

Evaluating flexible approaches to cash transfers for emergency response in Haiti

Context and Objectives

Haiti is currently facing one of the worst political, socio-economic and humanitarian crises of its history after years in cycles of political and economic dysfunction. The poorest country in the Western Hemisphere has long had one of the world's highest levels of food insecurity, which has significantly worsened in recent months due to drought, a collapse in the local currency and anti-government protests which shuttered businesses and public institutions for several months in 2019 and disrupted the transportation of goods, including food aid.

In response to the food insecurity and COVID-19 socio-economic crises the Government - led by the Ministry of Interior and Local Authorities in partnership with the World Food Program (WFP) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MAST) - will implement an emergency cash transfer program, targeting the most vulnerable households in selected urban and peri-urban areas. An estimated 34,000 households will benefit from this intervention. While the distribution of cash transfers is aimed to reduce the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable households, understanding how efficient this type of instrument, emergency registration as well as mobile payment delivery are to respond to shocks is valuable for all disaster response applications.

Main Activities

- **Evaluation of the emergency cash transfers and social and behavioral change communication activities in reducing the socio-economic impact and increasing awareness and understanding of COVID-19:** This evaluation will focus on several areas related to both the design of the transfer, as well as its outcomes. Regarding the design of the transfer, the feedback regarding modality, amount and frequency of the transfers, as well as the registration and targeting of beneficiaries will be evaluated. Regarding the outcomes, awareness of and behavioral changes related to COVID measures, food insecurity, poverty, resilience of households, perceptions of social cohesion, human capital, preferences of food, cash or mobile money are of interest.
- **Evaluation pilot of a mobile payment delivery mechanism for cash transfer as an option for emergency cash transfers:** This evaluation would require frequent monitoring of households enrolled in the pilot and focus on the implementation to capture the experience of households in using the mobile money option and their preferences in terms of delivery.
- **Qualitative evaluation of processes to register households in the social registry:** This activity aims to increase coverage and identification of potential beneficiaries in case of emergency via focus groups and key stakeholder interviews.

Results

This project is in its inception phase.

Partnerships and Coordination

This project is executed by the World Bank Latin America and Caribbean DRM and Urban team and the Social Protection & Jobs team, in collaboration with Ministry of Interior and Local Authorities in partnership with the World Food Program (WFP) and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Country

Haiti

Region

Caribbean

Caribbean Regional Resilience Building Facility component

Adaptation Facility for Leveraging Investments in Resilience in the Caribbean

Amount approved

\$500,000

Duration

06/2020-04/2022