tool 8 | Market sampling tool for groups

This tool should be used together with Tool 9: procurement guidelines for groups.

Price collection/sampling bids tool



Phase

Implementation⁶⁸

Does the market have the items that supported groups need to deliver their activities?

When are groups expected to engage in market sampling?

➔ When they start implementing their project.

Groups are expected to have an existing, basic understanding of the availability of necessary items in nearby markets, or where they will be able to acquire such items during the proposal stage.

Groups are not expected to do an in-depth market assessment and analysis, neither at the proposal nor the implementation stage.

GCTs should not require any lengthy procurement processes and establishing a procurement committee is not required (unless the community requests to have one).

Groups will not be required to follow organisational procurement guidelines

What kind of market sampling are groups expected to do?

If procuring items is part of the project, groups are expected to collect price and quality information from a few vendors.⁶⁹ If groups are unsure of the process of price sampling or are not confident in negotiating with vendors, community mobilisers or facilitating agency staff can support the groups. Ideally this is done through coaching, rather than doing the work for them.

What kind of data should the group collect to make decisions about where to buy items?

- ➔ Price information
- ➔ Availability in nearby markets
- ➔ Timeliness of delivery
- ➔ Quality of items

68. This is a tool for groups supported with cash grants and therefore part of the implementation phase.

69. The number of vendors to consult can be set by the facilitating agency in coordination with members of the community as part of the Strengths, needs and vulnerability analysis and then through follow up consultations. The number should be manageable for groups, while giving enough accountability to ensure good use of funds. In remote areas, vendor choices are likely to be more limited.

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Market sampling table

To be used only if deemed necessary by the supported groups and/or communities.

Item(s) sampled:

A: Unit price of item (in local currency)

B: Number of items needed

C: Can the vendor deliver the necessary number of items if several are needed (Y/N)?
If no, how many can be delivered?

D: Market where item is found and distance to project location

E: Vendor name and contact information

F: Type of vendor (wholesaler, retailer, informal, etc.)

G: When can items be delivered (date)

H: Quality of item*

* quality indicators should be decided by the supported group in advance, as this is specific to the type of item needed.

No.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								

Decision log

The supported group should document which vendor they decided to purchase item from and the reason for this selection:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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Annexes

Tool 9| Market sampling tool for groups

This tool should be used together with [Tool 8: market sampling tool for groups](#).



Phase

Implementation

Example from sclr micro-grants form #8.

This tool is intended for the supported groups to use.

1. For any expenditure, try to get a receipt from the vendor.
For any payments over (currency) you must get a receipt from the vendor.
2. A proper receipt should have the following information on it:
 - ➔ Name and address of vendor or service provider
 - ➔ Date of payment
 - ➔ Unit costs and amounts of the different items purchased
 - ➔ Total cost
 - ➔ Stamp (if available)
3. If it is not possible to get a receipt for small expenses (e.g. local transportation, etc.) then fill in your own cash payment receipt and save this.
4. For any planned expenditures of over (currency), you should first get written quotations from **three** different vendors (*ensure that all documentation includes the same level of information as that specified above for receipts (in point 2), as well as the name of the person(s) collecting the quotation*). Quotations can be submitted with your final report (see [Tool 14: Group narrative reporting form](#) and [Tool 15: Group financial reporting form](#)). To decide on which vendor to use, the signatories of the GCT contract (see [Tool 12: Group contracts](#)) need to make a selection. You do not necessarily have to select the cheapest quotation (e.g. it may be cheap because the quality is so bad) but you should include your justification for the vendor that you select in your final report.
5. Be careful not to select vendors where there could be any gossip or accusation of vested interest (i.e. if they are family member or friend).

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Tool 10| Market sampling tool for groups

Example from sclr micro-grants form #4.

This tool is intended for the supported groups to use.

Name of the group	Name	Position	Contact Information
Responsible member(s) of the group submitting this proposal, implementing the project, and managing the budget	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.
Location of the group			
Type of Activity/Intervention			

1. What are the objectives of your emergency intervention?
2. Who will benefit from the initiative? How many are they?
3. Describe how will you ensure that your initiative will not provoke any friction or conflicts within the community.
4. Are there any political or security risks that could result from this initiative? If so, what are they, and how do you intend to deal with them?
5. Explain who will manage the finances and how the funds will be kept securely.
6. Explain if this initiative is coordinating with any other programme(s) in the village (from the government or other organisations).
7. Submit your detailed work plan, showing each activity, who will do it and when, using a simple table like the one below with each activity on a separate row. Use as many rows as you need.

Market sampling table

Activities	When will it be done (number of days after the grant is provided)	Who will do it?
1.		
2.		
3.		
Etc		

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Tool III Group budget guideline

Name of the group:

Location:

No.	Activities, items, services	Unit cost	Number needed	Total costs	Amount needed*	Contributions from other sources (specify)**
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
Etc.						
Total						

* from the facilitating agency

** le e.g. the community, etc.

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Tool 12| Group contracts (letter of agreement)

Example from sclr micro-grants form #7.

The tool should be adapted to different contexts by adding or removing agreed-upon criteria

Contractual Agreement for GCT between [name of the facilitating agency]
and Group [representative members] **of** [name of group]
of Address

This contractual agreement defines the commitments of the facilitating agency and the identified group (referred to as **Grantee**) for implementation of a community project.

1. On the signing of this contractual agreement **the facilitating agency hereby commits:**
 - a. To provide a community grant of total value of(currency) as a Group Cash Transfer (GCT) to the group of the, in the Locality of to implement the approved project proposal as attached to this contract.
 - b. To transfer the funds within days of signing this contract in cash/as a cheque/as bank transfer.
 - c. To provide relevant training in financial and project management as needed.
 - d. To provide any other agreed assistance (e.g. training on new technical skills, temporary use of equipment, connections or introductions) as detailed in attached Annex
 - e. To facilitate an evaluation at the end of the project with relevant stakeholders that focuses on learning and capturing lessons that can help strengthen future interventions.
2. On the signing of this contractual agreement the representatives of **the grantee** hereby commit:
 - a. To implement all the project activities and make all expenditures according to the approved signed project proposal attached.
 - b. To seek help or advice whenever necessary from local authorities, existing services, or the facilitating agency or other actors.
 - c. To follow all basic procurement guidelines as attached.
 - d. To follow all basic book-keeping and accounting guidelines as attached.
 - e. Not to make any significant changes in implementing the project work plan or expending the project budget without first requesting a meeting with the facilitating agency to discuss any requested amendments.

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- f. To submit final narrative and financial reports to the facilitating agency - according to the Final Report guidelines (attached), upon completion of project and no later.

On behalf of the facilitating agency

Verified by:

Position:

Date of verification:

Signature:

On behalf of the GCT-supported group

Verified by:

Position:

Date of verification:

Signature:

Community witnesses (names and signature)

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Tool 13 | Accountability⁷⁰



Phase

Design, Implementation and Monitoring

This checklist is for assessing and inspiring new accountability mechanisms for a GCT project. The list is two-fold, and both address the accountability measures set-up by facilitating agencies, as well as those established by groups.

The checklist helps to determine the level to which a facilitating agency and the supported groups keep communities and key stakeholders informed about their organisation and programme activities in ways that are accessible and appropriate to the context. Facilitating agencies can also use this tool to carry out self-assessments. Lastly, the checklist helps to determine the extent to which groups are conducting key activities, and the accessibility of information about such activities.

Accountability structures should always be set up in consultation with the local population. Initial steps for establishing these structures should be taken in the design phase.

The traffic light system provides a straightforward way of assessing the degree to which each criterion has been achieved (**red** — not at all, **yellow** — ongoing, or **green** — fully achieved). It helps staff and group members to get a quick overview of which information sharing and communication areas are currently strong, versus those that need further support.

Facilitating agency	Key Questions/Criteria		
	Red	Yellow	Green
Project information posters are displayed at project site and in a public area for accountability and transparency (with information on the funds available, the types of initiatives they cover, requirements for groups to apply, etc.)			
The facilitating agency consults and agrees with communities/ key stakeholders on the best ways of communicating information (i.e., on group activities) , given the programme's context.			
The facilitating agency informs communities/key stakeholders about specific programme goals, activities, cost, and GCT project selection processes , and reports to community and supported group members on the activities' progress and adaptations.			
Feedback and complaints mechanisms have been established with inputs of affected populations and are available to all groups and individuals.			

70. This tool draws from the Information Sharing Checklist used by DKH for Cash Grants for Communities projects (which has been adapted from the Save the Children, 'Programme Accountability Guidance Pack', 2013), as well as a monitoring checklist used by the Myanmar Red Cross Society for community resilience programmes, in addition to data gathered from key informant interviews and the literature review.

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Details on how to give feedback or make complaints related to the facilitating agency, supported groups, and/or specific programme activities are made available to communities and key stakeholders.			
Standards for information-sharing between the INGO and facilitating agency, and between the facilitating agency and communities , have been established.			
The facilitating agency monitors how well information is being disseminated , understood and received through consultations with communities and key stakeholders.			
GCT-supported groups			
The affected population is informed of the supported groups' actions through public announcements, posters, etc.			
Roles of supported groups' members have been defined in a participatory manner. E.g. representatives for the supported group have been selected (president, vice president), and signatories for the cash grants have been determined based on the selected transfer options .			
The members of the supported group have agreed and approved the prepared action plan.			
The group has agreed to hold periodic meetings and the schedule is being followed. Groups determine the frequency of meetings according to the project activities' schedule.			
The group announces the project's process and achievements via public gatherings, posters, local media, or any other community-accessible means.			
Commonly agreed-upon complaints and feedback mechanisms have been put in place and are accessible to the affected population , e.g. suggestion boxes, contact persons, a hotline, etc.			
Channels of communication with the facilitating agency are established in case of disruptions in project implementation.			
Procurement is done in accordance with procurement guidelines for groups and as agreed upon in group meetings.			
Supported groups have prepare narrative and financial reports on their project.			

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Tool 14 | Group narrative reporting form



Phase

Implementation and monitoring

Example from Unbound: Agents of Change grant form

In line with the form for narrative proposals ([Tool 10: Group narrative proposal](#)), the narrative reporting form also needs to be concise and intuitive, in consideration of the various pressing engagements, literacy levels, and what people stand to gain and lose from spending time on filling in the report.

Agents of Change – Project Report

1. What needs or challenges did your community face that made you choose this project, and what did you want to achieve?
2. Tell us about what it was like while the project was underway. Were there challenges that you didn't anticipate? How did you deal with them?
3. Did you require other funds/resources in addition to the Unbound Agents of Change grant funds to accomplish your goal? If so, how did you obtain those resources?
4. How is life in your community different now?
5. Are there other projects that could be approached in the same way in your community?
6. What else would you like people to know about your community and your project?
7. If you have been unable to complete your project, what has stood in your way and what do you need to succeed?

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Tool 15| Group financial reporting form



Phase

Implementation

This financial reporting tool is a hybrid of the template used by the Myanmar Red Cross Society and the sclr financial reporting tool

The group financial reporting form should be aligned to the expenditures mentioned in the financial proposal, and should compare differences in planned and actual expenditures. The form below should be expanded to include the same number of expenditure elements as were initially proposed.

Once completed the report must be signed and dated by the signatories of the contract.

Expenditures Verification Report/Statement

Location: _____

Type of project supported: _____

Project start date: _____

Project end date: _____ / (ongoing) ()

Expenditure verification of: 1st Instalment (), 2nd Instalment (), 3rd Instalment ()

A: List of each individual planned expenditure, as listed in the in original budget

B: List of each individual actual expenditure, plus any additional unplanned expenditures

C: Your reference number for each receipt attached to this report (e.g. at least 1 receipt per expenditure)

D: Difference between actual and planned expenditures (if any)

E: Explanation of the reasons for any differences between planned and actual expenditures

No.	A	B	C	D	E
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
Etc.					
	Total planned expenditure	Total actual expenditure			

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1. If your total actual expenditure is greater than planned, how did you pay for the extra expenditure?
2. If your total actual expenditure is lower than planned, how would you like to spend the balance?
3. What have you learned about planning budgets for such projects? Would you do anything differently next time to strengthen your budgeting?
4. What have you learned about managing the funds you receive as a grant, book-keeping and expenditures?
Would you do anything differently next time to strengthen your financial management?
5. Are there any additional training or capacity strengthening needed for budgeting or financial management that this experience has revealed, which would help strengthen your organisation or group? If so, what are they?

On behalf of the group supported with GCTs

Verified by:

Position:

Date of verification:

Signature:

On behalf of the facilitating agency

Verified by:

Position:

Date of verification:

Signature:

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Tool 161 Peer monitoring on GCT projects⁷¹

Examples of peer monitoring questions as part of accountability efforts – these can be amended, or peer monitoring can be entirely informal and free of forms – see [GCT guidance section 4.2. Monitoring GCT projects](#) for definitions and description of GCT monitoring processes



Phase

Implementation and Monitoring

It is encouraged that peer monitoring on project is done by:

- ➔ Peer groups⁷²
- ➔ If necessary, peer groups assisted by community volunteers

The form below may be adapted and utilised by peer groups. The tool aims to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

Date of data collection:

General information

Name of the group conducting the monitoring:

.....

Name of the group being monitored:

.....

Type of group (Self-Help Group, Community-Based Organisation, Committee etc.):

.....

Location in which the monitored group is implementing a project:

.....

Date of group establishment: (dd/mm/yyyy):

.....

71. This tool is a hybrid of tools developed by the SORUDEV, FSTP and ZEAT BEAD Food Security Programmes funded by the European Union, as well as the Community Cash Grants FGD tool used by DKH, which draws on the ICRC and IFRC 'Cash in Emergencies Toolkit' on Focus Group Discussion Guidance for CTP projects.

72. Peer groups refer to other groups that are engaged in conducting projects of their own in the same locality or elsewhere through the use of GCTs.

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1. Group integrity

1.1. Has the group been meeting regularly, including all members?

2. Project perception

2.1. What planned activities has the project accomplished so far?

2.2. What modifications have been made to project activities?

2.3. What are the main challenges that the supported group has faced so far?

3. Impacts/effects of the project

3.1. What has changed so far in the crisis-affected community as a result of the project?

3.2. What has changed within the supported group as a result of the project?

4. Risks

4.1. Have there been any negative effects as a result of the project?

4.2. What are the 3 main fears/risks that the supported group currently faces?

5. Conclusion

5.1. For the monitoring group to consider:

What information should be shared with the public based on this monitoring?
When and by whom should this information be shared?

5.2. For the monitoring group to consider:

What information should be shared with the facilitating agency based on this monitoring?

Thank you very much for your time.

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Tool 17 | Process and post-distribution monitoring of GCT projects



Phase

Implementation and Monitoring

Example from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH)

Although monitoring the GCT projects is encouraged to be undertaken as peer monitoring and on an ongoing basis, in some cases the facilitating agency will still engage in a certain level of process and post-distribution monitoring (PDM). When doing PDM, the monitoring should be aligned to established indicators (if any) and can be used for both upward and downward accountability, as well as to make decisions on adaptations to an ongoing or future GCT project.

GCT PDM – volunteers and facilitating agencies

Please note that the suggested questions and answers below are indicative and **need to be adapted to your intervention and context**. This survey is based upon the DKH PDM Guidance, and has been complemented with learning from the ICRC and IFRC 'Cash in Emergencies Toolkit'.

The following table can be used as a focus-group discussion tool with representative group members.

BEFORE STARTING Presentation	
Date	
Interview (staff) name	
Location	
GENERAL INFORMATION Group members (authorised to receive GCTs)	
Names	
Gender of the respondents (note for all participants)	M / F
Positions held in the committee	

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PROCESS-RELATED QUESTIONS

Were you satisfied with the transfer mechanism used to deliver the cash to you?

Yes Somewhat No

Why? Why not?

Did you have any technical problems when receiving your assistance?

Yes No

If the answer is "Yes": What kind of problems did you face?

Expired card Blocked account Bank deductions Forgot PIN

Difficulty using the technology

Limited location to withdraw the cash

Problem with biometric technology (finger reader etc.)

Very positive Participating market did not accept the Smart-Card

If Other, please specify:

Did you feel safe receiving, carrying and spending the cash?

Yes Somewhat No

If somewhat or no, please explain why

Did you receive the full transfer amount?

How did you get to the site to collect your cash? (e.g. walk, car, bus...)

How long did it take you to get there?

< 15 min. < 30 min. < 1 hour Between 1-2 hours > than 2 hours Don't know

Were you satisfied with the transfer process?

Yes Somewhat No

If somewhat or no, please explain why

How long did you have to wait at the financial service provider until you received your cash?

< 15 min. < 30 min. < 1 hour Between 1-2 hours > than 2 hours Don't know

Were you treated with respect by the service provider?

Yes Somewhat No

If somewhat or no, please explain why

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OUTPUT-RELATED QUESTIONS

Transfer of assistance to target group

How much of the GCT amount (ENTER LOCAL CURRENCY) have you received so far?

How many transfers have you received so far under this project?

When did you receive the last transfer?

Date:

Of the total GCT you have received, how much have you spent so far?

To the interviewer: Check this against the committee accounts

Local currency:

Did the received amount correspond with amount that was communicated to you?

Yes No

Who in your committee received the cash transfer (positions in the committee)?

Who makes decisions on expenditures in your committee?

Was there any disagreement on use of the project GCT funds?

Yes, we were arguing a lot

Sometimes we discussed it but came to an agreement

No, there was no disagreement

Did receiving the cash cause any problems for you?

Project GCT did not cause any problems

Project GCT caused some small conflict

Project GCT caused conflict

If you selected that it did cause (some) problems, please tell us with whom you had conflict due to the Project GCT:

Community Leaders Project Staff Neighbours and friends Community Other

If other specify:

Would you say that the purchases you have done so far have been efficiently used for the achievement of the community project?

Yes No Don't know

If the answer is "No", please explain why:

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Purchase Patterns

Have you spent the community GCT as you planned in the project proposal?

Yes No Don't know

To the interviewer: Validate the response by checking receipts against the project budget, and record any discrepancies

Monitoring project expenditure and costs

Is the GCT amount enough to complete the project?

Yes, completely Probably Unsure No

If the answer is "Probably, Unsure, or No": For what reasons may it not be enough?

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Tool 181 outcome harvesting – sample tool



Phase

Implementation and Monitoring

As specified in the guidance, outcome harvesting is a context-specific exercise, and it is therefore not possible to provide a standard tool for it. The following table is a sample tool that facilitating agencies can adapt to record the findings from an outcome harvesting process. This table can be set up in Microsoft Excel and the sheet coded according to identified outcomes (e.g. resilience, lifesaving, women's empowerment etc.).

Identified outcome			
Specific group project(s) that is being monitored			
Who identified the outcome?			
Harvesting question - Why does the change matter?			
Harvesting question - How did the GCT project contribute to this change?			
Harvesting question - What else impacted the change?			
How are the outcome harvesting's results shared with communities engaged in or affected by the project?			
Note any reactions from the wider community on the identified outcomes and findings			
Actions to be taken based on the identified outcome, when and by who			

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Tool 19| Cash for Work

NB: not all actors engaging in GCTs consider Cash for Work (CfW) as relevant or appropriate to use for GCTs. Hence, it is recommended that a careful analysis of the appropriateness and feasible of CfW in the context and relevance to the project is conducted prior to considering this.

The following is a short complementary checklist developed by Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) if committees supported with GCTs wish to engage in CfW as part of the supported project.⁷³ The checklist can be used for inspiration by other actors, but it should always be contextualised and adapted to the requirements of the facilitating agency.

CfW to be implemented as GCT

Community Resilience Program (CRP): Rakhine – Myanmar, MRCS

This guideline and checklist is specific to CfW, but is part of an overall programming framework and should be considered as a sub-set of existing programming guidelines.

Identification of CfW projects:

The type of activities to be undertaken through CfW should be linked to community-based planning processes facilitated under the CRP. The Community Action Plans (CAPs) should be the guiding instrument to identify CfW activities. The activities undertaken through CfW should emphasise community assets building, as the projects should be beneficial to the whole community. The Village Resilience Committees (VRC) should regularly update CAPs to ensure that the identified CfW projects are needs-based.

Community Cash Grants (GCTs) and a modality for CfW:

MRCS has developed an innovative approach called “Community Cash Grants” (CCG), through which financial assistance is provided to community institutions like VRCs to implement small community-led projects to enhance community infrastructure. CfW should be implemented as a GCT, where VRCs take a leading role in the project’s administration.

Management of CfW by Village Resilience Committees:

Village Resilience Committees are responsible for managing and administering GCTs, which includes overseeing the implementation of CfW activities. MRCS should build the capacities of

73. Certain elements of the checklist have been excluded.

74. This statement is relevant for the MRCS programme in Rakhine, not globally. MRCS uses community cash grants or CCG instead of GCTs.

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these Village Resilience Committees so that they can properly fulfil all of their administrative tasks, including selecting beneficiaries, managing workforce, record keeping, supervising the quality of work, ensuring workers' safety, executing the payment cycles, and ensuring transparency. The village-level VRCs, sub-committees like WASH and Disaster Risk Reduction should also be actively involved in planning and implementing CfW activities.

Key aspects for implementing CfW include:

- As CfW is implemented as GCT, all procedures that are applicable to GCT implementation should be adhered to.
- Conduct participatory beneficiary targeting as per pre-agreed targeting criteria, with the active involvement of VRCs.
- The number of beneficiaries to include will depend on the type of work identified and total number of working days required to complete the work. On an average, each beneficiary should receive at minimum 20 days of wage employment.
- The daily wage should be collectively decided with the community, and by considering other market factors (e.g. CfW fees by other agencies, an established MEB etc.). The expected daily wage for the MRCS project is MMK 7,000. In case of different daily wages depending on workers' skills, it should be agreed in advance and there should be a proper system to administer these wages.
- Only one person from each identified household will be selected as a beneficiary. This is to maximise the number of households that will benefit from the CfW.
- Child labour is not allowed in any CfW programme. The minimum age of beneficiaries is 18 years.
- There should be proper transparency of the CfW's implementation at the community level, with display of information on the project, fees and expected timeline of the work.
- MRCS should ensure complaints and feedback mechanisms are in place to enhance accountability to beneficiaries.
- Village Resilience Committees, with support from MRCS, should administer the pre-agreed documentation systems, e.g. the daily attendance/muster roll, payment register, and all other relevant documents.

Material support to undertake the work:

Conducting CfW requires various types of tools and equipment, and also natural resources such as bamboo, stones, etc. It is expected that communities will try to secure as much of these resources within their own villages as possible. The budgets of CfW projects should however include the costs of procuring basic materials and tools that communities are not able to contribute. The MRCS team should support VRC's in developing these budgets correctly, and train them on how to procure these materials.

Payment of wages to beneficiaries:

After completion of every 5 days of work, Village Resilience Committees will make payments to the beneficiaries, as per the agreed procedure. The MRCS team and VRCs must be involved in the payment process to ensure to all agreed systems have been properly adhered to.

Annex 2

Group Cash Transfer Glossary

The Group Cash Transfer (GCT) glossary aims to facilitate a common understanding and harmonised use for GCT-related terms. The definitions included here are not necessarily reflective of GCT programmes in all contexts. Terms that are generally used in Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) are not included here; users can refer to [the CaLP Glossary of Terms](#) for necessary specifications and explanations.

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Term	Abbreviation	Explanation
Group Cash Transfers	GCTs	An approach to provide resources in the form of cash for selected groups to implement projects that benefit either a sub-section of the community, or the community at large. GCT is a response modality that seeks to transfer power to crisis-affected populations (typically delimited by geographical location) or community groups ⁷⁵ to respond to their own needs and priorities.
Appreciate inquiry	AI	A component of data collection that follows a community-led approach that draws on the strengths and potential of self-help actions through identifying and disseminating successful coping mechanisms, initiatives and ideas.
Area Based Humanitarian Coordination	ABHC ⁷⁶	An approach that reorients humanitarian coordination towards systems that are organised around the affected populations' needs rather than sectoral mandates - and challenges the current cluster approach.
Cash for Work	CfW	See CaLP Glossary for definition. In the context of GCTs, CfW may be an integrated part of a group project. The criteria for such CfW activity should be developed with the affected communities' input. The group that the grant supports is expected to facilitate any transfers to individuals engaged in the work, as well as to oversee CfW activities. If several groups in one community, or across closely located communities, are supported with grants for projects that include CfW, the local partner may need to ensure that the processes are similar (e.g. number of days/people involved, cash transfer amounts, etc.).
Community Action Plans	CAPs	Also known as Group Action Plans, CAPs are a process where community members identify priority needs and how to address them, with a focus on activities that can be undertaken to benefit a sub-section or the wider community (e.g., a rural village, a livelihoods group, a specific demographic). The term "community" does not imply the involvement of all constituting members, as actions are often developed and implemented by a specific group or committee that are elected. CAPs set a specific timeline and identify the resources needed to implement the action (e.g. money, people, and material). The key to a strong CAP is that it is developed, owned and implemented by affected communities themselves.
Community based organisations	CBOs	Non-profit, non-governmental groups that work at the local level. CBOs are typically formally registered and may have a specific focus or a broad approach to their sectoral engagement. Collaborating with CBOs can provide immense value to projects, as CBOs are typically formed and staffed locally, have extensive contextual knowledge and experience, and speak the local language(s).

75. E.g. self-help groups, community-based organisations, community committees and other formal and informal structures.

76. Jeremy Konyndyk, Patrick Saez, and Rose Worden, 2020. "Inclusive Coordination: Building an Area-Based Humanitarian Coordination Model." CGD Policy Paper. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/inclusive-coordination-building-area-based-humanitarian-coordination-model>

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Community groups	n/a	Groups or organisations that are created and function for a specific purpose, or to provide a specific service, in a community. ⁷⁷
Community-led response	n/a	Interventions/initiatives that are designed and implemented by a group of people who have a common goal or shared problem(s) they want to address together either on behalf of their community or the group members. The addressed concerns may range from sudden onset crises to long-term resilience projects.
Community of Practice	CoP	A group of people who share the same interest or passion. A CoP regularly shares experiences, best practices, lessons learned etc. to strengthen their work and learning. A CoP can exist via an online platform or face-to-face. An example of a CoP is the CaLP discussion groups .
Conditionality related to GCTs	n/a	Conditionality ⁷⁸ for cash transfers typically refers to pre-conditions that need to be met to receive cash or vouchers (e.g. participation in a training). GCTs however are usually made unconditionally; in other words, such conditions are not associated with GCTs.
Facilitating agencies	n/a	A term used to refer to local and national actors (LNAs), international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) as well as UN agencies engaged in supporting groups in crisis affected areas implement their own responses to crises and challenges. The term is used to emphasise that these actors should transfer decision-making power and agency to the supported groups in terms of designing, implementing and monitoring their own projects and primarily facilitate the processes for the supported groups.
Group micro-grants		“Group micro-grants” is a term used by the survivor and community-led crisis response (sclr) CoP to refer to GCTs, i.e. a money transfer to individuals, groups, communities, or organisations to attain pre-defined specific or broad outcomes. Micro-grants do not need to be paid back to the funding body, and usually range between \$50 - \$5,000.
Localisation	n/a	There is no single definition of “localisation.” Under the Grand Bargain, the 63 signatories have committed to “making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary,” while continuing to recognise the vital role of international actors, in particular in situations of armed conflict. In a narrow sense, localisation can be seen as strengthening international investment and respect for the role of local actors, with the goal of reducing costs and increasing the reach of humanitarian action. In a broader sense, it can be viewed as a way of re-conceiving of the humanitarian sector from the bottom up. It recognises that the overwhelming majority of humanitarian assistance is already provided by local actors. ⁷⁹

77. Definitions. (2020). <https://www.definitions.net/definition/community+group>

78. See the CaLP Glossary for an in-depth definition of conditionality:
<https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/calp-glossary-english.pdf#page=7>

79. Text from Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream. (2018). http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/06/categories_for_tracking_direct_as_possible_funding_to_local_and_national_actors_003.pdf

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Local and national actors	LNAs	<p>The Grand Bargain refers to “National and local responders comprising governments, communities, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and local civil society.” With regard to measuring progress towards their financing goal, the Grand Bargain signatories agreed to the following definitions:⁸⁰</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ “Local and national non-state actors: “Organisations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO. (A local actor is not considered to be affiliated merely because it is part of a network, confederation or alliance wherein it maintains independent fundraising and governance systems.)” ➔ “National and sub-national state actors: “State authorities of the affected aid recipient country engaged in relief, whether at the local or national level.” <p>LNAs are considered to include CBOs, women-led and women’s rights organisations, refugee-led organisations etc. Furthermore, national and local networks, alliances and coordination platforms may also be considered as LNAs.</p>
Micro-credit	n/a	Small loans provided to individuals (or groups), typically as a form of microfinance. These can be distributed by organisations or through businesses, for example to establish or expand income-generating activities.
Restrictions related to GCTs	n/a	<p>Restrictions typically refer to limitations on how to spend cash or voucher assistance.⁸¹ Restrictions for GCTs however generally refer to restricting projects to a sector or a certain focus area. This could for example be a donor-imposed restriction specifying spending on livelihood grants or projects intended for conflict transformation.</p> <p>It is advised for actors to advocate for flexibility in funding, however, is possible to balance restrictions with community priorities (see also Guidance Section 2.3.2. Designing Appropriate GCTs).</p>
Rights holders	n/a	<p>A more empowering term to use for individuals, rather than beneficiaries or recipients where actions in a community are concerned. The term captures all individual members of a targeted community.</p> <p>“From a human rights perspective, all individuals are rights holders who can make legitimate claims to entitlements in relation to specific duty-bearers such as states and other actors who are tasked with responsibilities and can be held accountable for their actions.”⁸²</p>

80. Text from Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream. (2018). http://media.ifrc.org/grand_bargain_localisation/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/06/categories_for_tracking_direct_as_possible_funding_to_local_and_national_actors_003.pdf

81. See the CaLP Glossary for an in-depth definition of Restriction: <https://www.calpnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/calp-glossary-english.pdf#page=15>

82. Text from Social Protections and Human Rights. (n.d.). Rights-holders. <https://socialprotection-humanrights.org/key-issues/universality-of-protection-and-effective-access/rights-holders/>

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Outcome harvesting	n/a	Outcome harvesting is a participatory monitoring and evaluation approach that involves the personnel involved in the implementation of a project as well as the beneficiaries in identifying, describing, formulating, verifying and analysing the outcomes. This applies to contexts where cause and effect are not obvious and hence, analysis is done backwards to understand how programme activities contributed to the changes. ⁸³ (see also Guidance section 4.2.1. Outcome harvesting (light touch))
Participatory Action Learning in Crisis	PALC	<p>A process referred to in survivor and community-led crisis response (sclr) that aims to establish community-owned methods for rapid situation analysis, appreciative inquiry (see above), information-management, mobilisation, gap-analysis and learning.</p> <p>The PALC process is typically activated by facilitating agencies in emergency situations and led by representatives of the crisis-affected population to identify priorities and capacities for self-help and collective action prior to announcing and designing GCT projects. By using PALC instead of a traditional needs assessment, focus is strengthened on community prioritisation, effectiveness, accountability, inclusiveness and social cohesion.</p>
Post-distribution monitoring	PDM	A tool used by facilitating agencies to monitor the progress of supported projects and gather feedback from supported groups on the quality, effectiveness and perceived risks of the support provided. PDM is conducted after cash transfers and or complementary services have been made to supported groups. Results of the PDM are used to adapt and inform programming and learning.
Self-help group	SHG	An informal group, usually of 10-20 people, who voluntarily come together to address a common problem or to act as a mutual support network. Alternatively, an assistance programme may initiate SHGs to further sustain desired outcomes for beneficiaries. In essence, SHGs are intended to create unity on actions to take, purpose and mutual benefit for members.
survivor and community-led crisis response	sclr	<p>Named by a CoP under the Local to Global Protection initiative, sclr is an approach for community-led and community-driven responses to complement otherwise externally-led humanitarian responses.</p> <p>sclr can be implemented in long-term, protracted crisis settings; rapid-onset emergencies; slow-onset emergencies; and in resilience programmes. sclr includes a GCT component that it calls “group micro-grants.”</p> <p>sclr as abbreviation is not capitalised since the approach is not considered a standard method. It is an evolving set of guidance that is constantly amended and contextualised.</p> <p>More information is available here.</p>

80. BetterEvaluation. (n.d).

https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting#OH_what_is_OutcomeHarvesting

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Savings Group / Village Savings and Loan Association	SG / VSLA	<p>Known as both SGs and VSLAs, this model creates self-managed savings groups where each member contributes financial savings that other members of the group can borrow, often in rotation or related to specific events. SGs/VSLAs typically comprise 10-25 members, and can be established with the support of facilitating agencies, but are meant to be based on group initiatives.</p> <p>In the context of GCTs, SGs/VSLAs are mainly considered in relation to the experiential learning of financial management for smaller, informal groups. See for example the SEEP Network for more evidence and guidance on savings groups.</p>
Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment	VCA	<p>An approach typically used in disaster risk analysis to identify local priorities. It utilises a range of participatory tools to understand vulnerabilities and capacities at the individual, household and community levels. The VCA focuses on exposure to risks, identifies the most vulnerable groups and the reasons they are more vulnerable, and highlights the priority needs and gaps. It also notes the existing capacities and empowers affected communities to take action according to their priorities, for example through designing community action plans.⁸⁴</p> <p>In the context of GCTs, a VCA can be used in long-term, protracted crises or resilience projects (rather than the more rapid PALC).</p>

84. Definition adapted from International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2006). What is VCA? An introduction to vulnerability and capacity assessment. <https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/vca/whats-vca-en.pdf>

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