



Post-Distribution Monitoring in the Context of Cash-Based Interventions

In the context of Cash-Based Interventions (CBIs), Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is a remarkably useful **exercise for collecting and analysing** data on the experiences and the levels of satisfaction of beneficiaries of cash assistance provided by humanitarian agencies. This analysis includes focusing on various implementation aspects such as timeliness, quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the support in relation to the targeted needs. For this purpose, PDMs are ideally conducted within four weeks after the cash distribution phase to be able to fully understand the possible impacts of CBI programmes.

Purposes and Benefits

In general, the purposes and the related benefits of PDM in the context of CBIs include:

- **evaluating the quality of distribution process and the effectiveness** of cash assistance in relation to the intended programmatic objectives,
- **gauging the levels of satisfaction and patterns of assistance utilisation** including intra-household/community dynamics and spending habits to tweak and tailor the relevant programmatic aspects as necessary,
- **identifying areas for possible improvement** with regards to designing future CBIs in an evidence-based manner to enhance learning and more inclusive programming,
- **endorsing and maintaining accountability to affected populations (AAP)** by improving community engagement and monitoring whether cash assistance successfully reached beneficiaries without any diversion and the targeted groups were adequately informed in a timely manner,
- **unveiling and preventing possible protection risks** related to PSEA, inclusion, safety etc.

Scope

PDMs conducted to assess the effectiveness of CBI programmes aim to answer the overall question of “**what was the experience and the level of satisfaction of beneficiaries regarding the cash assistance they received**”. However, the questions to be included in a PDM questionnaire and the methodological and frequency-related aspects to be determined depend on the pre-defined objectives, requirements, and scope of the CBI programme at hand. For example, whether to adopt the modality of household surveys and/or Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and the decision to conduct PDMs monthly or quarterly would depend on the related specificities of the CBI programme.

In this regard, the *Table 1* below provides some **non-exhaustive** examples on possible areas of focus and questions that can be considered to add in PDM tools to evaluate the effectiveness of CBI programmes. Further cross-sectoral monitoring tool examples can be found in the [Inter-agency Monitoring Tools Repository](#) compiling various PDM samples including those on CBIs conducted by the 3RP partners.

Despite the specificities of CBI programmes necessitating distinct PDM frameworks, utilising **disaggregated** data based on various relevant characteristics such as gender, age, disability, legal status, ethnicity etc. in PDMs is indispensable. Only with disaggregated data collection, it becomes possible to render the outputs and outcomes

sensitive to gender, age and disability and other relevant characteristics, enabling more comprehensive and nuanced analyses.

In addition, it should be noted that even though PDM works as a tool for gathering feedback on the effectiveness of programmes, its scope should not be diverted to act as a general **Feedback, Complaint and Response Mechanism (FCRM)** at the expense of monitoring CBI impacts. Beneficiaries' information on and access to the relevant FCRM mechanisms should be established and facilitated, independent from conducting the PDM. These mechanisms can be handled as an additional data source to PDMs by the relevant organisation, ensuring that the practical process regarding the complaints encountered during the monitoring can take place as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

Table 1: Non-exhaustive examples of possible areas of focus and inquisition in the context of PDM in CBI

Possible Areas of Focus	Example Areas for Inquisition
Programmatic Aspects	Did the cash assistance help beneficiaries to address their multiple needs in accordance with their household and personal priorities?
	Were the selection criteria followed during the implementation of the programme?
	Did the cash assistance ensure access to a more diversified diet, better hygiene or shelter improvements, decreased dropouts etc. in relation to the programme's pre-identified objectives?
Experience of Beneficiaries	Did beneficiaries experience any challenges (protection risks, security risks, etc.) while collecting and spending the cash assistance?
	Did they receive the assistance on the expected day/time without any delays?
	Was the transfer amount received by beneficiaries the same as the pre-determined amount?
	Were they able to find the items/services they need in the local market, both in terms of quantity and quality?
	Did the beneficiary household need to resort to any negative coping strategy in the period between cash distribution and PDM?
Intra-household dynamics and household consumption patterns	Who received the cash assistance?
	How did the beneficiary households utilise the assistance?
	Who made the decisions on the spending ensuing from the cash assistance?
Effectiveness	How did the cash assistance contribute to individual households in fulfilling their family needs considering timeliness, quality and quantity of the support as relevant?
	How much of the needs could be covered with the cash assistance?
	How did the market respond?



	To what extent has the cash assistance contributed to the living conditions and wellbeing of the beneficiary households?
Accountability	What is the level of knowledge of beneficiaries regarding FCRMs?
	Did beneficiaries receive sufficient information on the relevant FCRMs?
	What preferences do people have over the modality and frequency of assistance?

Good Practices and Lessons Learnt

The below list of good practices and lessons learnt concerning PDM processes is based on the highlights provided by the CBI TWG partners during the discussions held on their relevant PDM exercises.

Systematic Utilisation of PDM as a Course-Correction Tool

- For all kinds of cash assistance (including regular, one-off, and even irregular) PDMs can and should be **systematically** conducted in the aftermath of the distribution phase to evaluate the relevant impacts, allowing sufficient time around up to a month for beneficiaries to spend the cash they received so that they are able to provide informed feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the cash assistance.
- This would provide opportunities to **tweak and tailor** the current CBI programmes and to **better design** the upcoming ones in an evidence-based manner, ensuring the adoption of the most efficient methods to use the limited resources.
- In terms of designing the way-forward, the **triangulation of PDM findings with relevant secondary data** when applicable would enhance the benefits of utilising PDM as a course correction tool.
- In the PDM exercises, the inputs from the other units involved in the cash-based intervention should be collected and considered in the relevant analyses to achieve comprehensiveness.
- PDM is expected to cover questions allowing for in-depth analyses of the output; and based on the technical properties of the CBI (such as one-off or monthly) process, and outcome level.

Scope and Inclusion

- **Data disaggregation** based on the characteristics of the targeted groups should be prioritised.
- PDM tools should be constructed in a **locally appropriate and gender-sensitive manner** by knowing the target groups well to avoid leading to leading to misunderstandings, inciting social tensions, and causing a hostile environment.
- **More host community members** should be included when designing and implementing PDMs pertaining to CBIs.

Accountability to Affected Populations

- **Enhancing and strengthening the relevant systems for sharing information with beneficiaries** on CBIs were highlighted as good practices as they promote accountability to beneficiaries.
- **Relevant FCRMs should be introduced and linked** to PDM exercises of CBIs since PDMs cannot and should not substitute designated FCRMs.
- In this respect, **all available and suitable communication channels** such as SMS, phone calls, WhatsApp messages etc. to relay information on cash assistance and the linked FCRMs should be used.



- **PDM results should be shared with the affected populations** through the relevant platforms.

Dissemination of PDM Results and Lessons Learnt

- CBI PDM samples and tools should be shared via the [Inter-Agency Monitoring Tools Collection Form](#) if possible, to contribute to the enrichment of the aforementioned repository.
- Lessons learnt from PDM exercises, and the resulting reports should be shared with the relevant stakeholders to enhance the benefits of **peer learning**.
- An internal review meeting with the relevant units or implementing partners/other agencies might be conducted to discuss lessons learnt and good practices.
- If sharing PDM reports in their entirety is not possible due to internal rules and regulations of the related organisations, it would be beneficial to share at least the **highlights** in the IA platforms in line with the information needs of other agencies conducting PDMs in CBI contexts and beneficiaries.

Next Steps and Suggestions

- **Face-to-face surveys** are found to be one of the most beneficial methods when conducting PDM. Nevertheless, COVID-19 pandemic in-general and the lack of field activity permissions by provincial governorates affecting I/NGOs occasionally have hampered the use of this method in recent years. In response, remote modalities including phone surveys have been used by partners. Although data collection quality and effectiveness may be points of concern, in the absence of face-to-face surveys, remote modalities have filled the gap effectively.
 - ⇒ Follow-ups on the current levels of face-to-face data collection under PDMs in CBI and creating opportunities for peer learning on improvements concerning remote modalities.
- Due to the general predominance of **shorter-term projects**, especially with respect to NGOs, timelines for conducting PDM is even shorter than necessary, exacerbated by the short contract durations of project staff, including monitoring and evaluation officers responsible from data collection and analysis.
 - ⇒ Advocacy with donors for multi-year funding, budgeting key staff including monitoring and evaluation experts beyond completion of cash distribution in the field.
- As gathered from the latest [CBI mapping](#) exercise of CBI TWG covering 2021-2022, most PDM products are kept internal by their agencies.
 - ⇒ Greater internal advocacy for sharing **pre-selected highlights** of PDM reports **at the IA level and with the affected populations**.

Resources

[Minutes and Presentations from the CBI TWG meeting focusing on PDM](#)