Yemen Food Security and Agriculture Cluster

POST DISTRIBUTION MONITORING GUIDANCE NOTE FOR CONDITIONAL AND UNCONDITIONAL CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This technical note outlines Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) standards for unconditional/conditional cash and voucher assistance under the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC). Aligned with global frameworks like the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) and Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) principles, PDM ensures programs effectively address household food insecurity, reduce harmful coping strategies, and align with local market dynamics. It verifies equitable access by assessing adherence to FSAC vulnerability criteria (e.g., female-headed households, marginalized groups, ...) and identifies barriers such as documentation gaps. PDM also evaluates market impacts (e.g., price stability, availability of goods) and strengthens accountability through beneficiary feedback to improve transparency and responsiveness.

2. WHAT IS POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)?

Post-distribution monitoring (PDM) is a systematic process employed by humanitarian actors to collect feedback from aid recipients following the delivery of assistance. It focuses on several critical aspects of the intervention, including the timeliness of delivery, quality and appropriateness of aid, sufficiency of support, utilization of assistance, and effectiveness in addressing intended needs. PDM ensures accountability and informs improvements in future programming.

WHY POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)?

Verify outcomes: Ensure that assistance aligns with defined objectives and is delivered as planned.

Uphold accountability: Confirm aid reaches the most vulnerable, mitigate diversion, ensure transparent communication, and assess fairness in beneficiary selection.

Improve programming: Identify lessons to refine materials, processes, and beneficiary responsiveness in future interventions.

Mitigate harm: Evaluate risks linked to distributions (e.g., diversion, safety) and address inclusion gaps.

WHO TO INCLUDE?

Access to and benefits from unconditional/conditional cash assistance can vary significantly based on gender, age, ethnicity, disability, displacement status, and social marginalization. To ensure inclusive programming aligned with FSAC vulnerability criteria, PDM processes should capture insights on patterns of inclusion/exclusion and differing perceptions across groups, focusing on whether assistance reaches those prioritized by FSAC's context-specific criteria (e.g., displaced populations, female-headed households, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities).

Key groups to include in PDM sampling:

Heads of households who received cash/vouchers: Assess decision-making on resource use and satisfaction with the assistance, particularly among households selected under FSAC's vulnerability criteria.

Household members (e.g., women, children, elderly, youth): Gauge intra-household dynamics and whether assistance meets the food security needs of all members, especially those within FSAC-targeted groups.

Non-recipients: Identify exclusion errors (e.g., households meeting FSAC criteria but not receiving aid) and community perceptions of targeting fairness.

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Strategic Resource Allocation: PDM requires dedicated time, technical expertise, and funding. For cash/voucher programs, this includes resources for monitoring digital platforms (e.g., mobile money systems), conducting market analyses, and engaging in beneficiary consultations. PDMs should be conducted not only to inform necessary corrective actions (e.g., adjusting transfer values, improving delivery mechanisms, or revising targeting criteria), but also to enhance future food security programming.

Separation from Feedback Response Mechanisms: It is important to note that PDM is not a substitute for response and feedback mechanisms (FRMs). FSAC partners must ensure that PDM is effectively linked with FRMs to create a comprehensive understanding of program impact and beneficiary needs.

3. DESIGNING THE UCT/VOUCHERS POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)?

3.1 COLLABORATION & CAPACITY BUILDING

Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) program teams and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) staff should collaborate to design PDM methodologies tailored to cash/voucher modalities, local market dynamics, and operational constraints (e.g., digital infrastructure, financial inclusion barriers). If local technical capacity is insufficient, seek support from FSAC coordination teams or global cash expertise networks (e.g., Cash Learning Partnership).

3.2 TIMING OF POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)

Conduct surveys 2–4 weeks post-distribution to allow beneficiaries time to access markets, redeem vouchers, and assess the adequacy of cash transfers in meeting food security needs. In contexts with high population mobility (e.g., displacement crises) or rapidly shifting market conditions, conduct on-site interviews during distributions. Note that this limits insights into post-purchase usage or longer-term impacts on household resilience.

3.3 METHODOLOGY & TOOL DESIGN

DATA COLLECTION APPROACHES

Structured Surveys (Quantitative): Measure transfer value adequacy, redemption rates, market accessibility, and changes in food consumption or coping strategies.

Semi-Structured Interviews (Qualitative): Explore beneficiary decision-making (e.g., intra-household resource allocation) and perceptions of fairness in targeting.

Focus Group Discussions: Uncover barriers faced by marginalized groups (e.g., elderly, disabled) in accessing cash/vouchers or markets.

Market Observations: Assess vendor readiness, price fluctuations, and acceptance of vouchers/digital payments.

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR CASH/VOUCHER POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)?

Alignment with FSAC Objectives

Include indicators such as dietary diversity, reduction in negative coping strategies, and equitable access for FSAC-prioritized groups (e.g., displaced households, female-headed families). Tailor tools to capture context-specific challenges (e.g., digital literacy gaps, mobile network coverage).

FOCUS AREAS FOR CASH/VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

Transfer Effectiveness

Process Feedback

Market Impact

ETHICAL & PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Avoid Sensitive Disclosures: Do not design tools to solicit reports of fraud, exploitation, or protection incidents. Direct beneficiaries to dedicated Feedback mechanisms (FRMs) for grievances.

Limit Respondent Burden: Keep surveys under 20 minutes and focus groups to 1 hour. Prioritize concise, actionable questions.

Contextual Adaptability.

3.4 SAMPLING & INCLUSION

Prioritize FSAC Vulnerability Criteria: Ensure representation of households selected under FSAC targeting frameworks (e.g., malnourished children, displaced populations, ethnic minorities, female headed households, …).

Include Non-Recipients: Identify exclusion errors (e.g., eligible households not reached) and perceptions of fairness in communities.

3.5 FOCUS GROUPS & KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

For targeted distributions, focus groups should deliberately seek to include vulnerable individuals (recipients and non-recipients). Depending on resources available for PDM, multiple focus group sessions should be held to ensure that different community sub-groups are represented and given the opportunity to express their opinion.

For all types of PDM, when running focus groups and/or key informant interviews in complement to quantitative surveys, participants should not be the same as the ones engaged in the survey. As a good practice, focus groups should include from 8 to 12 individuals maximum for an optimal discussion.

3.6 DATA UTILIZATION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Linking to Program Adjustments: Use findings to refine transfer values, delivery mechanisms (e.g., switching to mobile money in cash-lite economies), or complementary interventions (e.g., nutrition education).

Integrate with FRMs: Ensure beneficiaries know how to report issues (e.g., via hotlines, community committees) beyond the PDM process.

4. PLANNING FOR POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING

4.1 FORMING A DATA COLLECTION TEAM

Diverse Representation: Ensure enumerators reflect the gender, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and disability profiles of target communities (e.g., female enumerators to engage women in conservative areas of Yemen, Arabic speakers familiar with local dialects).

Contextual Sensitivity: Avoid teams that could inadvertently heighten tensions (e.g., hiring enumerators from rival clans in conflict zones). Prioritize candidates with experience in cash/voucher programming or digital payment systems (e.g., mobile money agents).

Inclusion of Marginalized Groups: Partner with local organizations representing persons with disabilities or minorities (e.g., Muhamasheen communities) to recruit enumerators who understand their unique barriers to accessing cash/vouchers.

4.2 TRAINING AND PREPARING ENUMERATORS

Core Training Modules:

CASH/VOUCHER-SPECIFIC SKILLS

Understanding cash transfer mechanisms (e.g., mobile money, paper vouchers) and redemption processes.

Navigating market-related questions.

METHODOLOGY PRACTICE

Conduct mock surveys on cash utilization and focus groups on intra-household decision-making.

Train pairs to alternate roles (facilitator/note-taker) for qualitative discussions, emphasizing probing without leading (e.g., avoiding assumptions about spending choices).

ETHICS AND SAFEGUARDING

Data Protection: Secure handling of financial data (e.g., masking mobile money account details).

Safe Referrals: Train enumerators to direct disclosures of fraud, exploitation, or protection risks (e.g., aid diversion) to established complaints mechanisms (CFMs), not PDM tools.

DISABILITY INCLUSION

Collaborate with organizations like the Yemeni Association for the Blind to train enumerators in accessible communication (e.g., Braille surveys, sign language).

CONTEXTUAL ADAPTATIONS

Address challenges specific to Yemen (e.g., inflation, liquidity crises) by training enumerators to recognize market instability indicators during interviews.

4.3 VALIDATION

Prior to implementation, all tools and protocols should be validated through small-scale pilot tests to ensure that they are culturally, socially and context appropriate.

Enumerators must adhere to mandatory reporting protocols for suspected misconduct (e.g., fraud, exploitation, SEA) during cash/voucher activities. Prior to deployment:
PSEA Reporting: Provide contact details for their agency's PSEA focal point.

Train enumerators to report disclosures immediately without investigating or soliciting details.
Complaints Mechanisms (CFMs): Share CFM contacts (e.g., hotlines, SMS) with respondents wishing to raise concerns about distributions, redemption issues, or aid-related grievances.

Key Rules:

Never use PDM tools to collect sensitive allegations — direct beneficiaries to CFMs. Respond

neutrally to disclosures (e.g., "Let me connect you with our support team.").

5. IMPLEMENTING THE UCT/VOUCHERS POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)

5.1 WHO IMPLEMENTS THE POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING ?

To ensure objectivity, data should be collected by trained, independent enumerators not involved in cash/voucher distributions. Ideal implementation teams include:

M&E teams (preferred for neutrality).

Dedicated PDM teams (if M&E team has limited human resources), composed of staff unrelated to the distribution process (e.g., finance or logistics personnel).

5.2 MANAGING ENUMERATORS

Supervision: Assign supervisors to oversee enumerators, verify data quality, and monitor daily/weekly targets (e.g., 15–20 surveys/day).

Random Assignment: Rotate enumerators across locations to avoid bias (e.g., urban/rural, markets vs. displacement camps).

Data Quality Checks: Supervisors must review forms for consistency (e.g., ensuring responses on cash usage align with market observations).

Accountability: Enforce strict adherence to data protection protocols (e.g., anonymizing mobile money transaction details).

5.3 ADMINISTRATION PROTOCOLS

LOCATION & TIMING

Conduct interviews in confidential, accessible spaces (e.g., community centers) at times convenient for beneficiaries (e.g., post-redemption at markets).

REMOTE/MOBILE ENGAGEMENT

Use phone/SMS surveys (max 5 questions) in insecure or remote areas (e.g., “Was the mobile money transfer received in full?”).

DOOR-TO-DOOR VISITS

Limit use due to safety risks (e.g., targeting female-headed households in conservative areas). Always coordinate with community leaders.

REACHING MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Partner with agencies (e.g., disability NGOs, women’s groups) to access groups like Muhamasheen communities or disabled beneficiaries in hard-to-reach areas.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)

Separate groups by gender, age, or vulnerability (e.g., female-only FGDs on intra-household cash management).

Ensure informed consent and confidentiality (e.g., “Your feedback will not be shared outside this group”).

6. ANALYZING AND UTILIZING POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM) DATA

6.1 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The analysis of PDM data for unconditional/conditional cash assistance should be led by Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) teams to ensure objectivity. Where M&E capacity is limited, FSAC partners can seek technical support from cluster coordination bodies, Cash Working Groups, or external experts familiar with cash-based programming. The analysis should focus on key themes such as the adequacy of transfer values (e.g., whether amounts met household food needs), market accessibility (e.g., challenges redeeming vouchers or using mobile money), and equity (e.g., inclusion of FSAC-targeted groups like displaced populations or female-headed households).

Data must be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, and displacement status to uncover disparities. For example, analysis might reveal lower satisfaction among elderly recipients struggling with digital payments or lower voucher redemption rates in conflict-affected areas. Patterns such as non-responses to sensitive questions (e.g., intra-household decision-making) should be flagged, as they may indicate cultural barriers or protection concerns. The goal is to prioritize actionable insights, such as adjusting transfer values in areas experiencing hyperinflation or enhancing digital literacy training for marginalized groups.

6.2 REPORTING & UTILIZATION

Findings should be synthesized into concise reports that highlight actionable recommendations, such as switching to mobile money in regions with high voucher fraud risks or partnering with local vendors to improve redemption processes. These reports should be shared internally with FSAC program teams to guide adaptive measures (e.g., revising targeting criteria) and externally with clusters, NGOs, and financial service providers to harmonize approaches across the response.

Lessons learned, such as the impact of cash transfers on dietary diversity or challenges in mobile network coverage, should be documented in institutional knowledge repositories to inform future programs. Crucially, FSAC partners must communicate summarized results back to affected communities through accessible channels (e.g., community meetings) to validate findings, demonstrate accountability, and build trust. For instance, sharing data showing improved market access for displaced households in any displacement area can reinforce transparency and community engagement.

7. DATA PROTECTION

Privacy & Confidentiality: Conduct interviews in a private location. Politely request others leave to ensure confidentiality.

Verify Respondent Identity: Confirm the respondent is the cash/voucher recipient or head of household. If collected by a proxy, ensure both are present.

Introduction (Script): “I am [NAME], an enumerator with [AGENCY/FSAC]. We’re gathering feedback on the cash/voucher distribution at [SITE] on [DATE]. You’ve been randomly selected—your honest input will help improve our programs.”

Voluntary Participation: Participation is optional, with no rewards. Responses are confidential and will not affect future eligibility for aid.

Respondent Rights: They may skip any question or stop the interview at any time.

Consent: “Do you consent to proceed?”

If declined: Thank them and share CFM (Complaint Feedback Mechanism) details for future feedback.