



Helpdesk Research Report

Economic and market resilience before and after shocks

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Question

What is the state of evidence on the economic impacts of ‘market support’ interventions before and after a shock?

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1. Overview

This rapid review looks at the state of evidence on humanitarian and disaster risk reduction (DRR) interventions which aim to reinforce economic resilience in view of anticipated shocks and support economic recovery after a shock, both in situations of natural disasters and conflict. It focuses on donor led, local or regional interventions supporting local markets. It looks particularly at interventions supporting markets critical to affected populations in crises (i.e. basic needs and services, labour markets etc) as opposed to markets with development opportunities.

The review’s definition of market support interventions is informed by the Oxfam and World Food Programme (WFP) market based programming classification (Oxfam and WFP 2013) – and forthcoming updates to this framework by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) (Juillard draft).

This report does not cover the economic effects of humanitarian aid provided to beneficiaries directly affected by the crisis (often through programmes such as cash transfers and voucher programmes). Neither does it cover “market aware” interventions – when humanitarian responses use local market

systems to deliver emergency response. It does not include longer-term investment in market systems strengthening and development, such as investment in developing agricultural markets and value chains, unless the aim of such interventions is explicitly to increase market resilience to shocks and their recovery after shocks.

There is limited evidence on the economic impacts of indirect market support interventions, mirroring the paucity of evidence on market development approaches more broadly. Factors that contribute to this weak evidence base include:

- Providing indirect support to markets is a relatively **new, emerging area of activity** for humanitarian donors.
- Current interventions tend to be **small-scale components of larger programmes** and not the focus of attention of programme evaluations.
- There is a **gap in understanding of how to measure the success of indirect market interventions**.
- It can be difficult to distinguish between market aware strengthening and emergency response targeted directly to populations affected by crises, and support to whole market systems – in particular when looking at **longer-term interventions and livelihood approaches**.

The limited evidence base makes it **difficult to draw conclusions on the economic impacts** of market support interventions in anticipation or response to a crisis. This review provides some illustrative case studies to show the type of evidence and findings available. There are positive impacts reported, with some analysis of programme challenges and success factors. The examples highlight the small scale of these initiatives. The evidence includes qualitative case studies of single market support interventions during humanitarian response and recovery, and reviews that look more broadly at whole humanitarian responses to an individual crisis. It has been harder to find evidence on humanitarian and DRR market support in anticipation of shocks. There is a related body of evidence on longer-term development investment in market systems, some of which explicitly aims to strengthen the resilience of markets.

The literature highlights several key recommendations:

- Recognising that this is an area with huge potential, but with a need to fill **significant gaps in understanding of how and where humanitarian agencies should engage**. This includes in terms of understanding their mandate to support markets, as well as the costs and benefits and a conceptual framework for interventions.
- **Improving pre- and post- crisis market analysis** through: assessing markets before crises happen in places where crises are anticipated; understanding market systems more broadly to inform creative market interventions rather than looking narrowly at markets as a delivery mechanism for humanitarian assistance; and understanding the market as a system through engaging with a broad range of market actors.
- **Building relationships between humanitarian and development fields** to understand and strengthen synergies along the market based programming continuum.
- Improving **collaboration between the humanitarian and private sector**.

2. Defining market support interventions

In late 2012, Oxfam and WFP undertook joint research to understand how humanitarian agencies are engaging with markets (Oxfam and WFP 2013). Their framework of **three main approaches to “market based programming”** – the practice of working through and supporting local markets – is often cited in the wider literature (Oxfam and WFP 2013):

1. Short-term **“market-integrated relief”** to reach beneficiaries following emergencies – such as through cash and voucher interventions. *Examples include: in kind distributions; local and regional food purchase; cash vouchers; seed fairs.*
2. Short-term **“indirect support through markets”** for market actors that restore the market system after a crisis. *Examples include: targeted support to market actors – grants, loans, transport subsidies, temporary storage; support to supply.*
3. Long-term **“market strengthening and development”** to build resilience and strengthen livelihoods. *Examples include: support to productive and sustainable agriculture; employment creation; financial services; supply and value chains; productive assets; enterprise development.*

A critical distinction in this framework is between 1) interventions directly targeted at the crisis-affected population with market and economic objectives and 2) indirect **interventions that are targeted at a market system the crisis-affected population depends on** (Juillard draft). With the indirect interventions the target group (the market related system or actor receiving the assistance) is distinct from the impact group (the crisis affected population) (Juillard draft).

The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) plans to publish an **updated version of this framework**, as part of a scoping study of current and past market support initiatives implemented by aid actors across sectors in the humanitarian field (Juillard draft¹). A draft version of this forthcoming update develops the original framework to explain the distinction between and indirect market support interventions more clearly, highlighting that indirect market support interventions can support (Juillard draft):

- Market actors, market infrastructures or the market environment.
- Existing market systems, termed market strengthening, or non-existing market systems, termed market developing; market developing interventions are not recommended during emergency response.
- Preparedness/resilience, emergency, recovery and long-term development.

3. Limitations to the evidence base

There is **limited evidence of the impact of indirect market support interventions** in anticipation of and response to shocks (Oxfam and WFP 2013). This rapid review has found few published evaluations of individual indirect market support programmes, and there is no recent synthesis of evidence.

¹ A full description of this scoping study is provided in the section *Building the evidence base*. Key findings of the draft report of this scoping study have been shared verbally by the author, Helene Juillard, independent consultant, and are cited as Juillard draft. The commissioning agency – Catholic Relief Services – plans to publish the final report in 2016.

This mirrors the conclusion of a recent literature review that there is **limited evidence on market development approaches more broadly** (Hinds 2015: 23). The GSDRC Topic Guide on *The Social Impact of Private Sector Development* identifies a need for more rigorous evaluations of market development interventions, noting that other studies have found few evaluations of outcomes and impacts of market development programmes (Hinds 2015: 23).

Factors contributing to the limited evidence base include:

- Providing indirect support to markets is a relatively **new, emerging area of activity** for humanitarian donors, and on the whole humanitarian support to markets remains limited (Oxfam and WFP 2013). There has been broad acceptance by donors of the importance of market awareness (at minimum) during humanitarian response to natural disasters and conflict, according to Rajkotia 2014. Numerous market assessments have been conducted in humanitarian emergencies and there has been investment in new analytical tools² and in new guidance³ (Rakotia 2014; Gerstle and Meissner 2010: 3). There are some examples of market analysis resulting in indirect market support interventions⁴. Other reports, however, highlight the continuing limited nature of humanitarian support to markets, which is often limited to market analysis and market-integrated relief especially cash and voucher programmes (e.g. Zyck and Kent 2014: 24; The Seep Network 2015).
- Implemented indirect market support interventions tend to have been small **sub-components of larger complex programmes**. The indirect market support interventions can be very small-scale, described briefly in the programme plans, and not the focus of the overall programme evaluations. (Author observation; Juillard draft)
- The forthcoming CRS scoping study plans to highlight **a gap in understanding among humanitarian practitioners on what the success of indirect market interventions looks like** – and therefore how to monitor and evaluate it. While practitioners find it easier to agree what changes they want to bring to the ultimate beneficiaries (the population affected by the crisis), the results indicators for the desired market change are more difficult to explain (Juillard draft).
- In addition, it can be difficult for humanitarian practitioners to distinguish between market aware strengthening and emergency response targeted directly to populations affected by crises, and support to whole market systems – in particular when looking at **longer-term interventions and livelihood approaches** (Juillard draft). Livelihoods approaches to support vulnerable populations that happen to be market actors will necessarily be market aware but do not always constitute support to the whole market system (Juillard draft). Meanwhile longer-term activities to strengthen sustainable market systems undertaken as development investment may not use the terminology of disaster risk reduction, resilience and crises, but may have similar aims, target groups and activities.

There are, however, some factors that may have affected this review's ability to find relevant evidence. It has been challenging to search within a limited timeframe across the diverse range of different types of indirect market support intervention, and a more rigorous review of the evidence on a defined sub-

² Such as the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA) <http://emma-toolkit.org/about-emma/>; and the more recently developed Pre Crisis Market Mapping and Analysis (PCMMA) <http://emma-toolkit.org/practice/pre-crisis-market-mapping-and-analysis/>

³ Such as the SEEP Network Minimum Economic Recovery Standards <http://www.seepnetwork.org/minimum-economic-recovery-standards-resources-174.php>

⁴ See an analysis of the impact of the 2011 EMMA in South Sudan – Brady 2012.

section of this field may be able to find more evidence. It may also be the case that operating and funding agencies have commissioned reviews of indirect market support interventions that are not publicly available⁵.

Building the evidence base

Oxfam and WFP (2013) call for investment to gather sufficient evidence to make the case for indirect interventions, to help develop the conceptual framework and to actively improve the design of such projects.

Ongoing research activities include:

- As mentioned previously, CRS have commissioned a **scoping study of on-going and past indirect market support initiatives** implemented by aid actors across sectors in the humanitarian field. It aims to identify promising practices, challenges and lessons learned of market strengthening and to a lesser extent market developing interventions following the different steps of the project management cycle. The study will cover 13 different examples of market based interventions implemented across sectors (water; sanitation and hygiene; shelter; livelihood; food security; nutrition; and basic needs). As part of this work, CRS is updating the Oxfam and WFP market based programming framework. Some of the draft findings from this forthcoming report are included in this review (Juillard draft).
- With DFID funding Oxfam GB and Feinstein International Center (2015) are commissioning an **evidence synthesis on market support interventions, looking at the impacts of market support interventions on household food security in humanitarian crises**. This research aims to build on the work done by the CRS scoping study.

There are also several initiatives building resource libraries on recent practice to support markets pre- / post- crisis. The SEEP Network (2015) identifies this as a potentially rich resource from which to synthesise evidence and develop guidance to support future market support interventions. From a quick review, much of the documentation in these libraries is on market analysis and the impact of integrated market support humanitarian response (e.g. cash and food vouchers).

- **Building Effective and Accessible Markets (BEAM) Exchange**⁶ is a network to share evidence from market systems practitioners. It is building a resource library and an evidence map to provide easy access to publications that contain evidence of market systems interventions. Currently this includes one resource on the theme of fragile and conflict-affected markets.
- **Markets in Crises Community of Practice**⁷ acts as a forum for humanitarian practitioners to share, among other things, field experiences, market analysis reports and programme case studies. It has 1,200 members and a library of 685 documents. While a preliminary review found mainly market analyses, because the library is catalogued by country rather than theme, it is difficult to be certain exactly how much evidence it contains on market support interventions without further systematic review of the whole library.

⁵ For example, the CRS TORs for its ongoing scoping study mentions that NGOs such as Oxfam and Save the Children have done significant work in defining and implementing market support programmes. This rapid review has not been able to find evaluations of Oxfam and Save the Children market support programmes.

⁶ <https://beamexchange.org/>

⁷ <https://dgroups.org/dfid/mic>

- **Cash for Learning Partnership**⁸ is a global partnership of humanitarian actors engaged in policy, practice and research within cash transfer programming. This community of practice includes over 150 organisations and more than 5,000 individuals in the humanitarian sector. Its resource library has a section on markets⁹; most of the documentation is focused on market analyses and the impacts of cash and voucher humanitarian responses.

4. Examples of the available evidence

Market support during emergency response and recovery

Humanitarian response in Sindh Province, Pakistan, after the 2010 floods

The “Markets in Crises” series by the Overseas Development Institute’s (ODI) Humanitarian Policy Group reviews the overall humanitarian response to several crises¹⁰. One of the studies looked at the emergency response after the 2010 floods in Sindh, Pakistan (Zyck *et al* 2015). It found a lack of coordination between aid agencies, and between agencies and the government, which resulted in a lack of awareness of the collective impact of interventions on local markets and businesses, particularly in the bamboo sector. Nevertheless several interventions did have a positive impact on local business and markets. A local NGO provided interest-free loans to small businesses, enabling some to survive and recover after the floods. Oxfam and Save the Children’s market interventions helped to maintain and revive markets for fruit, vegetables and other key items in urban areas, while UNDP provided grants to re-establish small businesses and village shops. The study finds, however, that initiatives such as these were limited, and many Pakistani businesspeople, government representatives and NGO staff indicated that, in most cases, aid agencies tended to work around rather than with markets. (Excerpts from Zyck *et al* 2015: 13)

CRS support in the Philippines, after the 2014 typhoon

In this single intervention case study, CRS reviews its support to local blacksmiths in 2014 in response to typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, part of a much larger programme to support the livelihood recovery of 5,250 agriculture-based households. CRS provided USD 230 grants to five blacksmiths to invest in assets to restart tool production businesses. CRS reports that impact was: 1) programme beneficiaries gained access to preferred products at local markets; 2) blacksmiths supported provided 88% of local machetes purchased in CRS-sponsored input fairs; 3) blacksmiths adapted the types and quality of tools produced based on farmer requests; and 4) blacksmiths reported increased business knowledge and capacity. However, while combining cash grants for blacksmiths and consumer repayment using vouchers linked consumers with producers in an efficient and transparent manner, some reports indicate that tool costs in the vendor fairs were higher than market prices. (CRS n.d.)

⁸ <http://www.cashlearning.org/english/home>

⁹ <http://www.cashlearning.org/markets/markets>

¹⁰ In Sindh, Pakistan (Zyck *et al* 2015); Mali (Barbelet with Diallo Goita 2015; and South Sudan (Mosel and Henderson 2015).

Mercy Corps support in the Horn of Africa, after the 2007/8 food crisis

This single intervention case study looks at a five year USAID USD 20.7 million programme – Revitalizing Agricultural/Pastoral Incomes and New Markets (RAIN) – response to the 2007- 2008 Horn of Africa food price crisis, designed to use sustainable development strategies to improve the capacities of communities in the Somali and Oromia regions of Ethiopia to respond to shocks (Mercy Corps 2013a). One of the programme’s three response strategies was to promote efficient businesses, local economic development, and economic integration¹¹. Indirect market support interventions included capacity building support to producers’ organisations, loans to traders, and facilitation of linkages between input supply chains, livestock traders and alternative output markets (Čelebić 2014: 32). Mercy Corps (2013a) identifies the key success factors as including:

- Multi-year funding that enabled new, experimental strategies to mature and yield concrete results, building internal and external support.
- Flexible funding that enabled early response to emerging needs.
- Adaptive management approach which enabled implementers to recognise ill-suited approaches early on and adapt.
- Integration between relief and development goals which allowed continuity in the approach, with relief efforts creating the necessary conditions for the longer-term development goals and structural changes that the programme also addressed.

Other potential case studies

Other potential case studies include:

- An empirical case study looking at the role of the value chain approach in the work of USAID’s Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP) and Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP) projects in Afghanistan, supporting the poultry and grape/raisin subsectors (McMahon 2008).
- A review of USAID efforts to jump-start agricultural development in post-disaster Honduras (Chalmers *et al* 2005).

Market support in anticipation of crises

This review has found it harder to identify evidence of humanitarian and DRR indirect market support in anticipation of crisis. There is a related sector of longer-term development investment in market systems. According to a Mercy Corps resource, some experts have suggested that market development programming inherently results in resilience gains, while others have argued that additional considerations and efforts are necessary¹². Analysis by Mercy Corps of their market systems development work in Northern Uganda finds that even where economic development programmes are successful in achieving income gains, they may not make communities less vulnerable (Mercy Corps n.d. a: 35). They conclude that one-off, single-sector development programmes are unlikely to build resilience to cycles of crisis that underpin chronic vulnerability, and may result in new, unintended risks (Mercy Corps n.d. a:

¹¹ The other two strategies were: (1) protect vulnerable and food insecure households and improve preparedness; (2) prevent food insecurity through strengthened and diversified livelihoods.

¹² <https://www.microlinks.org/library/market-systems-development-inherently-resilience-approach-event-resources>

35). Mercy Corps provides a number of case studies of their market development approach to resilience programming – see Mercy Corps 2013b and Mercy Corps n.d. b.

5. Challenges and opportunities

Mandate

Oxfam and WFP (2013) find that while this is an area with huge potential, there is still a significant gap in understanding how and where humanitarian agencies should engage. Challenges include a lack of clarity on the mandate for humanitarian organisations to provide support to markets (Oxfam and WFP 2013: 3). The forthcoming CRS scoping study plans to highlight similar findings on the lack of consensus on humanitarian organisations' mandate in supporting markets and the ethics involved in working with profit-making market actors (Juillard draft).

Framework and guidance

Oxfam and WFP (2013: 3) identify another major gap as being the lack of shared terminology and analytical tools, including a coherent vision of the costs and benefits of market based programming and a conceptual framework for such interventions. The SEEP Network (2015) identifies an opportunity to translate theoretical frameworks and case studies into evidence-based guidelines, including the development of minimum standards, guidance notes, indicators and key actions, as well as a glossary of terms, that could help practitioners to design market based programmes within humanitarian response.

Market analysis

Several reports highlight room for improvement in pre- and post- crisis market analysis to inform indirect market interventions. One criticism is that conducting market analysis post-crisis and designing market-strengthening responses at that stage is often too late (Rajkotia 2014). Recent investment in the Oxfam and International Rescue Committee (IRC) Pre-Crisis Market Mapping and Analysis (PCMMA) approach aims to address this issue, by supporting assessment of markets before crises happen in places where crises are anticipated.¹³ It aims to improve the preparedness of agencies to design appropriate and market sensitive responses in a timely fashion, and to support pre-crisis interventions that could mitigate the effects of a crisis.¹⁴ There is not yet much evidence on how recommendations from PCMMA studies have been applied in practice and on what their impact has been.

The ODI case study series on markets in crises includes findings on the limitations of market analyses informing humanitarian responses. The Mali study found a narrow focus on assessing markets as a delivery mechanism for humanitarian assistance, looking mainly at the feasibility of conducting and sustaining cash and voucher interventions, and the capacity of markets to act as a source of in-kind aid (Barbelet with Diallo Goita 2015: 23). The South Sudan study found that the main limiting factors in achieving the required level of analysis appear to be “the insufficient time and expertise allocated, serious operational constraints, the disconnect from existing analysis (from development programming

¹³ An initial guidance document was shared in 2014, and is currently being updated based on early field pilots (conducted in 2015 in Pakistan, Niger and Somalia). <http://emma-toolkit.org/practice/pre-crisis-market-mapping-and-analysis/>

¹⁴ <http://emma-toolkit.org/practice/pre-crisis-market-mapping-and-analysis/>

for example) and insufficient coordination and consolidation between different assessments and analyses” (Mosel and Henderson 2015: 28). Participants in an ODI “markets in crisis” expert roundtable discussion in Islamabad recommended more joined-up analyses that consider a wide range of factors (such as prices, terms of trade, disaster/crisis risk profiles, social relations, livelihoods and numerous other) (Mosel and Zyck 2014: 5). They also recommended involving both humanitarian and recovery and development stakeholders, and other important actors – from philanthropists and small charities to remittance companies and businesses (Mosel and Zyck 2014: 5).

The forthcoming CRS scoping study also plans to recommend that better understanding of markets can be achieved through undertaking stronger engagement with the market as a network, engaging with a broad range of actors, from local trader communities to chambers of commerce and other (Juillard draft). This can help avoid creating or distorting markets through the humanitarian crisis response (Juillard draft).

In conflict-affected contexts there is a particular need to ensure market interventions do not aggravate the causes of the conflict. Gerstle and Meissner (2010: 6-7) call for more multi-disciplinary teams to engage in the design and implementation of market development programmes in conflict environments to understand governance and power relationships within markets. This involves understanding how efforts to promote the economy interact with the dynamics of the conflict. They cite research in Afghanistan that warns against efforts to promote “collapsed markets” that risked reinforcing the interests of economic elites that held power during the Taliban regime¹⁵ (Gerstle and Meissner 2010: 4).

Relationships between humanitarian and development fields

Oxfam and WFP (2013) find that there is an incomplete understanding of the relationships between the market based activities. Their study recommends building synergies along the market based programming continuum. Other commentators identify support to market systems as an opportunity for closer relationships between the humanitarian and development fields. In the forthcoming CRS report, respondents to the scoping study highlighted that market interventions may be a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between emergency and long-term interventions – an opportunity to share information and collaborate with knowledgeable actors across the humanitarian and development sectors (Juillard draft). The Seep Network (2015) identifies the opportunity for more interaction between market experts in humanitarian response and the broader market systems and value chain development community of practice.

Working with the private sector

Oxfam and WFP (2013: 4) highlight that humanitarian practitioners continue to lack experience in dealing with the private sector. They warn that this is a fundamental challenge to developing humanitarian indirect support to markets. An in-depth look at how the humanitarian and private sector can work better together is set out in the ODI study on the role of business and the private sector in humanitarian crises, emergency preparedness and response (Zyck and Kent 2014). Their recommendations include practical ideas for helping the humanitarian and private sector understand, communicate and collaborate better with each other. Looking specifically at support to local market systems, they recommend further

¹⁵ S. Lister and A. Paine (2004). *Trading in power: The “politics of “free” market in Afghanistan*. Kabul: Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit. <http://www.areu.org.af/Uploads/EditionPdfs/423E-Trading%20in%20Power%20BP.pdf>

research and pilot projects to identify how to support small and medium-sized enterprises to be more resilient during and after crises and to play a role in responding to disasters (Zyck and Kent 2014: 24) .

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