

# STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF CASH ON CHILD PROTECTION

## WHY THIS STUDY?

The “Joining Forces for Child Protection in Emergencies” (JF-CPIE) consortium commissioned this study to evaluate Phase One of its implementation, and specifically on the impact of Cash on various Child Protection (CP) risks. The goals are twofold:

1. To conduct a comprehensive evaluation of Phase One impact on child protection outcomes, identifying what strategies were effective and which were not, to refine our approach for the next phase which starts in July 2024.
2. To contribute to the growing body of evidence on the impact of Cash & Voucher Assistance (CVA) interventions on child protection outcomes, by measuring these effects more accurately but also documenting them more thoroughly.

## WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT?

This study is based on primary data collected during the implementation of 12 JF-CPIE projects across six countries (see next page 6 for more details). With Phase One recently concluded and the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) teams having completed their final evaluation on all mandatory indicators (see page 8), this study focuses in on the specific impact of Cash on CP outcomes (although some participants received vouchers, the analysis will only focus on the Cash recipients). It does not address the overall effects of the project on the Households (HH).



## HOW WAS THIS STUDY CONDUCTED?

The analysis relies primarily on the cleaning, classification, and analysis of data gathered from 327 focus group discussions held with program participants between March and May 2024.

Additionally, it incorporates statistical analysis of 5,256 Household Surveys (HHS) administered to program participants as part of the final project evaluation.

More details on the methodology and the project timeline can be found on page 6.





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# SOME USEFUL DEFINITIONS

## Cash + (CaLP)

Cash plus is generally defined as the combination of Cash transfers with complementary interventions. While it shares features with complementary programming, it differs in that it implies that Cash is pre-supposed as the core component, rather than determining all modalities via response analysis.

## Child Protection Risks (ACPHA)

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (ACPHA) defines child protection risks as the potential dangers and vulnerabilities that children face in humanitarian settings. These risks include abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence, which are often exacerbated by emergencies such as conflicts, natural disasters, and pandemics.

## Child well-being (ACPHA)

A dynamic, subjective and objective state of physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and social health in which children:

- Are safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence;
- Have their basic needs, including survival and development, met;
- Are connected to and cared for by primary caregivers;
- Have the opportunity for supportive relationships with relatives, peers, teachers, community members and society at large; and
- Have the opportunities and elements required to exercise their agency based on their evolving capacities.

## Cash for Protection (GPC- TTC4P)

Cash for protection is a term used to describe the use of Cash to contribute to the achievement of protection outcomes. The objective of Cash for Protection is to respond to urgent and immediate consequences of violence, coercion, deprivation and abuse. It aims to address or reduce the impact of serious harm because of a protection threat. In Cash for Protection, Cash is used as one of several modalities for a protection response.

# JF-CPIE PROJECT OVERVIEW

## PROJECT SCOPE

The Joining Forces for Child Protection in Emergencies (JF-CPIE) project is a multicountry project bringing together the six largest child rights organisations in Germany to improve the protection of vulnerable children and adolescents living in refugee and internally displaced person (IDPs) settings and host communities across different locations within Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Colombia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan (i.e., 12 project locations in total); from July 2022 to June 2024.

The JF-CPIE project employs various types of Cash assistance to support children and adolescents, as well as caregivers and families, in meeting the protection needs of vulnerable children and mitigating CP risks. **Under Result 2, there are two activities that integrate Cash assistance:**

**Activity 2.2:** Covering the basic needs of households with children registered in case management, as well as other vulnerable households with children and adolescents, through CVA and Non Food Items (NFI) support. In this activity, **Cash was provided as part of case management.** The Cash is unconditional and unrestricted in its use, with the amount established by the case worker based on the case assessment and the case plan.

**Activity 2.3:** Providing adolescents and caregivers with start-up kits (home gardening), ensuring food distribution for young children at risk of malnutrition, and granting access to self-help savings groups. In this activity, **Cash is integrated into nutrition and livelihood activities** to increase the resilience of families and adolescents. The amount of Cash is determined according to the needs of the family.

**Project overall objective:**

**“Improved protection of vulnerable girls, boys, adolescent girls, and adolescent boys through access to quality child protection prevention, mitigation, and response services and supports”.**

# 12 projects across 6 countries.



## Overview of project activities

- 1.1 Awareness raising sessions
- 1.2 Life skills sessions
- 1.3 Safe spaces
- 1.4 Psychosocial support and first aid
- 1.5 Dignity kits
- 2.1 Parenting sessions
- 2.2 **Cash, Vouchers and NFI**
- 2.3 **Garden start-up kits, food distribution and savings groups**
- 3.1 Participatory community mapping exercises
- 3.2 Capacity building to child protection groups
- 3.3 Financial and material support to child protection groups
- 4.1 Supporting local child protection referral pathways
- 4.2 Provision of case management services
- 5.1 Child protection mainstreaming.
- 5.2 Participation in coordination groups
- 5.3 Establishment of help desks

## Countries & implementing partners

Bangladesh	Plan International
	World Vision
Burkina Faso	ChildFund/ WeWorld
	Terre des Hommes
Central African Republic	Plan International
	SOS
Colombia	SOS
	Terre des Hommes
Ethiopia	ChildFund
	Save the Children
South Sudan	Save the Children
	World Vision

# STUDY OVERVIEW

For this study, the entire MEAL data available was analyzed to specifically isolate and measure the potential effect of Cash on child protection outcomes.

## 5256 HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

For this study, three distinct questionnaire guides were utilized, each tailored to the profiles of the respondents: caregivers, heads of households, and children. While the endline household survey did gather information on whether caregivers or household heads received Cash, it did not collect socio-economic data. Consequently, estimating the potential effects of receiving Cash on the socio-economic status of households is not possible. However, there may be indirect evidence on the socio-economic effects of Cash.

**Household surveys** typically use closed questions to gather quantitative data, which facilitates the disaggregation of findings and supports statistical tests. These tests can identify correlations, relationships between variables, and reveal patterns and trends.

## 327 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

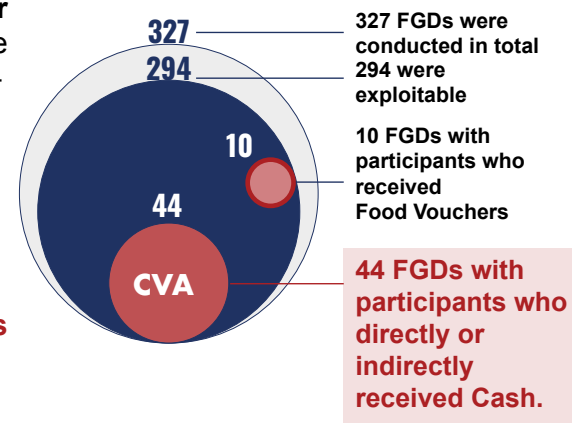
On average, each Focus Group Discussion (FGD) consisted of 6.5 participants, grouped by the following characteristics: children, other community members, caregivers, community-based child protection groups, adult non-beneficiaries, and children with disabilities. **For the objectives of this report, the FGDs were re-categorized based on whether the participants received Cash or not, or indirectly (children participants whose parents received Cash), or Vouchers.**

**Focus Group Discussions** (FGDs) complement quantitative data by offering deeper insights and contextual understanding, thereby enriching the research's depth and practical relevance. These discussions typically use open-ended questions to facilitate conversation and explore various themes.

The FGD questionnaire was designed to prompt participants to reflect on their current situation compared to their situation two years ago, prior to the project's start, on the following themes: access to basic needs, household relationships, child rights, awareness of CP risks and child rights among caregivers, children, and other community members, gender equality, and the level of services available to children.

Some FGDs were excluded from the analysis due to not meeting the required quality standards. Ultimately, 294 FGD reports were analyzed. Of these, **44 FGDs with participants who received Cash - 32 directly and 12 indirectly.**

**Only 10 FGDs included participants who received food vouchers, which will be considered only on page 18. For convenience and accuracy, we will use the term "Cash" throughout this report, except when specifically needed.**



## THE THREE OUTCOME INDICATORS & TARGETS

The scope of this study is solely to examine the potential effects of Cash on child protection outcomes. It does not aim to evaluate or monitor the below three main project outcome indicators, as this will be addressed in the final evaluation study to be published in September 2024.

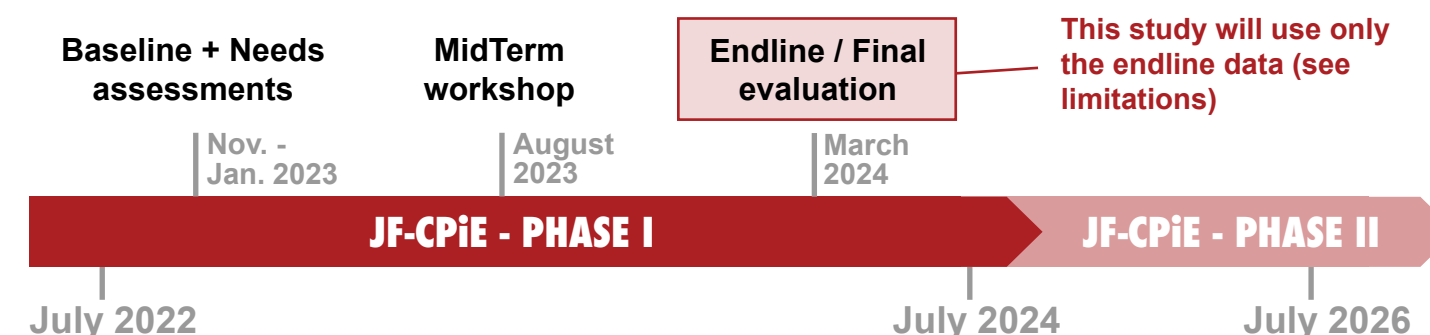
1	% of children who report increased knowledge of child protection risks and how to stay safe due to participation at endline.	Young people aged 7 to 17
2	% of caregivers who report increased knowledge of caring and protection behaviours towards children under their care compared to the beginning of the project.	Adults who take care of children 0 to 17.
3	% of community members who report increased confidence in their ability to prevent and respond to child protection risks compared to the beginning of the project.	Head of households, Caregivers, teachers, health-care workers, local authorities

## SOME METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

A significant methodological limitation of this study is the absence of socio-economic data collected at both the baseline and endline stages. This omission prevents any robust interpretation of potential findings regarding the effect of Cash on these variables. The scarcity of questions specifically addressing the impact of Cash assistance on child protection, asked to families, communities, and children, also limits the potential interpretations in this study. Additionally, the baseline and endline data were not directly comparable for some of the most interesting indicators we aimed to explore.

## MEAL & PROJECT TIMELINE

To support the JF-CPIe Phase One implementation (from July 2022 to July 2024), a baseline and needs assessment was conducted by independent consultants both within-country and globally between November 2022 and January 2023. In August 2023, 11 of the 12 implementing partners held a midterm reflection workshop to discuss project progress and identify potential lessons learned about strengthening child protection in emergency settings through a consortium. Data collection for the final evaluation (endline) of the JF-CPIe Phase One (2022-2024) took place in March 2024.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past few years, there has been a significant increase in the body of evidence around the impact of Cash on CP outcomes. While most of this evidence is quantitative, this qualitative research comes as a useful complement by **highlighting program participants' views and perceptions of the impact that Cash can have in contributing to CP outcomes and child well-being, as well as in mitigating drivers of CP risks.**

**Overall, the analysis of the impact of Cash on drivers of CP risks highlights a positive correlation between increased access to financial resources and improvement of child's well-being, reduction of certain CP risks, and increased awareness of CP.** Cash support plays a crucial role in enabling families to meet essential needs, reducing the likelihood of negative coping strategies such as child labor and child marriage, but also reducing certain drivers such as household stress level, which could contribute to CP risks such as violence in the home. Findings underscore the importance of these interventions in enhancing the overall well-being of children by addressing basic needs and facilitating access to services, such as education and healthcare.

**Cash interventions have proven effective in fostering a safer environment for children by alleviating economic pressures on families.** As a result, parents and caregivers are better positioned to provide a more stable and protective environment for their children. Moreover, the introduction of Cash support is associated with improved educational outcomes as financial barriers to schooling are minimized, allowing for greater attendance and completion rates.

**This study confirms that Cash is being used effectively for children and their well-being. It also highlights the psychosocial benefits allowed by Cash interventions.** In fact, families receiving financial support report reduced stress and improved mental health, which significantly contributes to a more nurturing home environment. Consistent and reliable financial aid helps establish a sense of security and continuity, crucial for the mental and emotional development of children.

**In conclusion, Cash interventions together with other CP strategies such as parenting or case management are vital to protect children in humanitarian settings in the short and long term. Cash assistance not only addresses immediate financial needs but also contribute to long-term developmental benefits for children.**

## THE IMPACT OF CASH ON CHILD PROTECTION

### 1. Prevention of negative coping strategies

In situations of economic hardship families must resort to negative coping strategies that can in some instances be harmful for the child. These negative coping strategies can in many cases constitute child protection risks. The provision of Cash, combined with livelihoods interventions, and/ or with case management, has contributed to the reduction of child labor, school dropouts, child marriage, child neglect and gender inequalities in the countries studied.

### 2. Family Relationships

Cash assistance has significantly improved the fulfillment of basic needs. Caregivers reported feeling less worried and anxious, which contributed to reducing risks of violence in the home and improving children's psychosocial well-being. This has fostered healthier and more nurturing relationships between parents and children.

### 3. Children & Caregivers Well-being

The provision of Cash combined with livelihoods interventions and CP intervention had a direct effect of the improvement of child well-being, by improving their access to basic needs and by improving the psychosocial well-being and reducing stress. Communities identify poverty as a major driver of child protection risks, and financial assistance as an effective approach to mitigate those.

#### Focus: the effect of Cash on perception of "poverty" as a primary driver of CP risks

The likelihood of respondents who received Cash identifying 'poverty' as a locally relevant child protection risk is lower than those who did not received Cash. These findings corroborate the existing evidence on the linkages between child protection risks and food insecurity and poverty (see [evidence review](#) from PLAN International).

### 4. Child protection awareness

Cash can improve the fulfillment of children's rights when used alongside awareness and Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) activities, though its impact is limited when used in isolation. Sensitization efforts are the primary drivers of improving children's rights, with Cash serving as a supplementary tool to increase overall effectiveness.



*Click on the headings to jump to the corresponding findings section*

# PREVENTION OF NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES

In situations of economic hardship families have to resort to negative coping strategies that can in some instances be harmful for the child. Some of these negative coping strategies can have economic drivers. This section highlights key child protection risks identified by communities, and how Cash has contributed to mitigate/reduce those.

The JF-CPIE project has positively impacted families and communities and households through a comprehensive approach to child awareness and risk prevention. These changes result from various positive factors working together to reduce the use of negative coping mechanisms:

1. Training and awareness sessions that increased knowledge of CP risks.
2. Improved referral mechanisms implemented by the government and civil society.
3. Economic empowerment through Cash, enabling households to meet basic needs and avoid risky coping strategies.

This section highlights some common negative coping strategies used by communities including CP risks, and how Cash has contributed to reduce those (including the economic drivers of CP risks<sup>1</sup>).

## Child Labor (13 mentions)

In nearly all contexts, child labor was identified as a significant risk and a coping strategy commonly used to overcome economic hardship. The financial relief provided by Cash has reduced the need for children to work or be drawn into exploitative conditions, thereby reducing financial stress that might otherwise compel children to get into child labor.

## Child neglect (3 mentions)

Cash was also reported to have protected children from neglect arising from financial instability (as in not being provided education for instance or being forced to child labor to cover basic needs).

## School dropouts (6 mentions)

By alleviating the financial burden on families, Cash has helped children return to or stay in school. The children's survey revealed that financial barriers were the most commonly reported reason for not attending school (34% among the 19% who did not go). Additionally, 14% of children cited the need to work as a barrier.

## Gender inequality (4 mentions)

Cash has been crucial in resolving financial shortages, thereby preventing unequal treatment of boys and girls due to economic constraints. Previously, some families prioritized boys' education over girls' when funds were limited. The provision of Cash has allowed parents to support both boys and girls equally, ensuring access to nutritious food, safe living conditions, quality education, and healthcare for all children.

## Child marriage (3 mentions)

Cash has reduced household vulnerability and financial burdens, thereby decreasing children's susceptibility to child marriage. By enabling households to provide equally for both boys and girls, financial assistance has improved educational opportunities for girls allowing parents to provide a safer, more nurturing environment, and reducing the pressure to marry off children early. However, the long-term impact on this complex, culturally rooted issue remains uncertain.

<sup>1</sup>. Please see the graph [page 6 of the CVA for CP tipsheet](#) illustrating how CVA can be used to contribute to CP outcomes through various pathways, noting that CVA would only address economic drivers of risk.

“ ”

*Cash was very useful because it relieved many parents (...) some parents have stopped making their children work, thus somewhat reducing the risks to which they were exposed.*

Women caregivers - CAR  
SOS Children's Village

“ ”

*The Cash allowed them to fill the gaps in their income that prevent them from treating their girls and boys equally. For example, given their limited financial means, they are sometimes forced to prioritize the education of boys over that of girls.*

Parents & caregivers - CAR  
PLAN International

“ ”

*Financial assistance can be a solution. "If parents are financially stable then they won't throw their child to work at an early age. If their basic needs are met, they can focus on providing a safe and nurturing environment for their children (...) child marriage is still prevalent in our community due to poverty and lack of education."*

Young people - Bangladesh  
PLAN International

# FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

**F**indings of this study corroborate other studies highlighting the positive impact that the provision of Cash can have on family dynamics and relationships. In fact, the provision of Cash enabled the alleviation of certain sources of stress, notably associated to the inability of caregivers to meet children’s basic needs and educational needs. Even though not explored at length in the FGDs, caregiver’s stress reduction is a known positive contributing factor to reduce or mitigate violence in the home. As highlighted in the FGDs, the combination of Cash with parenting sessions on different topics was particularly efficient in contributing to the overall improvement of family relationships including parent-child.

## THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THE PROJECT ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Overall, according to all FGD participants, the JF-CPIE project was reported to have positively impacted caregivers/children relationships, by +2.8 points (or +65% increase)

As we can see below, Cash as a contributing factor to the improvement of caregivers/children relationships was mentioned organically only twice in all FGDs. However, a dedicated set of follow-up questions about the impact of Cash was asked to FGD participants who received Cash (see next page).

### Improvement rates in Caregivers / Children relationships (according to all FGDs participants)

	Before project	After project	Diff. pts	Diff. %
All FGDs Participants	4.3	7.1	+2.8	+65%

### Most commonly reported reasons for this increase (FGDs)

- 1. CP Training and Parenting sessions: 4 mentions** (specific sessions aimed at improving parenting skills and childcare).
- 2. Enhanced child protection and welfare: 4 mentions** (supports spanning education, health services, and mental health support).
- 3. Community empowerment and involvement: 3 mentions** (increased awareness and involvement of parents and children in protective and nurturing practices).
- 4. Support for basic needs: 2 mentions** (financial assistance improving the ability to provide for children).

“ ”

*Financial support and emotional support gives parents and caregivers more resources to protect their children from high levels of stress. As the hardship goes down and the emotional well-being of both caregivers and their children improves when family given resources to meet their basic needs*

FGD with Community based CP group - Ethiopia  
Save the Children

**Parenting programs** involve structured sessions that aim to equip parents and other caregivers of adolescents, including foster caregivers, with tools to practice self-care, and positive parenting skills in crisis settings.

Regular group-based sessions provide parents and caregivers with a better understanding of the impact of emergencies and crises on adolescents, and strengthen skills to promote self-care, positive parent-child communication, and non-violent family relationships.



The impact of Cash on household relationships will be explored next page!

# THE IMPACT OF CASH ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Since the heads of households and caregivers have received the Cash assistance...

- 96%** Reported improvements in their relationships with their children
- 95%** Reported better relationships with other household members

Source: household surveys

The above findings from the household surveys highlight the positive impact of Cash on household relationships. The analysis of the 44 FGDs with participants who received Cash corroborates this: Cash has directly improved the ability to provide for children's needs, such as food, clothing (6 mentions), and education (5 mentions). This has significantly strengthened family bonds and enabled harmonious relationships.

In the same vein, participants also noted that Cash positively impacted the household's economic

well-being by reducing economic hardships (3 mentions). This reduction in financial stress lessened the necessity for children to work, allowing them to focus on education and healthier lifestyles (3 mentions).

However, some caregivers expressed that while Cash has been crucial, **the financial assistance is not entirely sufficient to overcome all challenges** posed by economic constraints (2 mentions). Additional top-up transfer value or additional interventions maybe be needed.

“  
**Financial relief from Joint Force Alliance project allowed families with young children to immediately afford to reduce the emotional burden of ongoing financial challenges associated with the conflict and drought**  
 FGD with Community based CP group - Ethiopia Save the Children  
 ”

## Cash FGDs Summary table - how Cash impacted caregivers/children relationships

# of themes occurrences in FGDs	Themes
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<b>Children's basic needs:</b> allowing parents to adequately provide food, clothing, and shelter has been an important stress alleviator for parents
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<b>Support for children's education:</b> facilitating access to educational materials and covering school expenses has reportedly contributed to improving relations inside the household
■ ■ ■	<b>Economic relief and reduced child labor:</b> reducing financial stress that might otherwise compel children to harmful work.

This section illustrates how Cash has played a significant role by enabling the fulfillment of basic needs, thereby fostering harmonious relationships between parents and children. This support has created a more loving and trusting environment while decreasing economic hardships.



“  
**Indeed, when parents are not burdened by the uncertainty of meeting life's essential demands, they can focus more on the emotional and psychological development of their children. This basic security creates a more stable home environment where interactions can be more positive and less stressful**  
 FGD with Young girls (PwDs) - Burkina Faso - TDH Suisse  
 ”



# CHILDREN & CAREGIVERS WELL-BEING

The project has significantly impacted the general well-being of caregivers and (especially) children, with Cash playing a key role, particularly when combined with safe spaces, PSS, life skills and parenting sessions. This section will highlight how Cash was the primary reason cited for the project's positive influence on household well-being, particularly by enabling the fulfillment of basic needs. We will also examine how Cash decreased the self-reported probability of households falling into poverty. Finally, we will discuss how this overall improvement directly and indirectly improved the general psychosocial well-being of children and families.

## THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THE PROJECT ON ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS FOR CHILDREN

The JF-CPIE project has played a significant role in helping caregivers meet their children's basic needs, resulting in a 2.4 point (+61%) overall increase.

### Improvement rates in caregivers capacity to meet their basic needs (all FGDs)

	Before project	After project	Diff. pts	Diff. %
All FGDs Participants	4	6.5	+2,4	+61%

The project's overall impact in increasing access to basic needs was most notably achieved through targeted efforts to improve livelihoods, raise awareness about children's rights and needs, and foster safe and conducive environments for children, as shown below:

### Most commonly reported reasons for the increased capacity to meet basic needs

- 1. Livelihood interventions and CVA: 14 mentions** (CVA transfers, startup kits, to support livelihood and meet basic needs).
- 2. Awareness and training on child protection and rights: 12 mentions** (programs to educate on child rights, child protection, and the importance of meeting children's basic needs).
- 3. Parental and community engagement: 10 mentions** (parental meetings that increased awareness about children's needs and rights).

“

*Through the money received, the parents were able to open a small grocery business where they sell vegetables. This has helped the family in getting the basics such as food everyday*

Children beneficiaries -  
South Sudan - World Vision

”



The impact of Cash on household well-being will be explored next page!

*(...) Children actively engage in JF program sessions, resulting in increased awareness among the community. While many are aware that child marriage is illegal, financial constraints often force them to prioritize immediate needs over their children's education. Now a number of children know about what kind of risk they have and they may save themselves from these risk.*

Other community members  
- Bangladesh  
PLAN International

”

## THE IMPACT OF CASH ON ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

Cash significantly supported households and children's basic needs, improving food, clothing, and shelter (11 mentions). It played a crucial role in children's education (6 mentions) by providing educational materials and covering school fees, thereby boosting confidence and attendance. Additionally, it prevented children from having to work (5 mentions), helping them to stay in school.

The assistance helped families buy food, ensuring balanced meals (5 mentions), and addressed some healthcare needs (4 mentions). Furthermore, it enabled economic empowerment by allowing families to engage in income-generating activities, providing a reliable financial resource that reduced women's workloads and prevented adverse coping mechanisms, such as child marriage (3 mentions) by stabilizing household economic situations.

### Cash FGDs summary table - how Cash impacted children's access to basic needs

#### # of themes occurrences in FGDs

#### Themes

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<b>Support for education:</b> enabled purchase of educational materials and paid school fees
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<b>Nutritional support:</b> enabled families to buy food and prepare nutritious meals
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<b>Economic stability and business start-ups:</b> facilitating the start-up of family businesses, improving long-term economic stability.
■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	<b>Health care support:</b> provided some support for medical expenses and healthier food options.

However, some participants express disagreement regarding the effectiveness of the financial support provided. FGD participants point out that the voucher received was not enough to cover all the needs of the market, and other also expresses disappointment at the limitations on the items that could be purchased with the voucher.

Participants receiving food vouchers also highlighted that **the amount of the assistance was not**

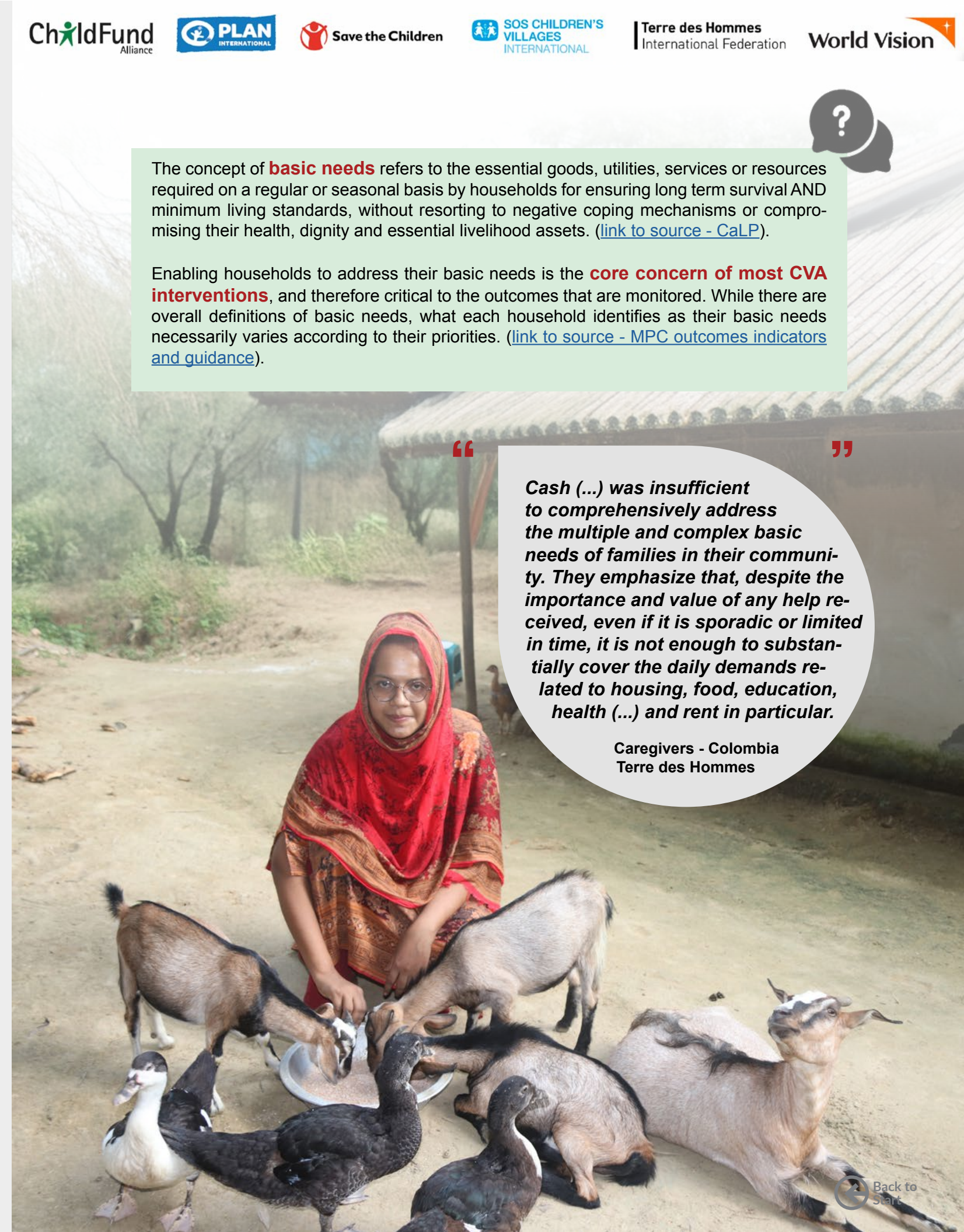
**sufficient to bring about lasting change and reduction in contributing factors to CP risks.** This reflects findings from other research (e.g. [Save the Children CVA CP Evidence building](#)) which indicate that the provision of financial or material assistance in itself is not necessarily efficient in itself to contribute to the reduction of CP risks. the design of the program (targeting, transfer value, frequency, duration) is in fact of primary importance in influencing changes and contributing factors in the reduction of CP risks.

The concept of **basic needs** refers to the essential goods, utilities, services or resources required on a regular or seasonal basis by households for ensuring long term survival AND minimum living standards, without resorting to negative coping mechanisms or compromising their health, dignity and essential livelihood assets. ([link to source - CaLP](#)).

Enabling households to address their basic needs is the **core concern of most CVA interventions**, and therefore critical to the outcomes that are monitored. While there are overall definitions of basic needs, what each household identifies as their basic needs necessarily varies according to their priorities. ([link to source - MPC outcomes indicators and guidance](#)).

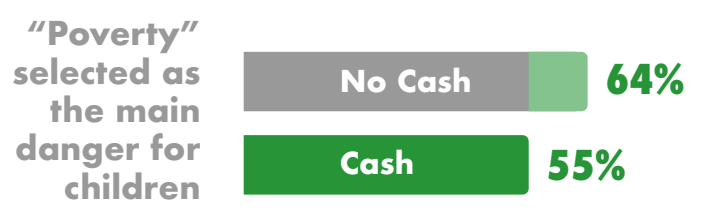
*Cash (...) was insufficient to comprehensively address the multiple and complex basic needs of families in their community. They emphasize that, despite the importance and value of any help received, even if it is sporadic or limited in time, it is not enough to substantially cover the daily demands related to housing, food, education, health (...) and rent in particular.*

Caregivers - Colombia  
Terre des Hommes



# THE EFFECT OF CASH ON PERCEPTION OF "POVERTY" AS A PRIMARY DRIVER OF CP RISKS

The likelihood of respondents who received Cash identifying poverty as a factor that may drive CP risks is lower than those who did not receive Cash.



Both caregivers and household heads were asked about the most prevalent situations and factors that could cause harm to children in the community, with 'poverty' being one of the potential responses. Since choosing 'poverty' may indicate personal exposure to poverty, either community-wide or within their own household, we can therefore consider this as an approximate indicator of a household's overall socio-economic status.

A probability test was conducted and revealed a significant correlation: the likelihood of respondents who received Cash identifying 'poverty' as a locally relevant child protection risk is lower than those who did not received Cash.

Consequently, the data implies that households receiving Cash are less likely to consider themselves poor, indicating a potentially higher socio-economic status at the end of the project. However, given the limitations of the data, further research is essential to explore this issue more thoroughly.



# THE EFFECT OF CASH ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING OF CAREGIVERS

The endline survey gathered data on proxy indicators that can be viewed as measures of financial pressure and psychosocial distress. Since receiving Cash, the heads of households reported significant improvements in their emotional and psychosocial well-being as demonstrated by the figures just below:



Those who received Cash support reported feeling safer and less worried compared to before receiving the assistance, which corroborates well with the section above on family relationships.

This section illustrate how the provision of Cash combined with livelihoods interventions and CP intervention had a direct effect of the improvement of child well-being, by improving their access to basic needs but also by improving the psychosocial well-being and reducing stress of caregivers and heads of households. Communities identify poverty as a major driver of child protection risks, and financial assistance as an effective approach to mitigate those.

# CHILD PROTECTION AWARENESS

## THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THE PROJECT (INCLUDING CASH) ON CP AWARENESS

Discussions and feedback from FGD participants indicate a significant improvement in the general awareness and knowledge of child protection risks within their community at large: Community awareness increased by 3.8 points or 82%, Caregivers' awareness by 3.2 points or 74%, and Children's awareness by 3.7 points or 104% (see below table).

### Comparing improvements in awareness of child protection risks (all FGDs)

	Before project	After project	Diff. pts	Diff. %
Community awareness	4.3	7.1	+3.8	+82%
Caregivers awareness	4.3	7.5	+3.2	+74%
Children's awareness	3.5	7.2	+3.7	+104%

These improvements were primarily attributed to interventions by the JF-CPIE program, particularly their awareness and training campaigns. Additionally, improved referral mechanisms, the involvement of government organizations, broader societal engagement (including influences from urban areas and international practices), and the impact of Cash played significant roles.

While Cash can be considered as a contributing factor / driver of improvement of child's right, the sensitization activities remain the primary drivers of this improvement/ change. Cash appears to be a tool that can be effectively used in combination with awareness / SBCC activities to increase impact/ change on child right's fulfilment, but would have a limited impact on its own.

These interventions collectively empowered communities to better protect children from risks such as child marriage, (worst forms) of child labor, and other forms of abuse. They contributed to a cultural shift toward recognizing and valuing children's rights and enhancing public awareness.

Participants noted that these changes led to a more proactive stance in protecting children and creating a healthier and more secure environment for children. The interventions were also credited with preventing harmful practices by providing **financial stability, thus reducing the need for children to enter into child labor.**

However, challenges persist, particularly in rural areas and among older community members who may still hold traditional views conflicting with contemporary understanding of awareness of protecting children in humanitarian crises. The normalization or trivialization of certain risks within the community and among children themselves indicates that while progress has been made, continuous efforts are needed to further change perceptions and behaviors toward child protection.



# SOME PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CVA & CP PROGRAMMING

## Strengthen your situation and child protection risks analysis:

Dedicate sufficient time and resources at the start of the project to conduct a thorough and well-informed situation and risk analysis. Ensure inclusivity in this process by consulting with community representatives and/ or conducting FGDs using the [CVA & CP toolkit](#) (produced by Save the Children)

To quote the latest [CVA & CP tipsheet](#) produced by the Global Protection Cluster's (GPC) Task Team on Cash for Protection (TTC4P) and CP Area of Responsibility:

*“To determine whether CVA is an appropriate response modality for your intervention, it is also crucial to analyze the CP risks and their root causes and drivers in your operational context. Your intervention's theory of change should reflect an understanding of the CP risks and their drivers and demonstrate the steps of how your intervention is going to address the CP risks step by step. The drivers for CP risks are often intertwined, for example, child marriage could be driven by a combination of economic factors, inability to access education and cultural acceptability. CVA can only address economic drivers of CP risks.*

*CVA can be used both to prevent CP risks (i.e. CVA to reduce the need to rely on negative coping strategies) and to respond to the needs of children who are experiencing or have experienced CP concerns (i.e. CVA to ensure access to services to a child who has experienced abuse).”*

## Tailor interventions based on the findings from the situation analysis

Develop the right package of activities that address the specific drivers of the identified child protection risks. Design the program to offer more than just financial assistance: include educational support, vocational training, and psychosocial services to address the multidimensional challenges faced by children and their families.

## Improve your logframe and your theory of change

The project logframe should include all potential effects the consortium and their implementing partners may have on children, their caregivers, and the broader communities of refugees, internally displaced people, and their host communities. MEAL tools should aim to measure these benefits as comprehensively and accurately as possible.

## The importance of designing and calculating CVA programs

Designing and calculating the transfer value of CVA to achieve Child Protection outcomes is crucial. An authoritative [guidance](#) has been produced by the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action on how best to design CVA that minimizes risks and maximizes protection outcomes for children, adolescents, and their families. For basic needs, the Minimum Expenditure Basket should always serve as the basis for transfers. To ensure protection outcomes, a top-up approach or Cash for protection should be considered.

## Ensuring comprehensive & adaptative transfer values

Moreover, as demonstrated by the [CVA and CP: Summary of practice and evidence 2023](#) - if the assistance is insufficient to meet basic needs or address economic drivers of child protection risks, households may still need to prioritize expenditures and potentially continue using negative coping strategies. It is thus essential to accurately calculate transfer values, ensuring they are comprehensive enough to cover the priority needs of program participants, such as including rental costs in urban contexts and accounting for potential or existing inflation trends. Finally, as recommended in the mid-project review, transfer values should not be static but adapted to changes in the context throughout the lifecycle of the project, especially in inflationary contexts where robust and regular market monitoring can support the adaptation of transfer values.

## Regularity and predictability of cash distributions

The study also emphasizes the importance of the regularity and predictability of Cash distributions. Program participants have expressed frustrations about the “limited and irregular” dispersal of the Cash. This inconsistency can prompt households to seek alternative means of support, potentially negating the positive effects on child rights.

## Effectiveness of combined approaches in the JF-CPIE project

Programs designed to address the multiple root causes of protection risks should include not only assistance and child protection services but also other sectoral interventions, such as livelihoods. In the JF-CPIE project, CVA combined with awareness-raising activities and parenting groups has been reported to be particularly effective.

These activities raise caregivers' awareness of their children's developmental needs and how to protect them from locally relevant risks. CVA that enables households to meet their basic needs promotes caregivers' ability to apply this raised awareness in practice. This integrated approach has equipped community members with the skills and resources necessary to protect children, fostering a cultural shift towards proactive child risk management, and creating a safer community environment for children.

## Integration with other programs

Furthermore, integrating CVA with other programs has proven more efficient than child protection or CVA alone. Evidence from Save the Children's [2021](#) and [2023](#) reviews shows that CVA, when integrated and complementary to child protection outcomes, has a positive effect on most child protection outcomes measured, especially with case management.



# SOME PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CVA & CP MONITORING & EVALUATION

## Use the right tool for the right reasons

As highlighted in the study overview and methodological introduction, it is crucial to use the appropriate probing tools for the right reasons: FGDs should be used to probe and explore socio-economic questions, but they should not be used quantitatively due to their susceptibility to subjectivity. It is essential to fill in preliminary questions to understand the participants' backgrounds, such as whether they have received Cash assistance or are participants of other activities: for instance, incomplete preliminary data led to manual re-categorization of FGDs in this study.

## SMART indicators for household surveys

For household surveys, it is crucial to use SMART indicators:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Relevant**
- **Time-bound:** Specify a timeframe (e.g., during the last 30 days or three months) and Maintain consistency throughout the questionnaire.

Use the same questions at baseline and endline to allow comparability of findings.

Avoid using overlapping categories in questions and choices provided.

## Include socio-economic questions

Socio-economic and/or basic humanitarian questions (Household Hunger Scale, reduced Coping Strategies Index, ability to meet basic needs) should be included at least at baseline and endline assessments. Regular evaluations of outcomes, such as improvements in nutrition, education, health, and overall well-being, are essential for properly evaluating the project's socio-economic impact on program participants. Please refer to section 7, 8, 9 of the [Multipurpose cash assistance PDM analytical guidance note](#) and the entire [baseline-endline analytical guidance note](#) for more information.

## Use the wealth of guidance available

The newly released [CVA and CP tipsheet](#) by GPC TTC4P regroups most of the latest literature on the subject.

Please refer to the standard tools endorsed by the alliance for guidance, such as the [Multipurpose Cash Assistance MEAL toolkit](#), which includes standardized questionnaires for HHS and FGDs, complemented by the [Toolkit for monitoring and evaluating child protection when using CVA](#) for selection of additional indicators, methodologies and tools which also include a [guide for CVA and CP focus group discussions to be held prior to CVA distribution \(Page 40\)](#) (about the risks and benefits for all children that may come from giving CVA to individuals, families, and children in this context).

**Utilize these insights to continuously refine and improve the current program and guide future planning.**

