

**Pledge title: Humanitarian Cash and Voucher Assistance****State(s) / National Society(ies) / other humanitarian partner(s):**

British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, Kenya Red Cross, Lebanese Red Cross, Mongolian Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent, ICRC, IFRC

International Conference theme/topic(s) related to this pledge:

Digitalisation of Aid

Pledge for the period 2019–2023:**A) Objectives of the Pledge**

Cash and voucher assistance (CVA) can provide a more timely, efficient, effective, flexible and appropriate form of humanitarian assistance, when the context and conditions are right. CVA enables choice and, therefore, is more dignified and empowering for people affected by crisis. CVA can also help recovery through support to livelihoods and local markets. CVA embodies a transformational change from traditional forms of aid to a model where economic power and decision-making are shifted into the hands of people in crisis.

CVA is recognised as playing an important role in innovation in humanitarian response, using the potential of digital payments, mobile money and technology to reach affected populations with cash transfers. The digitalisation of aid provides opportunities for new models of assistance as well as new partnerships, with the potential to increase access to financial services during times of crisis.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has taken significant steps to increase the use of CVA since the commitments made at The World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, adopting a common Cash Transfer Programming Strategic Framework and a set of global targets, and pursuing a global agenda to be “cash ready”. This involves ongoing efforts to institutionalise and mainstream CVA in systems and programs, strengthen operational capacity for CVA delivery, and build partnerships with governments and other key actors, including the private sector. The 33rd International Conference is an important opportunity to redouble these efforts and pledge our commitment to CVA.

The signatories of this Pledge commit to:

- Create the conditions that enable CVA to be an integral part of humanitarian aid, ensuring CVA becomes a routine consideration in humanitarian response.
- Promote the use of CVA, where feasible and appropriate, in relevant policies and strategies.
- Invest in the development of organizational structures, tools and systems required for CVA, particularly recognizing the key role of local and national actors in CVA delivery.
- Build partnerships and strengthen collaboration on CVA across organisations and sectors to harness resources, expertise and experience.

- Strengthen links and, where possible, alignment between humanitarian CVA and government social protection systems and emergency social safety nets.
- Share data, evidence and learning on CVA programmes to assess the costs, benefits, impacts and



- risks, and help improve the quality of CVA interventions.
- Ensure the collection and management of data for CVA follows principles and guidelines for data protection.
- Recognise CVA should be treated no differently to in-kind aid or service provision, and should be provided in full respect of the Fundamental Principles.

B) Action plan

The Action Plan focuses on delivery of the above commitments. Signatories of the Pledge support the following priority action:

- ☐ Increase the volume of humanitarian aid delivered through CVA.
- ☐ Increase investment in the capacities of National Societies to be “cash ready” through cash preparedness in all regions.
- ☐ Mainstream CVA across organizational systems, programs and support services.
- ☐ Increase the number of staff and volunteers trained, skilled and equipped to respond with CVA.
- ☐ Provide tools, learning and evidence to support CVA programs.
- ☐ Advocate for CVA and influence policy-makers within the Movement and with the wider humanitarian community, including donors.
- ☐ Build partnerships with other humanitarian actors, governments and the private sector to provide effective and innovative CVA at all levels.

C) Indicators for measuring progress

Measurable indicators include:

- Number of crisis-affected people reached with CVA
- Annual financial CVA data collected through “counting cash” system
- Number and scale of operations involving CVA delivery
- Number of National Societies assessed as cash ready
- Number of people trained in CVA
- Cost benefit analysis of CVA programs
- Evaluation evidence of CVA program impact on dignity and well-being of people affected by crisis

D) Resource implications

Implementation of this Pledge will require sustained efforts; leadership commitment and investment of resources in National Society cash preparedness; core institutional capacity in the IFRC Secretariat and ICRC to ensure Movement coordination and technical assistance to partners and operations; and institutional support to partnerships with governments, other humanitarian actors and the private sector.



Integrating cash and voucher assistance (CVA) into humanitarian operations brings a host of benefits, including increased efficiency, effectiveness and dignity for beneficiaries. By fostering an environment conducive to the success of CVA, we unlock its ability to deliver aid in a timely, adaptive and appropriate manner, thereby increasing the overall impact and sustainability of humanitarian initiatives. Increasing the volume of humanitarian aid managed through CVA is critical to unlocking its transformative potential within the humanitarian response. This requires scaling up existing CVA initiatives and seamlessly integrating cash-centric methodologies into a wider range of humanitarian activities. By expanding the scope of CVA, Türk Kızılay will be able to reach more beneficiaries, address a wider range of needs and optimise the effectiveness of aid distribution channels.

Türk Kızılay conducts its humanitarian operations within a holistic strategy that integrates different components to enhance operational effectiveness both nationally and globally. This strategic approach ensures that its efforts are coordinated and comprehensive, addressing immediate needs while building long-term resilience. Türk Kızılay maximises the impact of its interventions by leveraging multiple capabilities, including disaster response, health services, blood donation and social support programmes. This multi-faceted methodology enables the organisation to respond quickly and effectively to crises, optimise resource allocation and maintain high standards of service delivery. Its interventions are designed to be adaptive and scalable, ensuring that aid reaches those in need in a timely and sustainable manner, reinforcing its mission to alleviate human suffering in diverse contexts.

Comprehensive social assistance is painstakingly delivered by Türk Kızılay's Social Services Directorate through a variety of specially created programs intended to meet the wide range of community needs. These programs, which include major projects like Disaster and Emergency Aid, Minimum Living Support, Donor Aid, Shelter Support, Disability Aid, Temporary Accommodation and Transportation Aid, and Scholarship Support, guarantee well-being and foster social stability.

Additionally, Disaster Management and Climate Change Directorate has spearheaded many important projects during times of crisis, especially during natural catastrophes. These initiatives promote rehabilitation and resilience by providing vulnerable populations with crucial support. Prominent initiatives include the BIM Card Project, Cash for Basic Needs Support Project, Farmer Support Project, Orphan Support Project, Winterization Cash Support Project, and Ramadan Cash Assistance Project.

Moreover, Türk Kızılay's Migration Services Directorate has continuously committed itself to supporting individuals impacted by emergencies. The charity has assisted a growing number of people in need by providing Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA). The number of grantees increased from 2.4 million in 2019 to 2.6 million in 2020, 3.1 million in 2022, and 3.3 million in 2023. Ten major projects are included in these efforts: The Children First Project, the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) Project, the Complementary Emergency Social Safety Net (C-ESSN) Project, the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Program (CCTE), the Elazığ In-Camp Food Assistance Program, the Collective Kindness Project, the Vocational Course Allowance (VCA), the Vocational Course Incentive (VCI), and the Adult Language Training Program (ALT).

Türk Kızılay played a key role in integrating CVA into the national system, such as the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), Complementary Emergency Social Safety Net (C-ESSN), and Conditional Cash Transfer for Education (CCTE) initiatives. In our ongoing efforts, we lead the implementation of the



largest-scale cash assistance project through ESSN, strategically complemented by the utilization of the Complementary Emergency Social Safety Net (C-ESSN) to reach the most vulnerable populations. Additionally, in recognition of the importance of a comprehensive strategy, our Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme (CCTE) has emerged as a critical initiative, actively encouraging consistent school attendance to ensure educational continuity. It is crucial to emphasize both the prioritization of cash assistance among our esteemed partners and the cash preparedness of institutions. Importantly, it is imperative to underscore that cash assistance consistently stands out as the foremost methodological approach in this regard.

1. To fulfil this commitment and increase the volume of humanitarian aid delivered through CVA, the following actions is undertaken by Türk Kızılay:

- Forging strategic partnerships with governments, donors, financial service providers, and other key actors to mobilize resources, leverage expertise, and expand the reach of CVA initiatives.

- Türk Kızılay works closely with government agencies, international organizations, and the Financial Service Provider accelerated the operational process and enhanced the efficiency of the CVA process to improve the planning, execution, and efficiency of cash transfer programs. This guarantees that these systems are maximized for effectiveness, transparency, and accessibility by utilizing its vast experience and resources. This cooperative endeavour enhances the overall impact and durability of humanitarian initiatives in addition to improving the immediate functionality of cash transfer methods.
- As an auxiliary, Türk Kızılay and its governmental partners strive to enhance and modify these systems to address changing demands and obstacles, ultimately optimizing the advantages for impacted communities, via ongoing assessment and creativity.
- Türk Kızılay forges strategic partnerships with esteemed international organizations such as International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), World Food Programme (WFP), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) as well as domestically with government entities including the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), Ministry of National Education, and Presidency of Migration Management (PMM). Additionally, agreement with financial service provider further bolster their capacity to mobilize resources, capitalize on expertise, and extend the impact of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) initiatives.
- Regarding well-established coordination mechanism with both governmental and humanitarian institutions, Türk Kızılay has developed "Duplication Matrix" to prevent or at least minimise duplication while providing cash assistance to the recipients. This mechanism facilitates to maintain strong coordination among institutions who are actively providing humanitarian assistance and to reach more vulnerable population.

- Advocating for the recognition and prioritization of CVA within humanitarian policy frameworks, funding mechanisms, and coordination mechanisms at global, regional, and national levels.

- Türk Kızılay collaborates with international partners to advocate for CVA's inclusion in global humanitarian policies and funding mechanisms. Through joint statements, participation in



conferences, and engagement with policymakers, Türk Kızılay reinforces the importance of CVA in addressing humanitarian crises worldwide.

- Türk Kızılay works closely with government entities to integrate CVA into national policies and frameworks. By providing technical expertise, sharing best practices, and advocating for CVA's inclusion in national humanitarian strategies, Türk Kızılay strengthens the resilience of vulnerable populations and enhances the effectiveness of humanitarian response efforts.
- Türk Kızılay participates in working groups to foster collaboration and coordination among humanitarian actors. By promoting information sharing, joint planning, and capacity-building initiatives related to CVA, Türk Kızılay contributes to a more cohesive and efficient humanitarian response across borders. Task Team on Referral and Transition to Livelihoods Opportunities provides a platform for mutual information exchange and discussion on transitions of individuals from basic needs to livelihoods. Türk Kızılay has been co-chairing Task Team with UNDP and technical support of IFRC since 2020. These collaborative efforts aimed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of cash-based interventions provided by international and national actors.

- Fostering innovation and experimentation in the design and delivery of CVA, leveraging digital technologies and participatory methodologies to enhance efficiency, accountability, and impact.

- Türk Kızılay has developed its own Cash System, to manage all programmes simultaneously. Through the KIZILAYKART Cash System and its interfaces, it is aimed to carry out verification, transfer management and to take concrete actions to both internal and external cases and internally find solutions or refer to other institutions who are more likely to take necessary actions.
- Türk Kızılay prioritizes cash support in addition to the interventions listed above, and it keeps expanding the areas in which cash assistance tools can be applied. Tools like the Corporate Payment System, EFT Transfer from a bank, Voucher Code, Voucher Card, and ESEN Card are being used in this regard. Investments in technology infrastructure and efforts to expand the number of institutions and markets where these tools can be used are being undertaken in order to advance the development of these tools.
- Türk Kızılay has demonstrated shock-responsive agility by introducing digital payment solutions, including a debit card option. For instance, cardless payment modality was successfully carried out as a rapid response during the 2023 earthquake emergency.
- Shifting to a cardless payment methodology proved to be highly effective in facilitating assistance delivery in case of emergency. Continuing to embrace innovative technologies and payment methods further enhances the efficiency and accessibility of cash assistance programs, particularly in emergencies where traditional banking systems may be disrupted.
- As an innovative initiative of the Türk Kızılay, QRED Payment System stands out as a cash assistance tool, allowing humanitarian cash assistance to be delivered safely and quickly both domestically and internationally without the need for a financial service provider.



- Enhancing the capacity of humanitarian organizations, local partners, and relevant stakeholders to design and implement CVA programs effectively.

- The success of Türk Kızılay in obtaining data from governmental institutions, and maintaining strong collaboration with these government agencies is vital. This ensures access to accurate and timely information, facilitating efficient targeting and response efforts in future disaster situations.
- Türk Kızılay's initiative to equip staff in CVA aims to enhance the capacity in designing and implementing impactful CVA programs, and the individuals have completed training programs, including CVA Level II, HIAC, and PECT, to enhance their skills and expertise in relevant areas.

2. Building Partnerships and Strengthening Collaboration on Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)

Türk Kızılay's Cash Assistance Operations and Partnerships

Türk Kızılay has established itself as one of the global leaders in cash assistance, leveraging strategic partnerships with both domestic and international stakeholders to implement large-scale projects.

Impact and Achievements

Türk Kızılay has received \$4.1 billion from donors over the past decade, demonstrating its reliability and effectiveness. Türk Kızılay's deep understanding of local dynamics and its robust reporting skills have fostered long-term partnerships with donors, ensuring successful project outcomes.

Collaborations and Training Initiatives

Türk Kızılay collaborates extensively within Türkiye, especially with the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), to implement cash assistance projects. It also globally supports other organizations by sharing experiences and strategies through initiatives through the National Society Capacity Exchange and Enhancement Platform (NSCEP), the Rotational Delegate Scheme, and Cash School. Training programs like CVA Level II and Practical Emergencies Cash Transfer (PECT) have enhanced the skills of over 250 staff members, facilitating knowledge sharing within the humanitarian sector.

Participation in International Working Groups

Türk Kızılay actively participates in various international cash assistance working groups, allowing it to stay updated on global trends and share best practices. This includes groups such as Assistance Platform Working Group (WG), Cash Advisory Group WG, Cash Peer WG, Cash IM WG, CALP Network, Cash Hub, Cash School (CPDP), Cash and Relief WG, Cross Border Cash WG, Cash-Based Interventions Technical WG, and the IFRC Europe Region Community of Practice (CoP).

Sectoral Partnerships and Coordination

Through its involvement in the 3RP (Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan) platform and hosting ESSN Task Force meetings, Türk Kızılay maintains coordination across sectors and facilitates effective cash assistance activities.



3. Aligning Humanitarian CVA with Government Social Protection Systems

Integration with National Systems

Türk Kızılay works closely with the Turkish government, particularly the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS), to integrate CVA recipients into the national social protection system. This collaboration ensures the continuity and quality of large-scale projects and enhances the efficiency of emergency responses.

Utilization of Government Systems

Türk Kızılay Service Centers streamline the registration process for recipients, utilizing the Integrated Social Assistance and Information System (ISAIS) for efficient cash assistance delivery. This integration supports swift responses to emergencies, such as the 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, and helps meet donor expectations.

Advocacy and Collaboration

Türk Kızılay also engages in advocacy to align programmatic processes with government policies, achieving positive outcomes like increased transfer amounts. This collaborative approach strengthens social protection systems and ensures effective humanitarian interventions.

4. Data Protection in CVA Programs

Adherence to Data Protection Principles

Türk Kızılay prioritizes data protection to safeguard the privacy and dignity of individuals receiving assistance. It implements robust policies and procedures, including secure data transfer protocols, informed consent, and adherence to legal standards.

Tools and Methods for Data Security

Data is transferred via Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) and managed through a web-based reporting platform, ensuring transparency and security. Data validation processes and the use of unique identification numbers (Unique IDs) maintain personal data security while allowing transparent tracking of recipients.

Continuous Improvement

Türk Kızılay regularly updates its data protection measures based on technological advancements and regulatory changes, ensuring continuous improvement and compliance with data protection standards.



5. Treating CVA Equally to In-Kind Aid

Commitment to Fundamental Principles

Türk Kızılay treats CVA with the same respect and consideration as in-kind aid, ensuring assistance is based on need and delivered without discrimination. This approach promotes dignity, autonomy, and self-determination for recipients.

The key steps followed by Türk Kızılay to achieve this:

- Conducting thorough needs assessments and feasibility studies.
- Integrating CVA into existing humanitarian frameworks.
- Providing transparent information and establishing feedback mechanisms.
- Engaging beneficiaries in program design and incorporating their feedback.
- Implementing Cash Plus activities to complement CVA.
- Monitoring and evaluating CVA programs to ensure adherence to humanitarian principles.
- Collaborating with other organizations to enhance coordination and efficiency.
- Advocating for CVA recognition within humanitarian response frameworks.
- Investing in staff training and capacity-building.

By integrating these strategies into our professional approach to Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), Türk Kızılay significantly enhances the provision of more effective, ethical, and dignified support to crisis-affected populations. This commitment not only elevates the quality of TRC's humanitarian efforts but also ensures that aid is delivered with utmost respect for the dignity and rights of those in need.