

Global Humanitarian Agency concludes that sQuid is the fastest and most reliable cash transfer method in an emergency setting

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Mercy Corps, a leading global humanitarian agency, has released key findings of a new and unique study which concludes that e-vouchers were the fastest and most reliable method to deliver cash assistance in an emergency setting studied in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The study, which is the first to directly compare the cost-effectiveness of different electronic cash delivery approaches within the same program, was conducted in the DRC over a nine-month period. The study compared three different cash transfer mechanisms: physical cash, electronic vouchers (e-vouchers) and mobile money. 3,355 individuals received aid assistance, many of which had been displaced from their home and who live beneath the poverty line.

The e-vouchers for this programme were provided by **sQuid**, the UK-based electronic money (e-money) issuer and were deployed using contactless smartcards and payment terminals. sQuid's technology operates without the need for power and in the absence of internet or mobile networks - electronic value is sent to the smartcard via the terminal, enabling local collection and spend.

sQuid's e-vouchers proved to be faster to set-up, quicker to deploy and easier to understand for the end-user, when compared to mobile money. Mobile money took three times longer to set up than e-vouchers and physical cash, and e-vouchers removed the security risks associated with cash - proving to be a reliable alternative where cash is unavailable or too risky.

Commenting on the study, Adam Smith, CEO at sQuid, said:

"The study's findings show that sQuid is the ideal technology to ensure quick and reliable deployment of aid assistance. It's also easier to use for the individual when compared to the alternatives. During a crisis, the technology allows the recipient to buy what they need, when they need it - quickly and easily."

Sara Murray, Electronic Cash Transfer Program Manager at Mercy Corps, commented:

"Thanks to advances in technology, there are more ways to deliver cash safely and effectively, but it's crucial to select the right method for the environment. sQuid's smartcard system enabled thousands of individuals to receive vital humanitarian assistance in a fast and reliable way."

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