

# Multipurpose Cash Outcome Indicators

Final Draft for Testing

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Grand Bargain Cash Workstream

## Introduction

Multipurpose cash (MPC) is a type of assistance intended to enable people to meet their basic needs through local markets as they see fit. The goals of humanitarian assistance are not modality-specific (e.g. cash, in-kind); they are defined by the context of the response and identified humanitarian needs. As part of the Grand Bargain's commitment to "increase the use and coordination of cash-based programming," the need for **better and more consistent measurement of the outcomes to which MPC contributes** was identified.

Starting in 2018, a group of humanitarian stakeholders - including NGO and UN practitioners, cluster leads or cash/markets focal points, CaLP, and donors - came together under the Grand Bargain cash workstream to identify indicators in a participatory process. This included examining indicators currently used, those under development, and real-life minimum expenditure baskets (MEBs) that informed MPC design.

The purpose of the guidance and indicator menus below is to streamline reporting (in line with the Grand Bargain commitment to "*harmonize and simplify reporting requirements*") and to provide more consistent and comparable field-level monitoring. The Grand Bargain also includes a commitment to the "*participation revolution: include people receiving aid in making the decisions which affect their lives.*" Thus, the indicators also incorporate the stated needs and goals of affected people themselves.

## Spirit of this Document

The indicators in this document focus on the primary objectives of humanitarian MPC, and the outcomes to which multipurpose cash can most strongly contribute. (For example, some MPC interventions aim to link people to social protection systems after the MPC ends; but we have not included an indicator for this as this is not universal and is beyond the primary objectives of MPC.) Additional outcome indicators at the program or response level will vary by context and program objective.

This document seeks to gather a **core minimum group of indicators** that have a sufficient level of familiarity and acceptance across humanitarian stakeholders - and, for sectoral indicators, across sector clusters and sectoral experts. Some indicators may be highly appropriate but are not well used or understood in the humanitarian community; for other outcomes there may not yet be a widely accepted indicator. As this is an evolving area of practice, this document reflects the best of the consensus that exists currently.

This document does not seek to capture all potential outcomes (positive or negative) of MPC. Nor does this document attempt to attribute outcomes to MPC alone (see box, "A Note on MPC", below).

### A Note on Multipurpose Cash (MPC)

- [Multipurpose cash](#) is a type of assistance, not a program in and of itself - nor is there one standard, universal way of doing MPC. MPC promotes the agency of disaster-affected people to make choices and prioritize their own needs, which may or may not lead to them meeting humanitarian standards for assistance in relation to a given sector.

This document is a product of participants of the Grand Bargain Cash workstream. It was facilitated by Dina Brick/CRS, Laura Meissner/USAID contractor, and Ruth McCormack/CaLP. Contributors include Claudia Ah Poe/WFP, Francesca Battistin/Save the Children, Rachid Boumnijel/ActionAid, Nadine Lombardo/WFP, Calum McLean/ECHO, Tamara Shukakidze-Demuria, Holly Welcome Radice/CARE, Kathryn Taetzsch/World Vision, Belete Temesgen/World Vision, Ruco Van Der Merwe/USAID, and Nynne Warring/WFP.

- The extent to which a given MPC intervention can effectively address intended needs will be determined in part by the transfer value, frequency, and duration. This should be considered when analyzing data collected for the outcome indicators, both within and between interventions.
- Furthermore, evidence points to the role of MPC as one component of a larger overall response, and the need for additional interventions (e.g. systems-level interventions, in-kind support, service provision, technical assistance) to completely meet Sphere standards.
- These indicators aim to recognize this reality. Some measure people’s ability to meet their self-defined needs; other indicators attempt to measure whether minimum standards were met.

As a whole, these indicators should provide visibility to the overall quality of humanitarian responses of which MPC is a component. The indicators, and this process, should all be taken as a learning step, to be revised as the humanitarian community learns about the most effective ways of monitoring MPC.

## Guide to the Indicators

There are two categories of indicators in this document:

- **Cross-cutting indicators.** These include one required outcome indicator; multiple process indicators (of which one is required); and two recommended qualitative questions as well as additional outcome indicators that would benefit from further testing.
- **Sectoral indicators.** At least one indicator from each of three sectors is required. These sectors should be selected based upon the identified needs and people’s priorities - using MEB/transfer value categories or amounts may be helpful. Additional sectoral indicators may be selected as relevant, for example based on the implementing agencies’ program objectives or areas of concern, and other factors.

## Using these Indicators – What does this Mean in Practice?

This is the Final Draft for Testing. Agencies who commit to this using document for some/all relevant MPC interventions are committing to:

- Gather all of the required cross-cutting indicators for selected recurrent MPC transfer interventions
- Gather 1 process indicator for each selected recurrent MPC transfer intervention
- Gather 3 of the sectoral indicators in a given MPC intervention for which the MPC transfer value is intended to address needs in that sector/sub-sector
- Share experiences and feedback through the Grand Bargain cash workstream on the indicators

Donors are strongly encouraged to replace or remove MPC outcome indicators that overlap with these, so as to make progress on the Grand Bargain commitment to “harmonize and simplify reporting requirements.”

Gathering any of the additional indicators is optional, but agencies are encouraged to consider which of the additional indicators are most appropriate for a given response.

## Usage Guidance

- **Transfer duration:** These indicators have been developed primarily for monitoring recurrent MPC transfers. One-off MPC transfers, sectoral/labeled cash transfers, and/or “top-up” cash transfers, may use some of these indicators or different relevant sectoral indicators.
- **When to collect indicators:** Unless otherwise noted, these indicators should be collected at minimum two times: once at baseline or before the first transfer; and once after the last transfer (30 days after is a common interval). For longer-term transfers (6+ months), more frequent data collection is strongly recommended.
- **Households:** Unless otherwise noted, ‘households’ refers to recipient households (those who have or will be receiving MPC transfers).

- **Indicator definitions:** Where an indicator has an established definition, we have linked to it here. Where no fully standard definition exists, we have offered a definition.
- **Indicator Reference Sheets:** We will develop full indicator reference sheets as guidance no later than October 2019.
- **Quality measurement:** One asterisk (\*) indicates that quality is self-reported. Reference to Sphere or national standards may be used in surveys, but objective measurement may not be possible or advisable. Two asterisks (\*\*) indicates that, while quality is still self-reported, a technical specialist should provide quality checks to an appropriate confidence interval at least once every 3 months.
- **Disaggregation:** Individual-level indicators should at a minimum be disaggregated by sex and age group. Some agencies may wish to disaggregate further (e.g. by disability status or other vulnerability criteria); agencies may also wish to disaggregate by head of household for household-level data.
- **Using the additional indicators:** The additional indicators (or indeed other indicators or qualitative topics not listed here) should be selected based on needs assessments and discussions on the perspectives of affected people, and on program objectives.
- **Adjusting indicators:** For longer-term MPC transfers (e.g. 6 months or longer), post-distribution monitoring can be used to periodically re-verify assumptions on affected people’s priorities, and relevant changes can be made to indicators (or indeed to programming).
- **Feedback loop:** It is strongly recommended at the project level to have a mechanism for affected people to learn the results of monitoring. This can contribute to a people-centered approach and advancing the Participation Revolution Grand Bargain commitment.

## The Indicators

Cross-Cutting Indicators
<p><b>Required Outcome Indicator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of households who report being able to meet the basic needs of their households (all/most/some/none), according to their priorities*</li> </ul>
<p><b>Process Indicator for Quality, Protection Mainstreaming and AAP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Percentage of beneficiaries reporting that humanitarian assistance is delivered in a safe, accessible, accountable and participatory manner</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> It is required to use at least 1 of the questions in the Protection Mainstreaming Indicator questionnaire, and highly recommended to collect the minimum 7 questions to complete the indicator calculation, plus the question on ‘timeliness.’</p>
<p><b>Additional Outcome Indicator (optional)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of households by Livelihoods Coping Strategies (LCS) phase (Neutral, Stress, Crisis, Emergency) (<a href="#">introduction</a>, <a href="#">definition</a>, <a href="#">coping strategy list</a>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gender Equity/ Women’s Empowerment (optional)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Percentage of women reporting shared decision making on cash transfer use</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> MPC on its own is not sufficient to <a href="#">achieve empowerment</a>; this indicator may be more meaningful for interventions combined with other program activities for the same recipients. Additionally, <a href="#">gendered spending patterns</a> vary by context and expense; a baseline and <a href="#">gender analysis</a> will help contextualize results.</p>

## Recommended Qualitative Questions

These questions are intended to complement the basic needs indicator above to enable understanding of affected people's priorities, and a more nuanced understanding at the project level of how MPC assistance is utilized. They are not intended for large-scale comparison. Collected responses do **not** need to be an exhaustive accounting of all outcomes and unmet needs but can focus on the main priorities (e.g. top 3 to 5). Agencies or coordinating bodies may wish to suggest common categories in questionnaires from which respondents can select; but this should be contextual and maintain a focus on people-centered monitoring.

- What did the cash help your household to do or buy that you could not do or buy before you received it?
- Are there important things that your household is not able to do or buy after receiving the cash?

## Sectoral Indicators

- At least one indicator from each of three sectors is required; the sectors should be selected based upon the identified needs and people's priorities. Using MEB/transfer value categories or amounts may be helpful.
- Additional guidance is provided for each sector.

### Food Security

- Percentage of households by [Food Consumption Score \(FCS\)](#) phase (Poor, Borderline, and Acceptable)
- [Reduced Coping Strategy Index \(rCSI\)](#)

**Note:** FCS should be used for essentially all MPC. rCSI is recommended as an additional indicator for longer-term MPC (e.g. over 6 months).

### Shelter & Settlements/ Household NFIs

- Percentage of households whose shelter solutions meet agreed technical and performance standards\*\*
- Percent of target population living in safe and dignified shelters\*
- Percentage of households reporting adequate access to household non-food items\*

**Note:** If shelter-related costs are included in the transfer value, such as rental assistance, then the shelter cluster encourages that both shelter indicators be measured, as one requires technical quality checks, and the other triangulates that information with self-reported satisfaction on quality.

In order to meet shelter and settlement objectives and quality standards, technical support is needed, in combination with cash or other modalities for the transfer of goods and services. The Shelter Cluster recommends using market-based approaches to shelter responses where appropriate and feasible, per robust needs and market assessments and response analysis, alongside technical provision and support from shelter experts. Additional shelter indicators will be dependent on the nature of the program and its intended outcomes.

### WASH

- Percentage of households using an unsafe water source because they cannot afford to use a safer water source
- Percentage of households who have reduced essential WASH related basic needs expenditures
- Percentage of households practicing open defecation because they cannot afford to pay to use a public latrine and/or to build a latrine

**Note:** Due to the complexity and variety of WASH outcomes sought in various programmes, there are currently no general WASH indicators required or recommended for MPC. This may change as evidence around MPC and WASH grows. If WASH outcomes are expected for an MPC intervention, please see the [current recommendations of the WASH Cluster](#).

**Note from the developers of this MPC outcome indicator document:** The indicators included above are WASH-related coping strategies, which may be useful as basic indicators of WASH outcomes; please see the link above for further information.

## Education

- Percentage of households with school-age children with at least 1 school-age child who had to miss school because of costs associated with schooling (during the recall period)

**Note:** The above indicator may also be calculated as a percentage of total school-age children, rather than the percentage of households with school-age children.

Education costs are, to date, included in around half of MEBs; however, monitoring shows households routinely use a small portion of MPC transfers to address education needs. Therefore, even if the transfer value does not include education costs, it is recommended to include this indicator. The Education Cluster does not currently recommend monitoring enrollment or attendance for MPC, since the collection of these indicators are not compatible with MPC monitoring methods.

## Protection

**Note:** Many of the questions in the Protection Mainstreaming indicator and the Livelihoods Coping Strategies indicator, both under the Cross-Cutting section, are related to protection outcomes. The role of MPC on protection outcomes is still an area for further research; additionally, standalone MPC is not typically used to achieve protection outcomes.

## Health

- Percent of households receiving MPC that delayed or did not seek care when in need of healthcare, due to financial barriers
- Percent of households receiving MPC that were able to access a service from a qualified/certified provider (including consultation, diagnostic tests and its treatment) when they needed to use such service

**Note:** Caution is urged when using indicators for health for MPC. At most, MPC can address some financial barriers to accessing healthcare. The health cluster notes that reducing barriers and ensuring access to a minimum package of quality services (preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative) always requires a mix of interventions, both financial and non-financial, on provider and demand side, which is dependent on contextual factors. Recurrent MPC transfers are not designed to address these barriers, particularly healthcare service quality, and user surveys cannot adequately capture service quality.

## Child Protection

**Note:** Established under the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, the Cash and Child Protection Task Force alongside the Assessment, Measurement and Evidence Working Group seeks to address the lack of documented evidence on the effectiveness of cash transfers on children in emergencies and their wellbeing through identifying, collating, and developing measures, tools and guidance. The Cash and CP TF have commissioned a consultant to conduct a systematic review of monitoring and evaluation frameworks associated with multipurpose cash intervention designs and ultimately develop and pilot a module of common and user-friendly indicators and guidance for integrating child protection in MPC monitoring and evaluation frameworks. This work is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2019 to inform the outcomes and indicators developed by the Grand Bargain Cash Work Stream.

## Nutrition

**Note:** Due to the complexity of nutritional outcomes sought in various programs, there are currently no general emergency nutrition indicators recommended for MPC. This may change as evidence and our learning around MPC grows. If emergency nutritional outcomes are expected from an MPC program, please see the Nutrition Cluster for suggested indicators.

## Expenditure Indicators (optional)

In some cases, organizations may wish to track expenditures. All expenditure-based indicators should enquire about overall household expenditures (not the use of the MPC transfers). Instead of measuring exact amounts, agencies may wish to simply ask people their 3-5 most important expenditure categories, as part of a people-centered approach. If a quantitative approach or sectoral measurement is desired, the following indicators may be collected at the household level. It is recommended to collect expenditures on all categories of relevance to the population, as part of a people-centered approach. If data collection allows, item-level expenditures may be collected. Dividing household-level data by the number of members in the household will yield per-capita expenditure figures, which is needed for meaningful analysis.

To measure and monitor household priorities and economic capacity to meet basic needs:

- Total monthly expenditures (currency amount per capita)
- Distribution of monthly per capita expenditures by categories/sector (percentage of expenditures spent on food, shelter, water, NFIs, education etc.)
- Total monthly expenditures relative to the MEB (percentage)
- Economic Capacity to Meet Essential Needs ([ECMEN](#)) (a binary indicator for whether a household's total expenditures can cover the MEB; built on the previous indicator)
- Expenditure amounts by categories/sector relative to the corresponding amounts in the MEB (percentage of expenditures on food out of the food amount in the MEB, expenditures on shelter out of the shelter amount in the MEB, etc.)

To triangulate results of coping strategy measurements and other indicators:

- Total outstanding debt (currency amount)
- Main reason for contracting debt

## Gathering Feedback on the Use of the Indicators

If you are using the indicators or are planning to do so, either in full or using a single indicator or small subset, we'd love to hear from you. The aim of this is two-fold – in the first instance to be able to gauge the extent to which the indicators are being used, how and where; also, to be able to gather feedback on experiences of using them. Feedback will be used to review and potentially revise the indicators ahead of the 2020 Grand Bargain Cash Workstream meeting (May/June 2020).

If you'd like to let us know about project(s) where you're using the indicators, and possibly provide feedback, you can use the Google Form through the link below. This information, including your contact information, will only be accessible to and used by the group facilitators (advisors at CRS, USAID/OFDA and CaLP) for contacting you about your experiences using the MPC Outcome Indicators. If you no longer want to share your info, we will delete it at any time.

<https://forms.gle/EipzP5E1uDw9Jb68A>