

Cash first, human rights and dignity – A workshop exploring the connections

From 11:10am to 12:20pm (70-75 mins)

Monday 10 March 2025, Glasgow



Learning intentions

By the end of the workshop, people will have:

- A better understanding of the background to cash first, the right to food and dignity and how these interrelate
- Reflected on how community and emergency food projects work with, support and complement cash first approaches
- Reflected on how cash first approaches have been implemented to ensure dignity in local government settings



Warm up

Find someone you don't know already and introduce yourselves.

In your pairs finish the sentence:

‘Putting a cash first approach into practice means....’

Please make a note of your thoughts on a post-it and keep it for the end of the session



'Cash first' is used in international development

- Rory Stewart (UK's Department for International Development) 2017
- From designing interventions 'to help the poor' to cash grants

"I remember saying to myself, 'Well what happens to all of us?'" the former Conservative politician told me. "If the best thing we can do for people is just to give them cash, why are we all employed? Why have we all got master's degrees?"

In 2022, direct assistance through cash grants or vouchers accounted for 21 per cent of international humanitarian assistance, up from 14 per cent in 2017

Simon Mundy, Financial Times December 2023



Concern about risks

- A 2016 survey of 10,000 people from 28 European countries asked people to split €5 between cash and traditional aid. They said they would spend **€1.9** of it as a cash transfer as long as the money is spent on 'good' things
- When some of the cash might also be spent on something 'bad', the average choice of how much to allocate as cash drops to just **€0.9**

Dignity Report, 2016

“4.1 Cash First

As a general principle, households facing hunger due to an acute income crisis should be provided with cash to buy the food they need immediately.

This will not resolve underlying issues but provides the most dignified response to people who are destitute.”

Dignity: Ending Hunger Together

Report of the Independent Working Group on food poverty



A menu for change 2017-2020

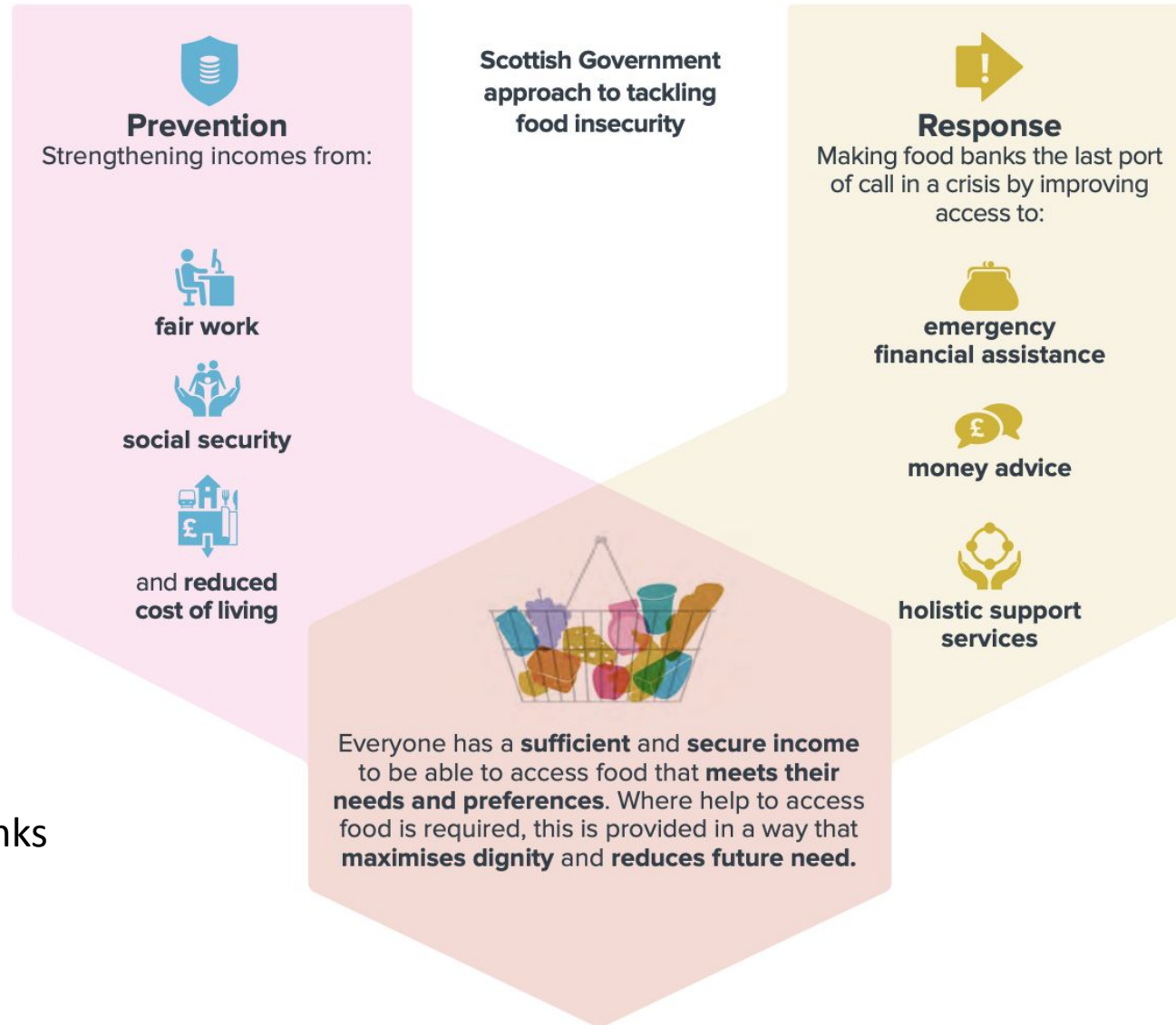


- Joint project between Oxfam, CPAG, Poverty Alliance and Nourish Scotland
- Tested new approaches, including ‘Worrying about money’ leaflets which have now been developed across the UK
- Described as ‘cash first’ leaflets



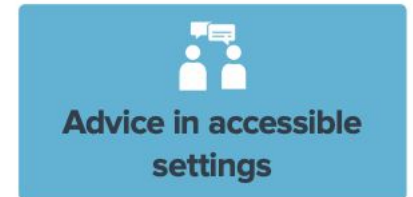
Scottish Government approach to tackling food insecurity

Cash First: Ending the need for food banks



Cash-First: towards ending the need for food banks

- Action 1: We will support new local partnership work to deliver cash-first **Eight cash first partnerships across Scotland**
- Action 2: We will expand testing of new models that provide immediate assistance **Shopping vouchers with Citizens Advice**
- Action 3: We will improve access to advice in accessible settings **Project with Trussell Trust and Citizens Advice**
- Action 4: We will support wellbeing through community food approaches **Investing in Communities, Pantry Network, Fareshare**



Cash-First actions, continued

- Action 5: We will continue to support cash-first models that are inclusive **British Red Cross crisis fund**
- Action 6: We will continue to support cash-first models that are inclusive **IFAN worrying about money leaflets**
- Action 7: We will maintain investment in the Scottish Welfare Fund and work with partners to produce an Action Plan to deliver improvements
- Action 8: We will continue to listen to the direct experience of people **Dignity Peer Network, Govan Community Project, MECOPP**
- Action 9: We will work with other funders to put shared values into practice



Implementations of cash first approaches – a range of Local Authorities’ activities

- Making sure people have good financial/welfare rights advice before they are referred to a food bank – “income maximization”
- Making sure that people who are eligible for a Scottish Welfare Fund payment are helped to apply for that before being referred to a food bank
- Being able to provide cash grants to people as part of a person-centered package of wrap-around support





Cash first Aberdeenshire

IFAN Conference
March 2025



Agenda

- Role of the Lived experience panel
- Lived experience recording
- Case Studies
- Examples of funding awarded

Aberdeenshire

- 6 Administrative areas
- Population over 260,000
- 2,437 square miles



Cash-first approach

Ending the need for food banks in Scotland by collaboratively working to help people experiencing hardship improve access to emergency financial assistance as a first port of call in a crisis. Providing money advice and holistic support services alongside cash-first responses can help to prevent future hardship. Helping to maintain dignity by enabling everyone to have choice over how to access the food and other essentials needed.





Role of the Lived experience panel

Lived Experience



			Collaboration
		Cooperation	Enhancing each other's capacity for mutual benefit
	Coordination	Sharing resources	Sharing resources
Networking	Altering activities/ways of working to achieve a common purpose	Altering activities/ways of working to achieve a common purpose	Altering activities/ways of working to achieve a common purpose
Exchanging information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information for mutual benefit	Exchanging information for mutual benefit



Lived experience panel

- 12 individuals from the 6 different administration areas
- lone parents, families with more than 3 children, households with a disability, households which are rural
- Meet monthly
- Promote and improve existing services, review referral pathways
- Test of change project

Lived experiences voices

- Agnese to send over lived experience voices recording

Cash-first awards 2024

- Applicant 1 - 120 households will be supported to reduce food poverty. This project will prioritise supporting families most impacted by financial and social inequalities, food, utilities, clothing
- Applicant 2 - 150 households will be supported to reduce food poverty low-cost cooking appliances (e.g., air fryers, slow cookers / recipe books / starter packs. Purchase of food to distribute by connecting with communities.
- Applicant 3 - 100 families will be supported to reduce food poverty. further develop our existing Cash first approach, build up stock for projects and provide vouchers to clients requiring additional financial support with the increased cost of living especially over winter.
- Applicant 4 – 82 families will be supported to reduce food poverty. Paid membership to larders to allow families to access food weekly, support in purchasing low energy cooking appliances.

Case Study

Case Study 1

- Single parent – has two children.
- Lives in a two-bedroom private rental property that has storage heating.
- Was working full-time but home based, company went into administration.
- Is looking for employment however is being restricted due to having to drop off and collect children from school.
- Afterschool club stopped a year ago due to funding.
- Has used all savings – applied last week for Universal Credit.
- Needs new shoes for both children

Case Study 2

- Couple with one child and baby on way.
- Live in a property with no mortgage as home inherited from grandparents.
- Home has a boiler that was classed as unsafe so rely on electric heaters and a wood burner.
- Dad works full-time in agriculture; mum works 12 hours per week as a carer. Both on minimum wages
- Mum and child have health conditions
- Never applied for benefits as working
- Dad fell and going to be off work 8 weeks – SSP only
- Live in a rural village that has only one small shop that is expensive – closest supermarket is 15 miles away.
- Don't know how they will afford a new baby.

Cash-first approach

Case Study 1

- Provide family with a Love Local voucher they can use to buy food.
- Refer to trusted partners such as Welfare Rights team to ensure applying for all entitled benefits, and money advice.
- Employability team to support with employment or training.
- Provide details of what is available in local community i.e. food larder, community supermarket, children's clubs and school supports.

Case Study 2

- Provide family with money as only a small shop locally.
- Refer to trusted partners such as Welfare Rights team to ensure applying for all entitled benefits.
- Application into SCARF to do a home energy assessment.
- Provide details for a local Logbank who can provide free logs.
- Link in with health professionals
- Provide details of Best Start and Best food





Thank you

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Human rights and the right to food

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Article 25

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, **including food**, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.



International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights 1966

- Urges the need for **dignity**
- Mentions **adequate food**
- Contains fundamental right of everyone to be **free from hunger**
- Urges the need for measures to be taken to improve **the distribution of food**



Monitoring economic social and cultural rights

- The UK is a signatory to the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural rights
- But these are not part of domestic law (so can't be upheld in a domestic court)
- The UK and devolved governments report to a UN Committee on their performance under the Covenant



Observations from UN, 2016

- Concern about the lack of adequate measures to address the increasing levels of food insecurity, malnutrition, including obesity, and the lack of adequate measures to reduce the reliance on food banks.
- Concern about the lack of adequate measures adopted to increase the rates of breastfeeding
- Recommends national strategy around the right to adequate food

A new updated report happened last week that ScotGov will now respond to



Scottish welfare system duties and other enablers

- Social security Act
- Social Work Scotland Act (Section 12)
- Children Scotland Act (Section 22)
- Welfare Funds
- Good Food Nation Act
- UN Rights of the Child (incorporation 2024)
- HR Bill tbc



Dignity in practice Project (2016-2025)

Partnership project between Nourish Scotland and the Poverty Truth Commission - Funded by The Scottish Government

Aims:

- Explore what the Dignity Principles mean in practice for community food provision
- Support community food providers to reflect on and transition their practice towards responses to food insecurity that promote and restore dignity



Dignity principles

Community food initiatives can put dignity at the heart of their project by supporting everyone taking part to feel:

- + A sense of control
- + Are able to take part in community life
- + Nourished and supported
- + Involved in decision-making
- + Valued and able to contribute



Examples of practice changes resulting from the Dignity in Practice Project

- **Directing people toward the right services – the importance of a trusted community worker**
- **A place where your background does not matter – building inclusive spaces where people want to come rather than have to come**



How **food providers** can support a cash first approach

- Worrying about money leaflets
- Co-locating advice services (independent of meals/shopping/cooking classes) e.g. Maxwell Centre in Rosyth
- Rethinking 'referral' systems
- Bearing in mind the needs of people with No Recourse to Public Funding
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How **Local Authorities** can support cash first approaches with dignity

- Design – involve people with experience in the design (SSS user panel)
- Process – inclusive, simple, get feedback to improve (social security stats)
- No wrong door/repeat referrals/forms
- Enable choice of what matters to you at the moment
 - E.g. Immediate cash help or advice and wider wraparound support
- Other examples....



In small groups:

Discuss **your original note** on what you understood 'a cash first approach' to mean:



Then go to menti.com
Insert code: 2524 1151
Or scan the QR-code

