

Operational Feasibility

What It Is

The second step of an emergency response is an assessment of the Operational Feasibility for different response options. Operational Feasibility as defined in the Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) considers national and local capacities and response, and international capacity, access, security, etc. In this toolkit, we add to this a more detailed market analysis, a risks and benefits analysis from an accountability perspective (to affected populations and to donors), the assessment of cash delivery services, and the role of humanitarian agencies and government.

There is a plethora of guidance on Operational Feasibility assessments for CBIs which will not be repeated here, as MPG feasibility assessments are identical. Rather what follows is an essential one page checklist. More detailed guidance on what is specific to MPGs follows in Part 1.3. [Multi-Sector Market Assessment](#) – as most existing market assessment tools are sector-specific – and Part 1.4 [Protection Risk and Benefits Analysis](#). The latter is important, as the flexible nature of MPGs can bring benefits and risks that other types of assistance may not.

Essential Checklist

Take a closer look at markets for the needed goods and services. Which specific goods and services can be reliably met locally and which cannot?

Can markets and local services meet total demand, including from non-beneficiaries? If not, are there quick wins that increase the capacity of local actors to supply what is needed? See detailed guidance in Part 1.3 [Multi-Sector Market Assessment](#).


What options are there for delivering money, safely and reliably? How do people normally access money? How have financial services been affected by the crisis?

What are the protection-related risks and benefits? Can risks be mitigated through programme design? Do the latter outweigh the former? Clearly document how the choice of modality (cash, voucher, direct delivery or in-kind) and delivery mechanism reflects

identified protection risks and benefits. See the detailed section on [Protection Risk and Benefits Analysis](#).

What is the humanitarian community's capacity to deliver CBIs? Are there agencies already delivering cash? Can these be scaled up? Do they have the necessary experience, human resources including leadership, technical and support staff, systems such as financial tracking, beneficiary information management, monitoring?

What is the government's opinion of CBIs? Does it have its own cash-based safety net? What opportunities are there for piggy-backing on existing cash-based safety net programmes? What advocacy needs are there to demonstrate the likely benefits to the local economy and efficiencies gained with CBIs?

 Involving national and local government in the Response Analysis (and programme design) can contribute to the acceptability of any CBI, including MPGs

Are MPGs likely to be a cost-efficient and -effective means of meeting multiple humanitarian needs? Is it cost-efficient to deliver MPGs, considering the coverage and costs of financial service providers, security, and other expenses, particularly when compared to in-kind goods and services? Might the provision of MPGs reduce the resale of in-kind assistance or facilitate access to services, and otherwise increase the effectiveness of humanitarian aid?

RESOURCES

General Operational Feasibility: [Cash and Market Standard Operating Procedures](#) (Oxfam), [Guidelines for Cash-Based Interventions in Displacement Settings](#) (UNHCR), [Cash and Voucher Manual](#) (WFP), [Cash in Emergencies Toolkit](#) (IFRC)

Delivering cash – Financial Service Providers: [E-transfers in Emergencies: Implementation Support Guidelines](#) (CaLP)

Delivering cash programmes – Humanitarian Agencies: [CBI Organisational Capacity Assessment Toolkit](#) (CaLP) and [Cash Competency Development Framework](#) (Avenir Analytics)

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: [Value for Money \(VfM\) guidance](#) (DFID)

Cash Advocacy Tools: [Making the case for cash: A field guide to advocacy for cash transfer programming](#) and [10 Common Principles for Multipurpose Cash-Based Assistance to Respond to Humanitarian Needs](#) (ECHO)

Risks and Benefits Analysis: [Guide to Protection in CBIs: Protection Risk and Benefit Analysis Tool](#) (ERC/CaLP)

[Background note on Risks and Humanitarian Cash Transfer Programming](#) (ODI), Risk Analysis in WFP's Cash and Voucher Guidelines, p.39 and [Risk and Benefits Analysis](#) in UNHCR's CBI Guidelines

The following sections take a closer look at selected essential steps of the SRA. These include:

- [Part 1.1: Vulnerability Analysis from a crisis-specific socio-economic perspective](#)
- [Part 1.2: The Minimum Expenditure Basket:](#) Quantifying recurrent needs for goods and services in a Minimum Expenditure Basket.
- [Part 1.3: Multi-Sector Market Assessment:](#) Of the needed goods and services, what can be purchased locally, at what price?
- [Part 1.4: Protection Risk and Benefits Analysis](#)