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## 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. The objective of this project is to evaluate an emergency cash transfer and on-demand registration as part of the COVID-19 emergency response.

### 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.
- Evaluation pilot of a mobile payment delivery mechanism for cash transfer as an option for emergency cash transfers.
- Qualitative evaluation of processes to register households in the social registry.

### Results

The evaluation is being undertaken through a partnership between two non-governmental organizations: IMPACT Initiatives and ACTED. A survey methodology and questionnaires were designed, and data collections have been conducted on the ground related to the evaluation of emergency cash transfers. The baseline data analysis shed light on the level of adoption of mobile payment platforms among the beneficiary population which is critical to inform the viability of this modality for the new safety net. The collected data was used to develop a baseline report on quantitative analysis of trends in outcomes of interest as well as household perceptions of transfer design, which was delivered in September 2021. Specifically, the report evaluates recipient households' mobile money experience and provide recommendations for future implementation.

Initial findings were presented during a virtual event in August 2021 to 16 people including 7 women from the Haitian Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, the World Food Program (WFP), the EU Delegation and the Inter-American Development Bank. Midline findings were then presented on 8

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December 2021 to 13 participants including 8 women, which included officials from the EU Delegation and the European Commission's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection and from the Haitian Ministry of the Interior.

In parallel, another focus of the project entails a qualitative evaluation of processes to register households in the social registry. This aims to assess the increase of coverage and identification of potential beneficiaries in case of emergency via focus groups and key stakeholder interviews. The methodology for the pilots has been discussed during a roundtable on social protection in July 2021 with the government and development partners. This was then shared with the EU Delegation in Port-au-Prince, and the evaluation is ongoing. Initial findings have been presented during a virtual event on 5 October 2021 to 22 people including 9 women from the Haitian Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and WFP.

## **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**

EUR 442,988 / \$500,000

### **Duration**

06/2020-04/2022