

## Cash and voucher programming during COVID-19 for effective and timely emergency preparedness, response, recovery towards financial resilience and social protection mechanism

With the increasing number of affected countries, confirmed and suspected cases, and mortality rates in March 2020, a holistic humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery effort requires flexible adaptive tools.

WVI, based on its [strategic Cash Roadmap](#) and [Our Promise to serve the most vulnerable children and their communities](#), recommends the use of cash and voucher programming (CVP) modalities. In 2019 WVI reached more than 1.6 million children (out of 3.7 million people total) through CVP. This work enabled local market-based assistance [to address preparedness](#) by improving [financial resilience](#), supported survival and basic needs, and [enhanced recovery and pathways to financial inclusion and social protection mechanisms for the most vulnerable children, their parents, and caregivers](#).

If the following parameters have been considered and are constantly monitored for changes in context, preference, and needs, then CVP can be used to:

- **address basic needs:** Where markets are functioning and affected vulnerable populations are able to access them, use CVP to facilitate a preventative response as well as recovery-focused single sector or basic needs interventions (i.e. multi-purpose cash assistance) to [support affected children and their parents and caregivers](#).
- **facilitate improved preparedness and recovery:** CVP can be used as an incentive (e.g. conditional CVP for preventative health outcomes); as part of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions; to maintain and support the recovery of the basic local market economy (e.g. as unconditional CVP in quarantined zones subject to required public health precautions); or for restricted/unrestricted funds to purchase certain goods and services.
- **help bolster the loss of income/livelihoods amongst the most vulnerable as an immediate response:** Learnings from the [West Africa EVD response \(2014-2016\)](#) showed these interventions to be [best practice](#):
  - targeted transfers in contexts where household income has been interrupted or severely impacted (e.g. health staff payments)
  - financial assistance to those who have lost their livelihood/income completely
  - linking support to other [financial recovery and inclusion](#) projects for small business owners as well as [\(child-sensitive\) social protection](#) mechanisms
  - enabling access to longer term mobile network/internet for virtual education options
  - reducing financial-access barriers during and after the crisis.

Strong and ongoing contextual, needs, community preference, and market analyses must happen in order to provide appropriate localised response options. Also critical is the need for (digital) feedback mechanisms through multi-stakeholder [collaborations with civil society](#) to ensure accountability and governmental and [private sector](#) collaborations to determine the most appropriate modalities and delivery mechanisms (e.g. [preference for mobile/electronic transfers, e-wallets, and/or e-savings groups](#)). The growing trend of affected governments enhancing existing social protection mechanisms and safety net interventions to reduce the impact felt by already [vulnerable children](#) and their communities, who are now also suffering from severe income loss, inadequate or non-existing health insurance, etc., [showcases the need to strengthen national health systems and basic income transfer options](#), especially where there is still time to prepare. Resources should also be redirected to bolster readiness, resilience and recovery in already challenged economies, more vulnerable population groups, and health systems.

World Vision is working to ensure that this proven modality tool, in tandem with the enhanced use of [digital technology](#), is used to strengthen the COVID-19 responses happening locally, nationally, and globally, especially in situations that are high risk, vulnerable, and/or have limited resources. These warrant substantive preparedness, swift and adaptive responses, and long-term economic rebuilding efforts. [We can do this!](#)