

B.8 Russia, Ingushetia - 1999 - Conflict - People displaced

Case Study: Cash for shelter - host families

Project type:

Cash grants to assist host families to shelter displaced people in private households

Disaster:

Internal displacement of civilians following 2nd armed conflict in Chechnya, 1999

No. of people displaced:

At the peak of the crisis, 213,000 people fled to neighbouring Ingushetia. Up to 150,000 people were privately accommodated by host families.

Project target population:

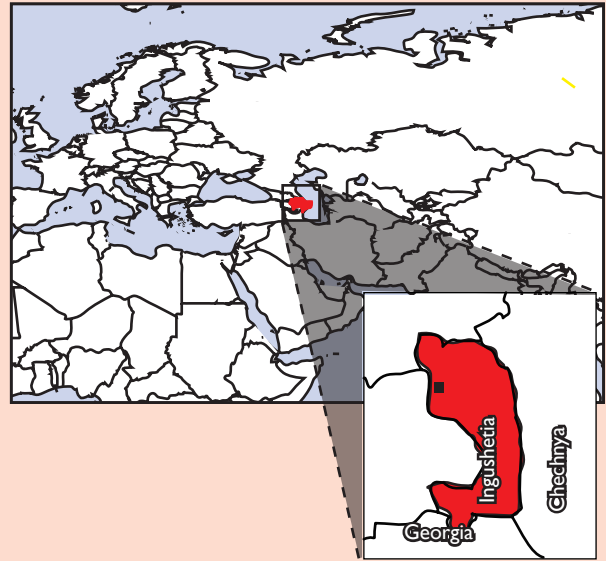
Winter 2000/01 – 15,000 Ingush host families.
Winter 2001/02 – 11,000 Ingush host families.

Occupancy rate on handover:

100% of the host families accommodated on average of five IDPs from Chechnya (subject to corruption, which was carefully screened out).

Shelter size

The cash grant was equivalent to an average of one month's salary in Ingushetia.
A 21m² minimum net floor area was strongly recommended. The shelter consisted of two rooms, one corridor and an external latrine.



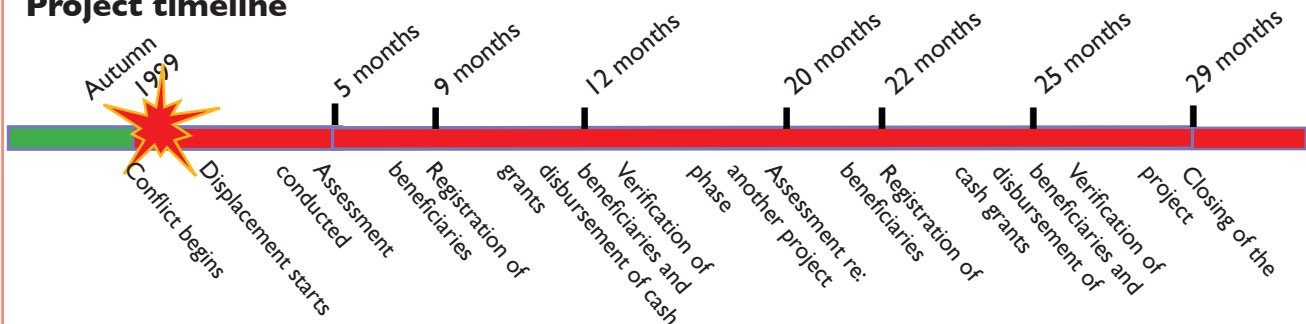
Summary

An international donor, in close cooperation with the international leading agency for shelter assistance in Ingushetia, provided cash grants to every family that hosted displaced people from the conflict in neighbouring Chechnya. The project goal was to prevent IDPs, who were being accommodated by host families, from being evicted during winter. This was achieved through the provision of cash grants to all registered host families in Ingushetia.

A one-off cash grant, roughly equivalent to one month's income, was given with no restrictions to each host family. The programme was implemented by the donor in close cooperation with the government of Ingushetia. The Ingush branch of the Russian postal service made the cash payments.

After a successful implementation during the winter of 2000/01, it was decided to implement a second phase, since the situation for displaced people in Ingushetia had not improved.

Project timeline



Strengthsandweaknesses

- X No eviction of IDPs during the winter months of 2000/01 and 2001/02 were reported.
- X No abuse during cash distribution or any security incidents occurred despite a rather tense security situation.
- X The programme's level of transparency achieved high acceptance among beneficiaries and local authorities.
- X Professional cooperation with the Russian postal service (Ingush branch) allowed for a timely and accurate cash disbursement.
- X The significant influx of liquid cash supported the local economy.

- W The high number of beneficiaries in different databases required an intensive verification process.
- W Implementation of the 2nd phase during the following winter was exposed to severe fraud attempts, as some individuals had manipulated official documents in order meet the eligibility criteria. However, the fraudulent cases were sorted out and expelled from the beneficiary lists before payment was released.
- W In view of the scope of the project (the entire Republic of Ingushetia) an evaluation of the project was recommended to reveal detailed information about its effects and impact.



The project worked with host families.

Context

The conflict in Chechnya started in 1999, forcing 213,000 people to move to the Republic of Ingushetia. At one stage in early 2000, there was one displaced person from Chechnya for every Ingush citizen.

Almost two-thirds of the IDPs were accommodated by Ingush host families. This was possible because of close family and religious ties between the two countries.

In the spring of 2000, there was some evidence that IDPs had been evicted from private accommodation. This was commonly as a result of financial pressures on families, many of whom had been hosting the IDPs for more than one year.

This project recognised that staying with host families was psychologically better for IDPs than living in camps. It also sought to encourage the solidarity effort of the Ingush population. As a result, the project aimed to support host families with economic incentives to encourage them to continue hosting the IDPs.

Assessments were conducted in the spring of 2000. These confirmed:

- the appropriateness of the cash for shelter approach;
- acceptance among potential beneficiaries and authorities; and
- the readiness of partner organisations to provide security and logistics.

Eligibility criteria

A host family was eligible for the cash grant when they:

- presented official registration documents proving that they an Ingush resident; and
- presented a Chechen IDP's temporary registration document with the same address and a registration date within a given time period.

Implementation

Registration - The registration of beneficiaries was based on United Nations and the Federal Migration Service lists. The two lists were combined and filtered. The resulting beneficiary lists were cleared.

Verification - To ensure that the registered beneficiaries were hosting



Photo: Mathias Rickli

By supporting host families with one off cash grants, the project aimed to avoid evictions.

IDPs, monitoring teams were sent to the registered beneficiaries' address.

Public information - The intention to implement a cash project was initially announced to the Russian federal government as well as to the Ingush government and the humanitarian aid community. Regular reports on local television kept the population updated on the programme and its progress. Detailed information on eligibility and lists of beneficiaries were posted at post offices and on the premises of local administrations.

Complaints - A complaints process involving the project management was originally not foreseen. Complainants were asked to refer to the Ingush government, which determined that 680 cases (out of 1,200) were eligible for compensation.

During the second phase in the winter of 2001/02, 6,100 faked documents were identified (out of 7,800 submitted). This was resolved as a result of close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior.

Payments - Payments were made by the Ingush branch of the Russian postal service. The postal service received a 1.5% commission for all transactions and personal invitations for beneficiaries. The cooperation was excellent in terms of reliability of payment procedures.



Photo: Mathias Rickli

Cash for shelter collection point

Assistance provided - Each family received the equivalent of US\$ 100 – the equivalent of an average monthly salary.

This project was accompanied by 32 small projects, such as equipment for computer classes and support to soup kitchens. The objective of this was to acknowledge the goodwill of the local community.

Staffing - The team consisted of two expatriate staff (a programme manager and a deputy programme manager), four local employees, two drivers and up to 24 part-time monitors and drivers. The staff were based out of two offices, one in Ingushetia and one in North Osetia.

Security - Movement was heavily restricted as a result of security restrictions on international staff. Small projects were visited by local staff.

Impacts - Although there were some signs of eviction reported among the international humanitarian aid community, no eviction of IDPs during the winter months of 2000/01 and 2001/02 was officially reported.

According to unofficial surveys, the cash grant was mainly used for daily needs as well as for the payment of electricity bills.

Due to the significant size of the two project phases, a total amount over US\$ 2 million was indirectly invested in the local economy.