UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency | Yemen

Post Distribution Monitoring

Cash Programme for Internally Displaced Persons
April – June 2023

IDP women receive their one-off multi-purpose cash assistance at a local financial institution. © UNHCR

Overview

Cash-based interventions (CBI) have become one of the primary methods to rapidly provide protection, assistance, and services to the most vulnerable forcibly displaced persons for UNHCR since 2019.

In quarter two of 2023, UNHCR assisted 28,000 families with Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) distributing more than USD 7.2M. This post-distribution monitoring (PDM) focuses only on the MPCA in south Yemen. UNHCR's rental subsidy and winterization assistance were not distributed during the first half of 2023. UNHCR's third-

party monitoring partner, Blumen, was unable to conduct the PDM in north Yemen during quarter two.

UNHCR collects data on critical socio-economic and shelter conditions as well as protection markers including family size, level of income, age/gender breakdown of the dependents. Specific attention is given to protection profiles, such as female-headed households (FHH), households with an elderly member, or persons with disabilities. Eligible families are selected according to socio-economic vulnerability assessments and protection risk profiles. Vulnerable groups (e.g., FHH, elderly, and persons living with disabilities) are prioritized for MPCA interventions. MPCA not only channels cash directly to those who are internally displaced, but also enables them to choose how best to meet and prioritize their own needs.

There are two currencies in Yemen: one in the north and one in the south. Due to bureaucratic impediments, the post distribution monitoring of the MPCA only took place in south Yemen. In the south, the transfer value of MPCA is YER 240,000. The transfer value is based on the monthly survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) set by the Yemen Cash and Market Working Group (CMWG), a humanitarian coordination mechanism in Yemen. The working group takes into consideration the average household's basic needs, markets prices, and inflation.

The PDM collects recipients' feedback on the quality, suitability, use and effectiveness of the assistance received. UNHCR conducts PDM through its third-party monitoring partner, Blumen. PDM is part of UNHCR's efforts and engagement in the accountability to displaced populations, with a focus on continuous improvement of the quality and relevance of the support provided. The focus of PDM is on the following aspects:

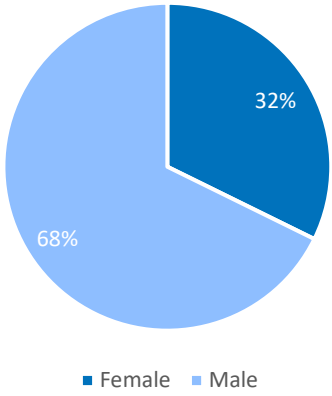
1. Use of cash assistance to fulfil the basic needs of the recipients;
2. Expenditure patterns of the assistance received;
3. Impact of cash assistance on recipients' protection and well-being;
4. Impact on the risk of resorting to harmful coping mechanisms;
5. Households' safety and security in the access to distribution sites, markets, goods, and services;
6. Overall quality of the delivery of cash assistance by the financial service providers and households' preferred distribution modality.

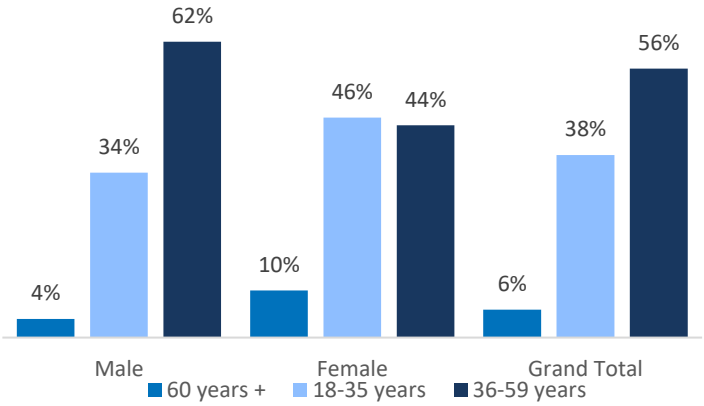
This report presents the results of the second quarter of 2023 PDM of UNHCR's MPCA in south Yemen.

Methodology

Among the 28,000 households who received MPCA (in the north and south) and considered for this PDM exercise, a sample of 189 households from eight governorates in the south of Yemen was selected.[1] The data was collected through home visits using a dedicated questionnaire developed by UNHCR.

Breakdown of the respondents (age and gender)





Key findings

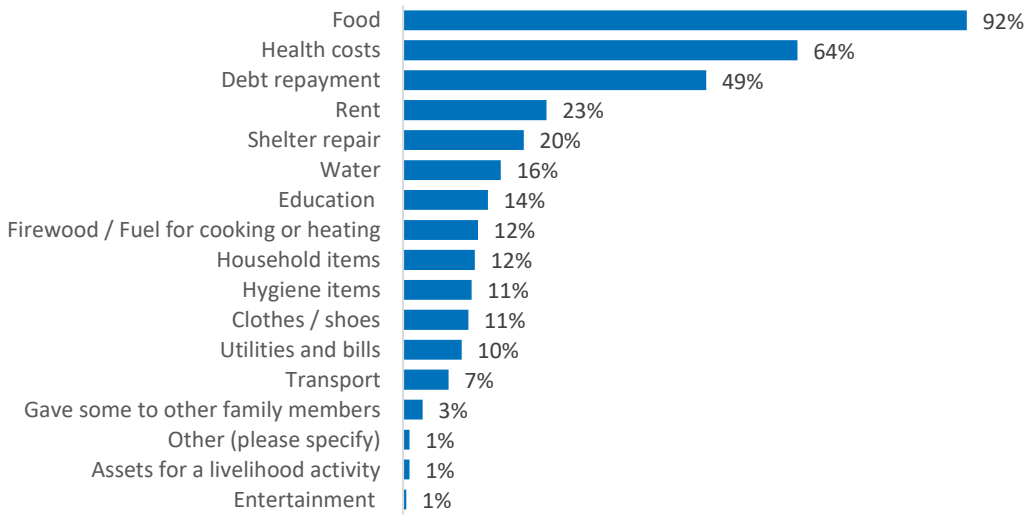
- 100 per cent of respondents received cash assistance.
- 92 per cent of respondents did not face any problem when receiving, withdrawing, or using the cash assistance received.
- 85 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the transfer value and the transfer value was in line with their expectations.
- 73 per cent of the respondents indicated that they received assistance on the day they expected.
- 59 per cent of respondents reported spending cash assistance in local markets.

[1] *The sample size was calculated using a 95% Confidence Level a 7% Margin of Error, extracted against each batch of cash assistance considered for this report.*

- The top five expenditures are: food, healthcare, debt repayment, rent, and shelter repair.
- Respondents received updates and information about cash assistance by SMS (41 per cent); via relatives, neighbours, and friends (25 per cent); via local leaders (11 per cent); community protection networks (8 per cent); and protection monitoring teams (7 per cent).
    - The vast majority of respondents stated that they received SMS with the hawala number on time (94 per cent).
- 94 per cent of respondents were able to find the items or services they needed in the local market. Of which, about 92 per cent were able to find the items with the right quality.
- More than half of respondents (64 per cent) preferred cash assistance, 25 per cent would have preferred a combination of cash and in-kind items, 9 per cent would have preferred livelihoods opportunities, 1 per cent would have preferred all in-kind (food or non-food items) assistance, and 1 per cent would have preferred in-kind healthcare services.
- 38 per cent of respondents were aware of the complaint and feedback mechanisms.

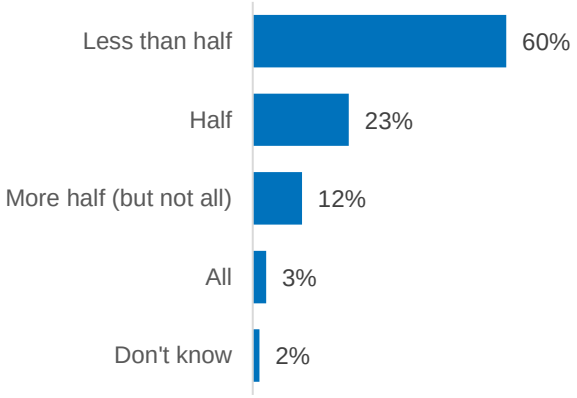
Use of cash assistance

All the respondents were asked how they spent their cash assistance. The majority (92 per cent) indicated using a portion of their assistance on food, followed by healthcare (64 per cent) and debt repayment (49 per cent) as a top expenditure.



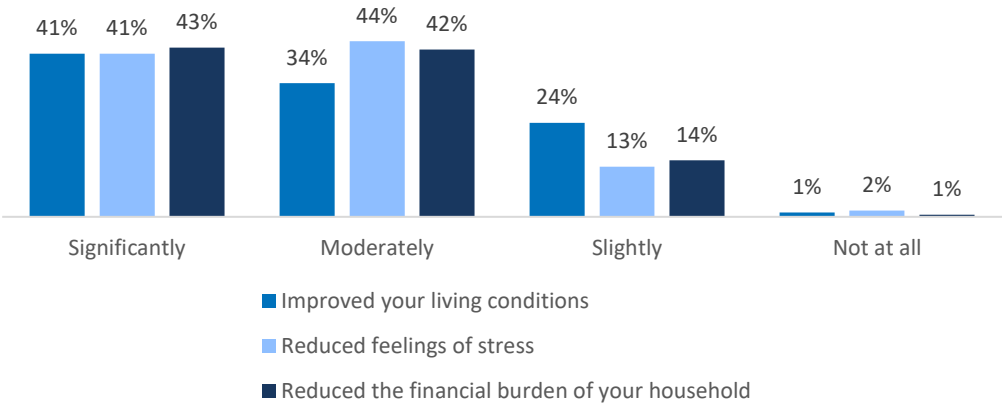
Impact of assistance on meeting basic needs

Even though most of the assisted population reported the transfer value meeting their expectations, the extreme vulnerabilities faced by internally displaced people did not enable them to regularly meet their basic needs, despite the assistance received. Among the respondents, 60 per cent reported that they were able to meet less than half of their household's basic needs. In contrast, 23 per cent reported being able to meet half of their basic needs. Additional information is reported in the following table.



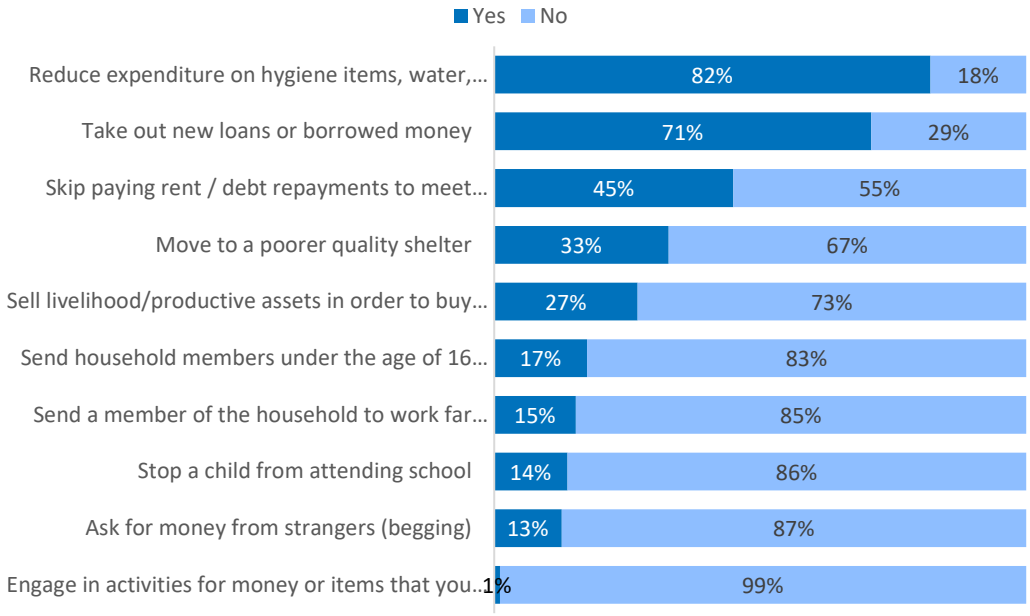
Impact of cash assistance on living conditions

Though the MPCA did not allow the respondents to regularly meet their basic needs, almost all respondents (99 per cent) reported slightly, moderately, or significantly improved living conditions. Additionally, the cash assistance reduced the feeling of stress in 98 per cent of respondents and 99 per cent saw reduced the financial burden on the household.



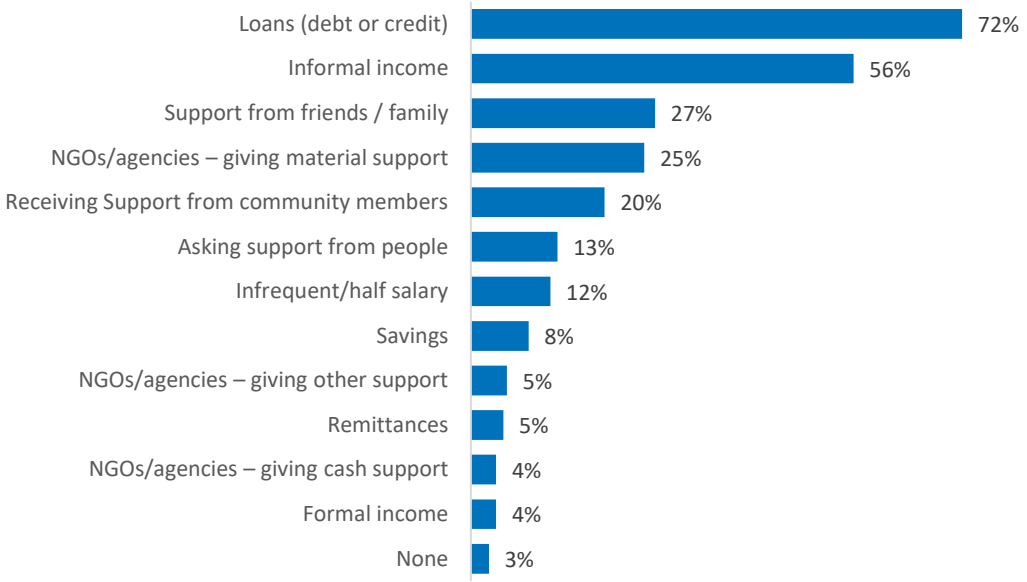
Coping mechanisms

Approximately all respondents reported using one or more harmful coping mechanism in the four weeks before taking part to in PDM. Most of the respondents (82 per cent) reported a reduction of expenditure on hygiene items as the most common harmful coping mechanism. Furthermore, 71 per cent of respondents resorted to borrowing money and 45 per cent admitted to skipping rent or debt repayment to meet other needs. Among them, 33 per cent moved to a shelter of poorer quality. A smaller proportion of respondents, 27 per cent, sold their assets, and 17 per cent mentioned sending a household member to work far away.



Other sources of cash

Within the last four weeks since receiving MPCA, 72 per cent of respondents took out a loan as an additional source of cash. Followed by informal income (56 per cent), support from friends/family (27 per cent), and material support from NGOs/UN (25 per cent).



Respondents' expectations

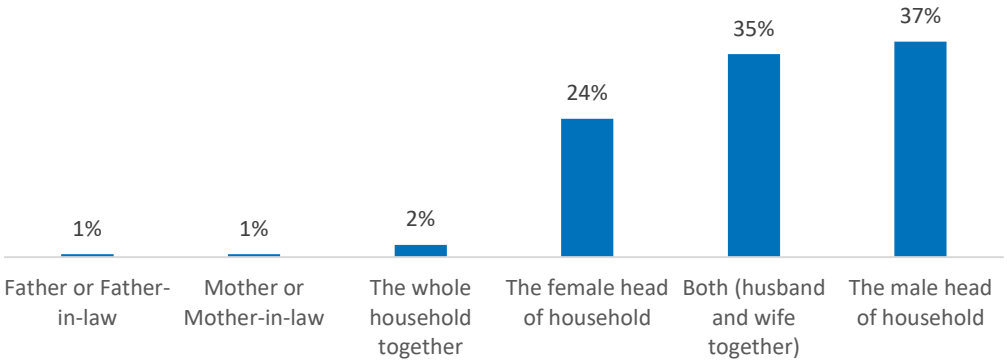
The MPCA received was in line with respondent's initial expectation (85 per cent). However, 13 per cent indicated receiving a different amount than what they had expected. There is a small percentage (2 per cent) who reported being uncertain or unaware of the exact amount they should have received.

Markets and prices

The vast majority of respondents (94 per cent) were able to find the items and services required in the local markets and shops.

Decision maker on spending the assistance

More than half (61 per cent) of respondents included a female voice in the family decision making. Thirty-seven per cent of respondents had only the male head of household deciding how the cash assistance was spent. Thirty-five per cent of respondents had joint decision-making from both spouses. While 24 per cent of the respondents reported that the decision was taken by only the female head of households.



Accountability to Affected Persons

The results revealed that the most common channels of information sharing about MPCA were SMS message (41 per cent); relatives, neighbours and friends (25 per cent); local leaders (11 per cent); community protection network (8 per cent); protection monitoring teams (7 per cent); and UNHCR/NGOs staff (5 per cent). Interestingly, 2 per cent of respondents reporting knowing about cash assistance five or more years ago.

Complaint and Feedback Mechanism

Among the respondents, 38 per cent were aware of the different complaint and feedback mechanism in place. This also meant that 62 per cent of respondents were unaware how to submit a complaint or feedback on the assistance received.

Increasing awareness and utilization of complaint and feedback mechanisms is a priority for UNHCR. Efforts will be made to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of the complaint and feedback mechanisms, including through community engagement and targeted communication strategies.

Preference for future assistance

More than half of the respondents (64 per cent) reported their preference to receive assistance in cash, whereas the remaining respondents stated that they would prefer a combination of cash and in-kind assistance (25 per cent). Nine per cent would have preferred livelihoods opportunities, 1 per cent would have preferred all in-kind (food or non-food items) assistance, and 1 per cent would have preferred in-kind healthcare services.

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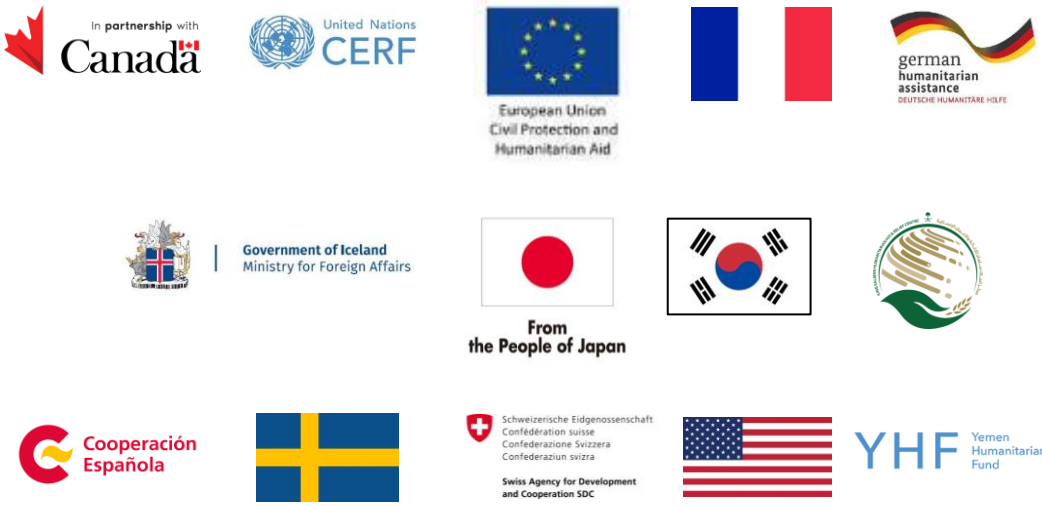

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