

**Yemen Social Protection and COVID-19  
Response Project (P173582)  
UCT Component**

**SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SIA)**

**UNICEF**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CM	Case Management
CMA	Case Management Assistant
UCT-MIS	Unconditional Cash Transfer – Management Information System
UCTC	Unconditional Cash Transfer Component
E-Payments	Electronic Payments
GR	Grievance Redressal
ID	Identification Document
MFI	Microfinance Institution
PMT	Proxy Means Test
PMU	Project Management Unit
SFD	Social Fund for Development
SWF	Social Welfare Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

## GLOSSARY

<b>Case Management Form</b>	Paper form, given to the cash transfer beneficiaries attesting that their identities have been verified. The form is distributed by the Case Management Team and contains a case management code.
<b>Cash Transfer Beneficiary</b>	Primary beneficiary or family member listed on the Beneficiary List, who has his/her identity verified through at least one of the UCT Program accepted IDs and who is entitled to receive the benefit
<b>Local Actors</b>	Refers to either local authority representatives or other community representatives who are approached and requested to support the implementation of the UCT component
<b>Payment Agency</b>	Institution contracted under the Unconditional Cash Transfer Component to deliver the benefit to beneficiaries.
<b>Primary Beneficiary</b>	The person registered in the SWF beneficiary list as the head of the beneficiary case.
<b>Service Provider Organizations</b>	Participating organizations, agencies, or firms including payment agencies contracted by UNICEF to fulfill specific Unconditional Cash Transfer components.
<b>Social Welfare Fund Passbook</b>	Document containing the Unique Code provided by Social Welfare Fund.
<b>Unique Code</b>	Number/code in the UCTC database also indicated in the Social Welfare Fund (SWF) passbook. This code facilitates the allocation of the name in the UCTC

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The intensification of the crisis in Yemen since 2015 led to the suspension of the Social Welfare Fund (SWF), leaving the already vulnerable SWF beneficiaries without any social protection support. Increased food and non-food basic commodity prices, loss of assets and livelihoods, and internal displacement, have further exacerbated the situation. In response, the World Bank approved the Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) Component under the ongoing Emergency Crisis Response Project. The UCT component is implemented by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and delivers emergency safety net support to SWF beneficiaries. The UCT component is managed and implemented by UNICEF through a Project Management Unit (PMU), with funding and technical assistance from the World Bank/International Development Association along with co-financing from the US Department of State NEA. DFID contributed first through a World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund and later through parallel funding.

The UCT component uses the pre-conflict beneficiary list from SWF; and builds on the same parameters of this national institution with the aim of contributing to strengthening the national social protection system so the project can be handed over back to SWF once the conditions are right. However, the UCT component benefited from some adjustments to the cash delivery mechanism to ensure it could be delivered amid a conflict environment. The UCT model therefore requires several interrelated processes to be conducted. These include facilitation, payment, grievances redressal and third-party monitoring, all of them transversally supported by communication and MIS-UCT tools. All beneficiaries must go through a one-time process of verification of identity against a photo ID accepted by the UCT component and the information stored in the MIS. This verification of identity is a pre-requisite for payment which is a key risk mitigation measure to ensure the cash reaches the right beneficiary.

To ensure that the UCT Component is administered and delivered in a transparent and secure manner, especially in Yemen’s current conflict environment, the execution of the different processes of the UCT Component are supported through several consultancy services that are currently procured and managed by UNICEF. These include: (i) Payment Agencies, (ii) Field Facilitation; (iii) Third Party Monitoring and (iv) Quality Implementation Support Services. The UCT Component also includes a Grievance Redressal Mechanism which is entirely managed by UNICEF.

The UCT Component starts with the generation of a beneficiary list which stipulates the benefit amount per beneficiary case, calculated using a pre-defined payment formula and flags indicating specific actions to be taken by the Payment Agency as instructed by UNICEF. A Facilitation Organization initiates and maintains regular dialogue with local, formal and informal, authorities and leaders to facilitate a smooth execution of UCT Component activities, and through them reach beneficiaries with all relevant information about the UCT Component. The UCT Component has a national coverage with the flexibility to reach every beneficiary at their current location. During the cash distribution period, verified beneficiaries can go to the payment sites closer to their current location for payment, and with the payment agencies assigned to them or benefit from outreach support if they are elderly, differently abled or have any other mobility restrictions. Those with questions, complaints or in need of support, can file their grievances which are then analyzed by a dedicated team in line with detailed protocols.

## **2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (SIA)**

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is a requirement of the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), which sets out the borrower's responsibilities for assessing, managing and monitoring environmental and social risks and impacts associated with a UCT Component supported by the World Bank through Investment Project Financing. While the Social Protection and COVID-19 Response UCT Component (SPCRP) will not result in any negative environmental impact, it could potentially cause adverse social risks and impacts. The objective of the SIA is to assess potential social risks and impacts of the UCT Component and propose mitigation measures. Due to the access restrictions to the country that are exacerbated by COVID-19 and the ongoing nature of the UCT Component, the SIA has been prepared based on the lessons learned from the previous Emergency Cash Transfer Project, UNICEF's 1<sup>st</sup> hand understanding of the Project, a quarterly updated risk registry and analysis of the situation, scenario and work planning in order to address and pre-empt any potential negative impacts.

The SIA also provides a description of all major UCT Component including the objectives, institutional arrangements between all participating stakeholders, and proposed organizational setup. It details the UCT Component parameters and describes the main UCT Component processes. Thereby, the SIA:

- Enables stakeholders to understand the scope, content, organization, and activities of the UCT Component;
- Ensures a uniform level of understanding in the interpretation and application of policies and guidelines for all stakeholders;
- Provides the necessary tools to guide the implementation processes of the unconditional cash transfer component by introducing appropriate institutional arrangements, coordination mechanisms as well as lines of authority and control mechanisms; and
- Ensures that the requirements for transparency, equity and accountability are met.

### 3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASELINE

Despite the occasional ceasefires (in 2015, 2016, 2018 and 2020) and numerous peace talks (including Geneva – 2015, Kuwait – 2016, Stockholm – 2018, Riyadh – 2019), the conflict is entering its sixth year with no immediate prospects of improvement. The conflict has brought the economy to a near collapse. Hydrocarbon exports, the main source of exports, government revenue and economic activity, came to a virtual halt in 2015 due to the repeated sabotage of infrastructure and increased insecurity. This had a major impact on economic activity and led to wide-scale suspension of basic public services and civil service salary payments, rapid depreciation of the currency, and shortages of imported goods. It is estimated that between 2015 and 2018, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted by \$49.8 billion in real terms.

The conflict has made Yemen one of the poorest and most food insecure countries in the world. Projections suggest that over three-quarters of the population live on less than US\$3.20 purchasing power parity per day, compared to 45 percent in 2014. The high level of food poverty is of particular concern. Conflict has destroyed livelihoods and with that the ability to purchase food. It has also caused major disruptions in the food supply chain and increases in the price of imported foods, which Yemen is heavily reliant on, resulting in substantial increases in food prices—the cost of the minimum survival food basket increased by 134 percent in nominal terms between March 2015 and February 2020. About two thirds of the population (20 million people) are food insecure (double the number in 2014), 10 million people are at risk of famine, and two million children require treatment for acute malnutrition. The 2019 International Food Policy Research Institute Global Hunger Index ranked Yemen 116 out of 117 countries, and the 2020 Global Report on Food Crises calls it the “world's worst food crisis.” Most of the population also lacks access to basic services such as education, health services, water and sanitation. These deprivations are eroding Yemen’s human capital: the future earnings potential of children born today in Yemen will be 63 percent lower than what it could have been with complete education and full health (World Bank 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic poses severe and far-reaching negative consequences for the Yemeni population that is already coping with the effects of conflict. By early October, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in over 40.5 million cases and 1.12 million deaths in 212 countries. The number of reported cases and deaths in Yemen are growing fast, and the actual number of cases and deaths are likely to be much higher due to the limited testing capacity. The indirect effects of the pandemic will be substantial. The pandemic will negatively affect the Yemeni economy through the domestic restrictions on economic activity and, most significantly, through its impact on global markets, particularly through the plummeting oil prices and the likely collapse in the Yemeni Rial (YR). This would significantly increase the prices of imported commodities, eroding households’ purchasing power and increasing operating cost for businesses. Households will be affected by reduced labor incomes and remittances and, particularly, higher food prices—food insecure households and those vulnerable to food insecurity are most vulnerable. Food prices are already on the rise and they will likely increase further, particularly as food imports continue to decline following the disruption in global food supply chains caused by COVID-19.

This is being compounded by the impact of climate-related shocks, including the desert locust plague and recent floods. Yemen is highly vulnerable to climate change, which intensifies the development of locust swarms and the occurrence of natural disasters. Climate change has triggered the strongest alterations in water temperature in the Indian Ocean in 60 years. Warmer seas create more extreme rainfall as well as stronger and more frequent cyclones, providing ideal conditions for locusts to hatch, breed, and disperse widely. The impact of the locust on crops is devastating: a small swarm (1 km<sup>2</sup>) can comprise as many as 80 million locusts and can consume the same amount of food in one day as 35,000 people. To make matters worse, Yemen was hit in April 2020 by the worst floods in a generation, destroying crops and irrigation systems, damaging houses and buildings and creating conditions for infectious diseases to spread.

#### 4. UCT COMPONENT DESCRIPTION

The objective of the proposed SPCRP is to provide cash transfers, temporary employment, and increased access to basic services and economic opportunities to vulnerable populations affected by COVID-19 and the ongoing conflict. The UCT Component was developed to provide an immediate response to the crisis and to protect the targeted poor, conflict-affected families, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and communities from falling into extreme poverty. The SPCRP currently includes three components, as follows:

- **Component 1:** Cash Transfers / Subcomponent 1.1 Unconditional Cash Transfers (implemented by UNICEF in partnership with the Social Fund for Development -SFD);
- **Component 2:** Labor Intensive Works and Economic Opportunities (implemented by UNDP in partnership with SFD and the Public Works Project – PWP);
- **Component 3:** UCT Component Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Capacity Building of National Institutions.

**Subcomponent 1.1 Unconditional Cash Transfers.** Prior to the conflict, the Social Welfare Fund (SWF), under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, was implementing a well-targeted large-scale national cash transfer (CT) program providing 1.5 million households with quarterly cash benefits. The SWF targeted the poorest and most vulnerable households in the country through a combination of proxy means testing (PMT) and categorical targeting (for groups such as the disabled). With the eruption of conflict, the SWF became bifurcated and the CT program was discontinued due to lack of funding. SWF beneficiaries were bearing the brunt of the suffering and there was emerging evidence showing a growing need to receive their transfers which provided critical supplemental income. The World Bank's Additional Financing 2 to the Emergency Crisis Response Project (P159053) under implementation, was thus prepared as a direct response to the dire needs of the poorest households in Yemen, adding a third component to the ECRP: the CT component to renew CT payments to SWF beneficiary households, ultimately seeking to revive and sustain the largest and most critical social protection program in the country.

The launching of the CT component was done with a view to: (i) extend social protection to the poorest 30 percent of the population following the collapse of the national system; and (ii) retain key program features such as targeting criteria, coverage, and benefit amount to enable a smooth transition in a post war and state-led social protection landscape. UNICEF was selected as the implementing agency for this component and has since provided CTs to an average of over 1.42 million households over eight payment cycles. In light of the ongoing conflict and volatile environment, UNICEF has also introduced various improvements and risk mitigation measures to the program to enable the delivery of cash amid a high risk environment, including payments through private financial institutions and a robust beneficiary Verification process and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). Evidence shows that the fastest and most effective way to protect households against food insecurity caused by conflict, COVID-19 and other shocks is through CTs.

**The SPCRP** will finance US\$135 million in unconditional cash transfers. The UCT Component is expected to cover three payment cycles of cash transfers until December 2021. As with the ECRP, the UCT Component will implement COVID-19 sensitive measures during subsequent payment cycles, including awareness raising, sequencing payment scheduling to avoid overcrowding, as well as ensuring social distancing and the availability of hand sanitizer at payment sites.

## 5. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The SIA is prepared to:

- Comply with national environmental and social laws and regulations, and the operating procedures of SWF;
- Meet the requirements of the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), including the World Bank Group Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines; and the World Bank guidelines on stakeholder engagement during COVID-19.

The RoY Labor Law, Act No.5 of 1995, includes Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements for workplaces that need to be applied in the UCT Component.

- The Labor Law (Law 5/1995) states that women are equal to men in all aspects without any discrimination, and that equality should be maintained between women and men workers in recruitment, promotion, wages, training, social insurance. It also regulates work time for pregnant women.
- The Labor Law regulates the rights and wages of workers, their protection, occupational health and safety. In addition, the Social Insurance Law regulates retirement compensation.
- Yemen has ratified ILO Convention Number 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (Law 7/2001). The Convention establishes a minimum age for admission to employment.
- Yemen has also ratified the ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. It refers to child labor as work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, by obliging them to leave school prematurely; or by requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

The RoY is party to a number of international environmental agreements, the most important of which are:

- World Heritage Convention
- International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage
- Convention on Biodiversity
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Yemen acceded to the Kyoto Protocol and is party to Paris Agreement but not ratified)
- United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification
- Environmental Modification Convention
- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat
- Law of the Sea
- Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

UNICEF contracting is done in line with relevant UNICEF Terms and Conditions of Contracts (Services) on its section 7 related to Ethics Standard.

In general, national agencies are not currently in a position to handle the technical complexities and reporting requirements of international agreements. UCT Component activities are not expected to be in breach of any international agreement to which the RoY is a party.

## 6. ELIGIBILITY FOR SPCRP UCT COMPONENT – CT BENEFICIARIES

This section outlines the predetermined features, which describe the rules of the proposed UCT Component. The subsequent sections define the UCT Component's objectives, beneficiaries, beneficiary list, payment parameters, facilitation mechanisms, verification parameters, types of grievances and their categories, monitoring mechanisms and the duration and exit from the CT component of the SPCRP.

### 6.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE CT COMPONENT OF THE SPCRP PROJECT

The CT component aims at providing emergency unconditional cash transfers to the poor and vulnerable in response to the socio-economic crisis.

### 6.2. SPCRP - CT BENEFICIARY

The SPCRP beneficiary of the unconditional cash transfer is a person or family member **Entitled** to receive benefit, when:

- His/her name is listed on the Beneficiary List.
- His/her identity is verified through at least one of the following Identification Documents (IDs) containing his/her own picture:
  - New National ID (*acceptable with or without SWF passbook*), OR
  - Old National ID (*acceptable with or without SWF passbook*), OR
  - Electoral ID (*acceptable with or without SWF passbook but only for beneficiaries verified in the first and second payment cycles*), OR
  - Passport (*acceptable with or without SWF passbook*), OR
  - Family Card (*acceptable with or without SWF passbook*), OR
  - Birth Certificate (*acceptable with SWF passbook with photo, but for Primary Beneficiaries only*), OR
  - Student's Seat Number Card for the Final Exams of 9th or 12th Grade, (*acceptable with SWF passbook with photo*), OR
  - Marriage contract (*acceptable with SWF passbook with photo, but for Primary Beneficiaries only*), OR
  - Disabled Care and Rehabilitation Fund ID Card (*acceptable with SWF passbook with photo*), OR
  - An Amin/Aqil Letter with/without a photo (*acceptable with or without SWF passbook*), supplemented by a Community Validation of Identity Form OR a Case Management Form. This picture/photo is mandatory ONLY when the Amin/Aqil letter is emitted, and the beneficiary has no other form of photo ID.

**Note:** the UCT component can accept expired IDs as a valid document for all the processes; however, only original documents are accepted.

### 6.3. BENEFICIARY LIST

For the CT component, the pre-conflict beneficiary list of the Yemen Social Welfare Fund will be used. This list contains the personal information available for the 1.5 million beneficiary cases (around 9 million people). The beneficiary list is securely stored in the UCT Component's Management Information System (MIS).

### 6.4. BENEFIT AMOUNT

The SPCRP will use the same benefit amount used by the Yemen Social Welfare Fund in 2014. This amount varies between 9,000 YER and 18,000 YER per beneficiary case, per quarter, and was calculated taking into account the size of the household in line with a pre-determined formula.

## 6.5. FLAGS

Flags are either assigned to the entire family (*group, affects all members*) or to a specific family member (*individual, impacts only one person*) throughout the execution of the various activities. Flags are to support the Officer who is interacting with the beneficiary to understand a particular requirement for payment or characteristic of the beneficiary. The main flags are included in the payment list while the sub-flags – which allow to identify the reason why the beneficiary has that specific flag – are only visible in the MIS for internal use only.

**Table 1. SPCR CT Flags**

Name of flag in payment list	Impact of the flag
No Payment	Amount due set to "US \$0". None of the household members can collect the cash.
Requires CM	Payment Agent cannot pay unless the beneficiary presents a case management form.
Home outreach	Should be paid via home outreach but can collect if present themselves at the payment site
Deceased No payment	Person flagged cannot collect the cash. All other family members can collect.
Pay only	The cashier can only pay the flagged beneficiary and no other family member in the household
Disqualified	Flagged members cannot collect the cash. All other family members can collect.
Verified	Cashier should process the payment to this beneficiary upon presentation of an accepted ID.

## 6.6. DURATION AND EXIT POLICY

- **Duration:** CT beneficiaries are entitled to receive the benefit while funding is available for the project to last.
- **Exit:** CT beneficiaries shall exit the Project if it is proven that they have committed fraud.

## 6.7. PAYMENT

Payments are delivered through **fixed and outreach (mobile) payment sites** to CT beneficiaries on a quarterly basis. The method used for payments to the CT beneficiaries will be the Manual Cash Delivery.

**Fixed** payment sites are sites established by the banks' agents, bank's fixed branches or offices operating at the same location throughout the payment delivery phase:

- The number of fixed payment sites per district is defined according to population, topography and size of the district.
- At least one (1) fixed site must function for 26 days in a district

**Outreach** (mobile) payment sites are set up in areas where no Fixed Payment Sites are available at an accessible distance for the UCTC beneficiaries. The Outreach Payment Sites are available for a short time in a designated area.

Fixed and Outreach (mobile) payment sites will also do individual **outreach payments through home visits (home outreach)**. Outreach home visits are applicable for beneficiaries with physical impediments or sociocultural barriers that prevent them from accessing the Fixed Payment Sites. Such beneficiaries are flagged in the payment lists and also, they may ask for a home visit through the grievance redressal mechanism.

The Fixed Payment Sites and Outreach Payment Sites must be located at a maximum distance of two hours by foot from beneficiaries or a maximum of ten (10) kilometers away. Only in the districts that due to the war payment to beneficiaries becomes impossible, this parameter becomes flexible allowing twenty (20) kilometers of distance.

## Benefit amount

The definition of the payment amount considers four (4) specific variables: monthly amount, number of months to pay, arrears and reimbursements.

Any authorized benefit that was not collected in the previous cycles is considered 'arrears'. If the CT beneficiary could not collect the payment during a given payment delivery phase, this amount is accumulated and paid in the next cycle along with the amount corresponding to that payment cycle. Reimbursements are the amounts that were confirmed to be deducted from the benefit or not paid to beneficiaries by the payment agents, resulting from the investigation of alleged frauds and corruption cases. The total amount that an CT beneficiary receives in a payment cycle is represented through the following formula:

$$\text{Total amount} = (\text{Monthly amount} \times \text{Number of months to pay}) + \text{Arrears (where applicable)} + \text{Reimbursement (where applicable)} + \text{Top-up (where applicable)}$$

The general payment parameters established for the CT include the following:

**Table 2. Payment parameters**

PARAMETERS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Coverage</b>	22 Governorates (333 Districts)
<b>Total Amount</b>	(Monthly amount * Number of months to pay) + Arrears (where applicable) + Reimbursement (where applicable) + Top Up Amount (where applicable)
<b>Monthly payment amount</b>	The last monthly amount paid by the SWF in 2014.
<b>Payment Frequency</b>	Payments are made on a quarterly basis; therefore, CT beneficiaries receive the benefit every three (3) months.
<b>Arrears</b>	Any benefit amount that was not collected in the stipulated cycle is considered 'arrears'. If the CT beneficiary could not collect the benefit during a given payment delivery phase, the amount is accumulated and paid in the next cycle along with the amount corresponding to that payment cycle.
<b>Reimbursement</b>	Reimbursements are the amounts that were confirmed to be deducted from the benefit or not paid to beneficiaries by the payment agents, resulting from the investigation of alleged frauds and corruption cases.
<b>Top-up</b>	Additional amount which, subject to funding availability, is given to the beneficiary in addition to the regular base benefit amount
<b>Payment Modalities</b>	Manual Cash Delivery
<b>Payment Agency</b>	Entity that is contracted to deliver benefits at <b>fixed and outreach (mobile) payment sites, or through home outreach</b> , to CT program beneficiaries.

## **7. ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS**

The CT program will serve as a continuation of ECRP (Component 3 – UCT) and is expected to continue having a positive impact and increasing food consumption for a targeted 1.5 million households and individuals (approximately 9 million people), of which 40 percent of targeted direct recipients are female. The CT program was designed to target the chronically poor, orphans, vulnerable children, widows, persons with disabilities, the elderly and female-headed households. However, the program could entail potentially adverse social risks and impacts. Below is the list of key social risks in the program, proposed/ongoing mitigation measures and lessons learned from previous cash transfer cycles. More detailed actions, timelines, implementation arrangements and monitoring mechanisms will be considered before the start of the cash transfer cycle supported by the program.

### **7.1 Security risks**

This specifically includes security risks associated with the ongoing conflict which remain relevant under the proposed program. The greatest security risks in many locations are the threat of physical violence for individuals involved in the implementation of the UCT Component such as payment agents, beneficiaries (at Program sites or while traveling to payment locations) contractors and their workers, potential damage to property of implementing agencies and contractors, and the risk of forced expropriation of CT funds from beneficiaries and payment agents.

#### **Mitigation measures**

UNICEF is currently implementing a series of measures to mitigate these security risks, including:

- Implementing a clear mechanism to identify security threats to the UCT Component and to communicate changes in threat levels to the various parties involved in project implementation;
- Establishing communication and facilitation arrangements to secure the support of all relevant political and community actors at the national, governorate, and local levels to promote safe and politically neutral implementation of the UCT Component; and
- Suspending UCT Component activities in areas where political and governance risks cannot be effectively managed and establishing payment sites in alternative neighboring locations safely accessible to beneficiaries.
- In areas with active conflict, establish outreach payment sites whose mobility enables to ensure that the cash process takes place only when and where it can be delivered in a safe manner;
- Applying a protocol to temporarily close payment sites in a coordinated manner in case of security threats;
- Additionally, mitigation measures include the establishment of clear implementation arrangements which emphasize the independence of decision making by any political and/or public-sector entity. These arrangements are communicated to all parties and stakeholders on a regular basis.

Despite the ongoing conflict, the mitigation measures put in place by the ECRP have been successful. Thanks to continuous monitoring, the project has shown ability to respond to arising security threats in a swift manner, mitigating impact for beneficiaries and service provider staff. The coordination led by UNICEF between the payment agencies and the entity responsible for facilitation has been pivotal in ensuring that beneficiaries are duly informed about the closure of a payment site reducing their exposure to such risks. This arrangement will continue to be applied by all the stakeholders involved in the proposed program.

### **7.2 Social tensions**

The UCT Component delivers cash transfers using the pre-conflict SWF beneficiary list generated based on categorical targeting and proxy-means test (PMT), without enrolment of new recipients. With the increasing deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the country, many may feel unfairly excluded; therefore, tensions between the Social Welfare Fund “SWF” beneficiaries and SWF non-beneficiaries may arise.

## Mitigation measures

UNICEF is currently implementing a series of measures to mitigate these social risks, including:

- Establishing communication and facilitation arrangements to secure the support of all relevant political and community actors at the national, governorate, and local levels to promote safe and politically neutral implementation of the program;
- Implementing focused outreach activities to disseminate information about the timing and location of the payment delivery to beneficiaries by facilitators; clearly articulate and widely communicate the UCT Component goals and objectives including targeting criteria and that the cash transfer represents a resumption of an existing transfer scheme rather than a new transfer and hence no new names to be added to reduce any false expectations of SWF beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries;
- Ensuring the availability of a functional Grievance Redressal Mechanism that can be accessible for free by both program beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

The facilitation and GRM arrangements, which were applied to the ECRP, have been proving effective in mitigating risks of social tensions. These arrangements will continue to be applied by all the stakeholders involved in the proposed program.

### 7.3 Exclusion of vulnerable beneficiaries

Vulnerable groups of beneficiaries with access constraints to payment sites derived from physical impediments or sociocultural barriers, can be excluded from the UCT Component benefit. Additionally, as the program requires that beneficiaries present a program accepted ID to go through the process of verification of identity and payment, those without IDs may be excluded from the program.

## Mitigation measures

UNICEF is currently implementing a series of measures to mitigate these exclusion risks, including:

- Ensuring the availability of payment services through the home outreach modality applicable for beneficiaries with physical impediments or sociocultural barriers that prevent them from accessing the payment sites; and clearly communicating about the existence of the home outreach payment service, eligibility criteria, and channel to place a request to benefit from this service;
- Establishing a protocol to ensure provision of priority services to pregnant women, elderly and people with disabilities who collect at a payment site.
- Establishing a community-based mechanism to support beneficiaries in obtaining a program accepted ID, free of cost. This mechanism leverages on the administrative roles allocated to officially designated community leaders as per the existing Yemeni law (“Amin” or “Aqil” as mentioned hereunder).

These arrangements will continue to be applied by all the stakeholders involved into the proposed program. The ECRP has been consistently monitoring performance at this level and increasing its efforts to better serve the most vulnerable beneficiaries, since payment cycle 7 allocating the early days of the payment cycle exclusively to home outreach activities. The same efforts will be undertaken in the proposed UCT Component.

Support to beneficiaries without IDs has been embedded in the model design since payment cycle 2. The UCT Component leverages on the Election Law 13 for the year 2001. This law determines that any Yemeni citizen who has attained the age of 18 is entitled to register during the voter registration period and must provide one form of approved identification, including: personal identification card (national ID), family identification card, military identification card, or passport. For registrants who are unable to provide one of these four forms of identification, the Election Law stipulates that an Amin or Aqil may testify to the registering voter’s identity and eligibility. For female registrants, who cannot reach out to the Amin or Aqil, two females who are currently registered in the same district may testify. The Amin or Aqil is a male dignitary who resides in each neighborhood of any rural or urban area. It should be noted that the Amin/Aqil of neighborhoods are also key verification people in Yemen for land or vehicle purchase, marriage, and divorce.

## 7.4 Gender and SEA/SH risks

With persistent gender gaps existing even prior to the conflict – i.e., in education, legal restrictions on mobility and decision-making, barriers to female participation in the labor force and in political life, and few opportunities for voice, paid work and entrepreneurial activity – women are more vulnerable to the economic, social and security challenges that result from the conflict and should thus be proactively reached for access to cash to improve their purchasing power for food and basic necessities. The stark gender gaps are influenced by and set within the context of conservative and strict gender norms. Cultural constraints in some governorates make it difficult for many women to go to sites to collect their benefits, which leads to many of them assigning someone else to collect, which can create an opportunity for fraud and/or collective payment. Also, this UCT Component includes activities that entail risk of sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment (SEA/SH) due to the high vulnerability of beneficiaries, compounded by poverty and, for many, displacement status - and thus the high need to access the UCT Component benefits. While many of the systems in place to select beneficiaries and distribute benefits are automated or otherwise quite structured, activities that involve a differential of power between program staff and vulnerable women/girl beneficiaries do pose a risk of SEA/SH.

### Mitigation measures

UNICEF is currently implementing a series of measures to mitigate these gender related risks, which will continue to be applied by all the stakeholders involved in the proposed UCT Component. These measures include:

- Strengthening the direct communication with female beneficiaries, by establishing female networks to facilitate the dissemination of information about program to females, as a way to overcome the barriers to physical participation of females in the community meetings organized by the program;
- Requiring the presence of at least a female cashier or female cashier assistance at each payment site, to ensure that both males and females have a chance to collect the cash; Screening officers, including female, were also engaged at payment sites to support in crowd management, which includes organizing segregated male-female queues at waiting areas.
- In more conservative areas, establishing female-only payment sites operated by female payment staff.
- Gender-sensitive third-party monitoring arrangements, including female focus group discussions to provide more insight into the context and nature of these potential risks, as well as further ideas to increase the safety of women/girls and ensure their equal access to UCT Component benefits.
- Ensuring availability of a functional grievance redressal mechanism which can be used as reporting channel.
- Conducting staff training on gender and SEA/SH and GBV.

## 7.5 Transmission of COVID-19

Yemen is currently facing a crisis within a crisis, due to the COVID-19 pandemic whose impact is particularly worrying as the Yemeni health system is on the brink of collapse, due to years of conflict. Many of Yemen's 3,500 medical facilities have been damaged or destroyed in air strikes, and only half are thought to be fully functioning. Clinics are reported to be crowded, and basic medicines and equipment are lacking - in a country of 30 million people there are only a few hundred ventilator machines. The high vulnerability of the population compounds a dire situation. Since 2015, millions of people are without access to proper health care, clean water or sanitation; while the country has already been struggling with diseases such as dengue fever, malaria and cholera. Some 24 million people, about 80% of the population, depend on aid to survive and 2 million children are acutely malnourished. Payment cycles mobilize over 1.4 million people in Yemen around Program sites, which can constitute locations of potential risks for the spread of COVID-19 if appropriate preventative measures are not implemented.

### Mitigation measures

UNICEF is currently implementing a series of measures to mitigate these security risks, and such measures will

continue to be applied to all stakeholders participating in the proposed UCT Component. These measures include:

- The inclusion of COVID-19 preventative measures in all messaging disseminated through all communication channels;
- Scheduling payments and limiting the number of beneficiaries that can be paid in a given day to avoid overcrowding at payment sites; clear communication to beneficiaries on the limited number of daily payments and compliance to scheduling at sites as part of the disseminated messaging;
- Provision of hand-sanitizer at all payment sites, with a requirement for all beneficiaries to clean their hands upon arrival at the payment site, and after receiving and counting their cash;
- Ensure physical distancing and the use of face coverings by beneficiaries at payment sites;
- Where possible, adopt a payment token system at sites where overcrowding is anticipated;
- Diligently monitor compliance to these measures as well as COVID-19 restrictions by district in the form of travel restrictions and temporary lockdowns of localities which can affect beneficiaries' access to payment sites and take appropriate action to ensure these bottlenecks are removed.

## **7.6 Child labor**

The dire humanitarian situation may lead families to adopt negative coping mechanisms, including child labor.

### **Mitigation measures**

UNICEF is currently mitigating the risk of child labor through contractual requirements on prevention of child labor, minimum age and age verification protocol for each implementing entities. These measures will continue to be applied to the proposed program.

## **7.7 Natural disasters/risks**

The effects of climate change are being felt across the world, and Yemen is not an exception. Strong heat waves are affecting different areas of the country, which is also prone to natural disasters such as heavy rains, floods and cyclones. These affect populations and result in possible health and safety risks for beneficiaries waiting at payment sites, or even access barriers preventing them from reaching these payment sites.

### **Mitigation measures**

UNICEF is currently implementing a series of measures to mitigate these risks. These measures will continue to be applied to the proposed project. These measures include:

- Diligently monitoring the weather conditions and developing response plans to ensure the safety of beneficiaries and payment staff;
- Request payment agencies to ensure that payment sites have appropriate shading at waiting areas.
- Occurrence of heat waves occurring during payment cycles in a number of locations: adapted working hours at sites to avoid payment during times of high temperatures and increased capacity at sites to reduce waiting time for beneficiaries.

Occurrence of floods: strengthened facilitation efforts to identify alternative payment locations which can be safely accessed by beneficiaries; deployment of outreach payment teams to serve the affected beneficiaries.

## 8. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### 8.1 FACILITATION

The objectives of the **Facilitation Process** are to:

- Identify and liaise with the relevant local actors including authorities and inform them about the UCT component thereby gaining acceptance and support to ensure an enabling environment for project implementation throughout the country.
- Strengthen links with the local actors by initiating and sustaining dialogue to receive their support in gaining project acceptance and facilitation of access, communicating project goals and rules within their communities or relevant audiences including the targeted beneficiaries and any other stakeholders.
- Schedule and direct the CT beneficiaries of to the Payment Sites according to the established schedules, in an organized manner to avoid overcrowding.
- Inform the relevant actors including and not limited to beneficiaries and communities about the Project and schedules of the payment and facilitate the beneficiaries orderly, inclusive and safe access to the Payment Sites.
- Identify vulnerable groups of beneficiaries with physical impediments or sociocultural barriers that prevent them from accessing the Fixed Payment Sites and support them with differentiated measures, such as outreach home visits.

Specifically, the facilitation organization is responsible for identifying contacting, communicating, and maintaining a regular dialogue with local, formal and informal authorities to facilitate smooth execution of UCT Component activities. The Facilitation Organization will ensure that formal and informal local actors and communities understand, accept and support the SPCR to enable smooth implementation in a timely, efficient, effective, and inclusive manner.

Subsequently, the Facilitation Organization must identify and meet with the relevant local authorities and community leaders (as applicable) in all the geographical areas where the UCT Component will be implemented, prior and during the implementation process, to ensure their buy-in and support for a smooth running of the project, particularly during the payment period and the supporting activities that take place before and after the cycle. Also, the Facilitation Organization will ensure that beneficiaries are informed about the rules and regulations of the project, as well as about the location of the payment sites. The facilitation organization will schedule the beneficiaries' visits to the payment site and facilitate their orderly access to sites.

The Facilitation mechanisms used for the UCT component are listed in the table below:

**Table 3. Facilitation mechanisms**

MECHANISM	DESCRIPTION
<b>Meeting Actors at the Governorate level</b>	Actors at Governorate level, including the governor, security authority and governorate local council members are approached by the Facilitation Supervisors once clearance has been given by the UNICEF Chief of Field Offices to provide them with facilitation letters from the central authorities. This will allow them to start facilitation activities at the District level.
<b>Meeting Actors at the District level</b>	Informs them about the location of the payment sites, takes their opinion in regard to access to those sites and the overall security situation in the district; and Provides local actors with general information about the CT component of Project; Gathers information regarding suitable local actors to involve on village/locality level.
<b>Meeting Local Actors at the Villages /Localities Level</b>	Disseminates information about the CT component of the project, ensuring buy-in and support of local authorities for the UCT Component to run smoothly, particularly during the payment period; Informs them about the schedule for CT beneficiaries to attend payment sites; Requests their cooperation in sharing the information with the CT beneficiaries to secure their attendance to the allocated payment sites and on the scheduled dates only.

<b>Disseminating Information to CT Beneficiaries</b>	Local actors assist in actively sharing the information.
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**Community Outreach<sup>1</sup>** - Community meetings are the entry point for community outreach. During community meetings, Facilitation Officers explain the key UCT Component principles to local actors/leaders, who then convey the key messages to the beneficiaries. Posters with key messages are placed in areas with wide visibility and leaflets distributed to local influencers. The outreach efforts of the Facilitation Organization are complemented with direct messaging from UNICEF through local radio and social media leveraging on UNICEF Facebook and Twitter channels. The messaging platform RapidPro is also used to announce the payment start and end dates, as well as to increase awareness on the grievance mechanism.

**Scheduling of beneficiaries to payment sites** - To prevent overcrowding and ease the burden of beneficiaries, facilitators are additionally responsible for scheduling and directing beneficiaries to specific payment sites. To develop the scheduling plan, the Facilitation Organization considers factors such as the distance between payment sites and beneficiaries' homes; estimated daily productivity of the site; security context in the area; and previous experience. To inform beneficiaries about the scheduling, the Facilitation Organization leverages on the Aqil Amin Al-Harabs as well as on the printouts of scheduling banners (in rural districts) and distribution of scheduling cards to beneficiaries (in urban districts).

**Access and support during the implementation** - When cash disbursement to beneficiaries begins, the focus of the Facilitation Organization shifts to assist the work of other service providers throughout the duration of cash disbursement. Accordingly, in each payment cycle the facilitation team maintains regular dialogue with local, formal and informal authorities and leaders to facilitate a smooth execution of UCT Component activities, and through them reach beneficiaries with any updated information about the project. The operation rooms established in Sana'a and Aden by the Facilitation Organization were reactivated; and the numbers were distributed among all implementers with instructions for them to call in the event of any security incident or any other challenge risking to endanger the smooth implementation of UCT Component activities. With their knowledge of on-the-ground conditions, Facilitation Officers play a critical role in assisting in the identification of alternative payment site locations when needed.

**The table below summarizes the channels used for stakeholder engagement which take place in each payment cycle. These combine face to face interaction with distribution of visual printouts and dissemination of audio-visual materials to mitigate the risks of exclusion.** Messaging guidelines are provided to facilitation teams and all visual, audio-visual and written content is developed by UNICEF. The content focuses on UCT Component parameters, including GRM and SEA prevention, and payment cycles dates.

Outreach channel	Responsible	Remarks
Community meetings	Facilitation Organisation	Community meetings in person and over the phone involving local actors, influencers and beneficiaries representing different communities
Friday speeches		Leveraging on mosques across Yemen
Printouts		This includes scheduling banners; scheduling cards; posters; and leaflets.
WhatsApp		Visual/written and audio-visual content sent to a network of local actors and a female only network.
Radio	UNICEF	Key messages on UCT Component dates and parameters disseminated through local radio channels
Twitter and Facebook		Messages disseminated in UNICEF social media platforms.

<sup>1</sup> Reference to Annex. Stakeholders Engagement for more details on community outreach

## 9. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

The Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) includes a component of grievance collection, whereby complaints from beneficiaries, community members and UCT Component staff are received and logged into the project's Management Information System (MIS); and a component of redressal whereby the grievances are analyzed and acted upon. The data of the complainant is collected when filing the grievance; but all complaints are treated with confidentiality and the complainant information is not disclosed to those against whom the complaint is filed. A gradual transition of the GRM being fully executed by UNICEF is envisioned towards a national transitional implementation agency taking on a greater role with oversight still with UNICEF.

A call center established in Sana'a is used by beneficiaries to file their grievances using a toll-free line (8003090). The call center is open six days a week and operates for a minimum of 10 hours a day, with the number of working hours increasing as required to respond to the demand based on ongoing monitoring of the number of calls.

Due to concerns over the effectiveness and quality of the grievance collection and the need to secure the independence of this service, the call center operates under UNICEF direct oversight and will be the first aspect of the GRM to transition to the envisioned national transitional implementing organization. Trained Call Centre Agents – both males and females - ensure that these grievances are registered in the Grievance module of the Management Information System (MIS) within the appropriate grievance type, to ease the analysis and redressal.

Due to the risk of exclusion of those beneficiaries in areas with limited or no phone network coverage, UNICEF has **released a mobile application for grievance collection**. This App will also transition to the envisioned national transitional implementing organization for us. Dedicated field staff deployed in such areas collect grievances directly from beneficiaries through face-to-face interaction and store them in mobile devices through this offline-capable application. When connected to the internet, this mobile application connects to the MIS and the grievance information is deleted from the mobile device and uploaded in the system.

All grievances recorded in the MIS are automatically categorized allowing for redressal as per agreed protocols. Grievances of suspected fraud are subject to a first level of desk review to determine which ones require immediate investigation by the third-party monitoring organization supervised by UNICEF; and which ones need a different type of redressal such as review of documentation, clarifications to the beneficiary, etc. Grievances associated with the quality of services or mistreatment are referred to the concerned contract manager for follow up with the service provider. Grievance linked to beneficiary issues (i.e. challenges experienced by the beneficiaries that prevent them from collecting their cash benefits) are addressed by the case management team – with males and females.

The UCT Component will handle SEA/SH **grievances** as outlined in the note *Grievances Mechanisms for SEA/SH in World Bank-financed Projects*. The mandate of a SEA/SH Grievance Mechanism (GM) is limited to: (i) referring, any survivor who has filed a complaint to relevant services, (ii) determining whether the allegation falls within the UN definition of SEA/SH, and (iii) noting whether the complainant alleges the grievance was perpetrated by an individual associated with a World Bank project. A SEA/SH GM does not have any investigative function. It has neither a mandate to establish criminal responsibility of any individual (the prerogative of the national justice system), nor any role in recommending or imposing disciplinary measures under an employment contract (the latter being the purview of the employer). All branches of the GRM must be sensitive to handling SEA/SH complaints, including multiple reporting channels, the option of reporting anonymously, a response and accountability protocol including referral pathways to connect survivors with needed SEA services.

UNICEF requires SFD as the envisioned national transitional implementing organization to conform with the PSEA standards.

Through the GRM, community members and service providers may make complaints on issues such as the following:

- Adverse social or environmental situation caused by the project;
- Access to UCT Component services – (for example if an intended UCT Component beneficiary has not been reached by the project.);
- Deviation in implementation or use of UCT Component inputs – (if implementing partners deliver services or pay to beneficiaries an amount less than the standard set by UNICEF for the project);
- Complaints on SEA related issues with ensuring complete confidentiality to protect impacted survivors due to culture norms in the country; and
- Any other concerns

The CT GRM will:

- Be responsive to beneficiaries, address and resolve their grievances;
- Serve as a channel to receive suggestions, and to increase community participation;
- Collect information to enhance management and improve implementation performance;
- Promote transparency and accountability on the modality and performance of the project;
- Deter fraud and corruption;
- Include referral pathways to refer SEA survivors to appropriate support services;
- Mitigate environmental and social risks; and
- Build trust between citizens and UCT Component management.

GRM Principles:

- Protect beneficiaries' and stakeholders' rights: beneficiaries and stakeholders have the right to make their voices heard. No retribution will be exacted for participation/use of the GRM system.
- Transparency and Accountability: All complainants will be heard, taken seriously, and treated fairly.
- Timeliness: All complaints will be addressed as per protocols.
- Neutrality, Equity, and Non-Discrimination: All complaints will be treated with respect and equally regardless of the community groups and individuals, types, ages and gender.
- Accessibility: The GRM will be clear and accessible to all segments of affected communities.
- Confidentiality: Information communicated through the GRM is restricted to a limited number of people and is not disseminated more widely, offering protection and security to the complainant.

The entire grievance collection and redressal process is registered and recorded into the MIS. This enables the implementation of comprehensive quality assurance processes, with concrete protocols, to ensure that all grievances are recorded and handled in a proper manner.

The types of grievances and their categories stipulated for the CT component of the proposed program are described in the following table:

**Table 4. Grievance categories and types**

Grievance category	Grievance Type
Suspected Fraud	The beneficiary was issued a CM form but the CM form was never given to him/her by the CMA
	Demand of fee/commission
	Person claiming no payment
	Received lower amount than assigned
	Someone is collecting the passbooks and cash on behalf of them

Service Quality	The UCT Component staff is not using COVID-19 protective gear (select gloves, masks, other)
	No priority for vulnerable groups at the payment site
	The bank notes I received are not acceptable in my district
	Site not open
	Case Management team did not provide the necessary information to the beneficiary
	Lack of cash
	No security personnel available
	Site located too far away from home
	Staff not helpful
	Multiple visits to the site to be paid
	I was asked to do a copy of my ID outside the payment site to be able to receive the cash
	No female staff available
	The payment was suspended in my governorate
	I was refused payment in my scheduled date
	I have not been informed of my scheduled date
	Long wait at site
	No screening officer available to organize the crowds
	Delay in Responding/processing the grievance
	The Officer/Cashier retained the beneficiary's Case Management form
	No adequate facilities (no waiting area, no seats, no toilets/no proper toilet)
	The payment agency allocated to beneficiary does not operate in his district of residence
	Difficulties in collecting because the site is operating offline
	ID rejected by bank system
	I have requested to be paid at home, but the payment agent did not come
	System is not working/connection problem
	The Officer/Cashier retained the beneficiary's ID
Lack of information about steps to collect the money/services available/other (explain what)	
The banknotes I received are very old or torn	
The beneficiary is eligible for payment but not paid	
The Case Management Assistant met the beneficiary but not at the beneficiary's house	
The beneficiary and the case management assistant agreed on a visit date, but the case management assistant did not come	
I made a grievance about suspected fraud, but the grievance was not solved	
I have requested to be paid at home, but I have not been flagged as home outreach	
COVID-19 security distancing (at least 1 meter) was not enforced by the UCT Component staff (select: at community meetings, at payment site, during CM work, during TPM work, during fraud investigation work)	
There was no hand sanitizer at the payment site	
Mistreatment	I was asked for a favor to benefit from the project
	Poor attitude of staff
	Physical aggression
	Verbal aggression
Beneficiary issues	The beneficiary is differently abled, dependent on a family member's care, live in a household and are the only beneficiary in the list
	Issues with names as per his/her ID

	I cannot collect my cash because I am flagged as "No payment"
	I cannot collect my cash because I am flagged as Disqualified
	I want to edit/change grievance.
	I want to withdraw my grievance
	SWF passbook or ID lost/damaged
	Beneficiary cannot attend the operational Site
	Beneficiary is deceased
	No ID, or ID lost/damaged
	I have an ID but have not yet been verified
	Cannot collect because of expired ID
	I am wrongly flagged as deceased
	Beneficiary who is a minor and does not have a representative on the Beneficiary List
	The beneficiary is in a health institution or orphanage and there are no family members
	I want to cancel my home outreach request
	I am flagged as "Requires CM"
	I cannot collect my cash because I am flagged as no show
	My case was rejected because of lack of documents but now I have the documents needed and want CM support
	Grievance follow-up: I was contacted but could not pick up the phone/was out of coverage
	I want to update my address (location)
	I want to update my phone number
Staff challenges	I am being forced to work extra hours without being paid for the extra time
	I have been mistreated by my superiors/colleagues
	I was asked for a favor to work for the project
	I have not been given adequate/safe working conditions
	I have not received the salary I am entitled to
	I did not receive proper training

Findings from the third-party monitoring organization in relation to beneficiaries' level of satisfaction with the services provided by the grievance redressal teams during the current ECRP have been very positive. However, the TPM reports that a number of beneficiaries had not heard about the Call Centre. Under the proposed project, the existence, purpose and way to reach the project's grievance redressal mechanism, will be more widely publicized.

## 9.1 INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

The SIA will be disclosed in country (UNICEF website) with English and Arabic full translation as well as WB website in English and Arabic.

## 10. MONITORING AND REPORTING

UNICEF contracts an **independent third-party monitoring (TPM) service organization** to monitor compliance with the project's design, standards and parameters throughout the UCT Component cycle. The mechanisms utilized for monitoring purposes are detailed below.

The TPM activities include male only and female only focus group discussions which serve as an effective way to learn from the beneficiaries and community members and gain insight on how different aspects of the UCT Component may impact males and females.

**Table 5. Monitoring mechanisms**

MECHANISMS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Process Monitoring</b>	<p>Goals of Process Monitoring are to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where and by whom the standards defined in the protocols and guidelines and laid down in the Operations Manual and its Technical Annexes, are not met;</li> <li>• Where implementing agencies deviate in their field activities from those protocols and guidelines and;</li> <li>• What kind of challenges organizations face in UCT Component implementation?</li> </ul>
<b>Spot Checks</b>	<p><b>Spot Checks on payments</b> are the instrument used to determine whether the UCT Component beneficiaries received the cash benefit and whether the amount received corresponds to the amount allocated to them.</p> <p>Spot check on the call center process is applied to a sample of beneficiaries that have been supported through the call center. This is done by selecting a representative sample of all grievances submitted during the payment cycle.</p> <p>Spot checks on the case management processes are also conducted to determine whether the data collected through structured interviews in the Call Centre, reports submitted by the CM team and registered in the project's MIS are accurate and to check the quality of service. Also, the spot check determines if cases were handled in line with the CM protocol.</p>
<b>Post Distribution Monitoring</b>	<p>Through Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) the UCT Component attempts to study beneficiaries': a) actual utilization of the cash transfers during each of the payment cycles, b) socioeconomic indicators on individual and household level, c) assessment of the services provided by the UCTP (facilitation, payments, grievance redressals).</p>
<b>Investigation of identified outliers</b>	<p>The objectives of the investigation of identified districts are to detect deficiencies in the execution of activities in operational processes such as facilitation, payment delivery and grievance redressal including case management; and take corrective measures to address the identified deficiencies.</p>

In addition, **monitoring is done by the implementing partner(s) and UNICEF PMU** through field visits, data analysis, daily meetings and media monitoring. All issues are logged, analyzed and directed to the relevant contract managers for immediate action and follow up with the contractors. An online dashboard and daily updated charts with progress against targets highlight on the areas with the highest number of unserved beneficiaries to inform where efforts needed to be accentuated. Colleagues in Sana'a and all five field offices across Yemen work directly with the service providers to coordinate and monitor the activities and ensure alignment with UCT Component standards and management decisions. Process monitoring is also substantially supported by the deployment of contracted Field Implementation Monitoring Consultants across all governorates. Media and social media outlets are monitored on a daily basis against any content and coverage on the programme, to highlight content from the web that may pose any threat and de-facto impact the implementation of the UCT Component and future payments, including those linked to potential fraud and corruption activities.

## **10.1 INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CASES**

UNICEF contracts an independent third-party (Quality Implementation Support Services Organization) to conduct investigations of alleged fraud and corruption cases throughout the UCT Component cycle. Cases suspected of fraud could be filed against an individual, a group of individuals, or even an entire organization. Various sources are used to identify those cases, which are:

- Grievances.
- Field Monitoring, including by a Third-Party Monitoring Organization;
- Media monitoring;
- Data analysis and reconciliation using MIS data;
- Any other sources.

The Quality Implementation Support Services Organization is responsible to conduct respective field investigations and report the results to UNICEF PMU to take corrective actions accordingly.

## **11. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The UCT component requires close coordination and cooperation between all key stakeholders involved. This chapter of the manual presents the institutional arrangements between different Service Provider Organizations and serves as a general reference for roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and organizations involved in the UCT Component's implementation.

UNICEF functions as the grant recipient and executing agency of the UCT through a Project Management Unit (PMU) and will facilitate a gradual transition to the envisioned national transitional implementing organization as per the WB/UNICEF agreement.

### **11.1 GRANT RECIPIENT**

UNICEF functioned as Grant Recipient for the CT component of the ECRP and will continue maintaining such function in the proposed UCT Component.

### **11.2 IMPLEMENTING PARTNER**

As part of the World Bank's broader strategy to gradually increase the reliance on national institutions to deliver IDA-19 support to Yemen, the implementation of the CT component of the proposed UCT Component will be gradually transferred from UNICEF (current implementing partner under ECRP) to the envisioned national transitional implementing organization (the Social Fund for Development - SFD), with the ultimate goal of transferring the UCT Component back to SWF when appropriate. The implementation of the facilitation, payment and GRM components will be gradually transferred to the national transitional implementing organization as per the WB/UNICEF agreement. UNICEF will however continue to perform the role of implementing partner for the TPM, QISS and MIS functions for the entire duration of the UCT Component.

UNICEF PMU, with staff at central and field level will supervise the implementation; under the oversight of the UNICEF Yemen Country Representative. Due to restrictions in access, the PMU operates between Yemen (Sana'a Country Office and five Field Offices) and Jordan (Amman). This role entails the direct management of the UCT Component including the following: (i) overseeing the implementation of UCT Component activities; (ii) monitoring the progress; (iii) sub-contracting and supervising all contracted Service Provider Organizations; (iv) managing UCT Component funds; (v) coordinating activities of all Service Provider Organizations; (vi) reporting functions (financial and progress implementation report); (vii) communicating and reporting to donors and financiers building capacity of the envisioned national implementing partner (SFD) and SWF; and (viii) carrying out other UCT Component management functions as necessary.

### **11.3 DONORS and FINANCIERS**

Funding for the emergency cash transfers, UCT Component management and monitoring for the proposed UCT Component is provided by the World Bank through the International Development Association (IDA). The World Bank and UNICEF are also mobilizing resources from other donors and financiers.

UNICEF will undertake joint progress reviews and supervision missions with the participation of the World Bank and any other donors/financers on a regular basis (at least twice a year) and upon an agreed schedule. When and if implementation issues that require donors' and financiers' attention and agreement arise, these will be discussed during missions, and next steps will be agreed in accordance with the legal agreements signed between UNICEF and each donor/financer.

## 11.4 SERVICE PROVIDER ORGANIZATIONS

To implement the CT component of the proposed program, Service Provider Organizations will be contracted to fulfill responsibilities for specific operational components. The Service Provider Organizations coordinate closely for implementation and participate in the National Technical Working Committee and Field Technical Working Committee meetings.

- **Facilitation Organization**

It is the overall responsibility of the Facilitation Organization to make local actors, local communities and beneficiaries understand, accept, and support the CT component of the proposed program. The Organization must identify and meet with representatives at the governorate, district, and village/locality level to establish working relationships of mutual trust to facilitate smooth implementation of the UCT Component. It is furthermore the responsibility of the Facilitation Organization that beneficiaries are made aware of the UCT Component parameters and the schedules of attendance to Payment Sites by village/locality, to facilitate their orderly access to the assigned Sites based on correct and up to date program information.

- **Payment Agencies**

Payment agencies are entities that are contracted to deliver benefits to CT beneficiaries on a quarterly basis. Payment Agencies can be Banks and/or Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) who through their branches or sub-contracted payment agents, disburse cash benefits to UCT Component beneficiaries against the presentation of a photo ID accepted by the program, in respect for flags presented in the payment list; carry out the reconciliation process and transfer electronic payment data to the MIS.

- **Third Party Monitoring Organization**

Third Party Monitoring Organization provides independent monitoring services. The tasks are: (i) conduct process monitoring at Payment Sites; (ii) conduct spot checks; (iii) conduct post distribution monitoring; (iv) investigate outlier districts; (v) make recommendations for valuable solutions to any shortfalls in implementation, (vi) make sure that the records are properly maintained, in case there is a need to verify any reported issue.

- **Quality Implementation Support Services**

The QISS function is implemented by an independent third-party service provider which will not implement any other function in the same program to minimize the conflict of interest. The QISS organization will have the capacity to access all governorates and districts covered by the UCT Component to which the services are being provided to investigate cases of fraud, corruption and collusion.

## 11.5 UCT COMPONENT TECHNICAL WORKING COMMITTEES

Technical Working Committees are interagency committees, functioning at (i) National and (ii) Field Level.

- **The National Technical Working Committee**

The National Technical Working Committee **comprises** of one or more representatives of the following organizations or firms and is to be chaired by UNICEF PMU (Team Leader or Deputy Team Leader):

- UNICEF: PMU Team Leader or Deputy Team Leader, CT Specialist, Monitoring and

Evaluation Specialist and other staff as relevant to the functions implemented by UNICEF;

- SFD as the envisioned national transitional implementing organization: Team Leader and other staff as relevant to the functions implemented by SFD;
- Team Leader(s) of Payment Agencies;
- Team Leader(s) of Facilitation Organization(s);

The Third-Party Monitoring Organization can be invited by UNICEF to attend a meeting, as required.

It is the **overall task** of this committee to secure sufficient coordination and collaboration between the various stakeholders in the preparation phase as well as throughout the entire implementation of the UCT component.

The National Technical Working Committee is the forum to discuss required adjustments to operational plans when needed and agree on mechanisms to resolve outstanding issues which were not resolved at the field level. In addition, joint decision-making happens at the level of the National Technical Working Committee. Recommendations for changes to operations can be made to the National Technical Working Committee from the Field Technical Working Committee; and decisions made and informed to the Field Technical Working Committee.

Using the framework of the National Technical Working Committee, a number of coordination meetings led by the UNICEF PMU take are held prior to the start of each payment period to assess preparedness and address challenges, followed by daily meetings during the payment period to assess implementation progress and take corrective action on identified challenges.

#### • **The Field Technical Working Committees**

The Field Technical Working Committee is chaired by the UNICEF focal point at hub level, with support from the UNICEF Chief of Field Office when needed. The Committee is **attended by** one or more representatives of the following organizations/agencies/firms:

- Supervisor(s) of Payment Agencies;
- Supervisor(s) of Facilitation Organization(s);
- SFD as the envisioned national transitional implementing organization.
- SWF (where feasible)

The main responsibilities of the Field Technical Working Committees are: (i) to coordinate the everyday activities of all participating Service Provider Organizations in the respective geographic region; and (ii) to respond to any possible upcoming crisis situation through immediate actions.

## **11.6 CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

The Consultative Committee acts as a platform through which the UCT Component could receive feedback from relevant Government ministries and provide updates on the program in a coordinated manner. The Committee is a consultative forum through which UNICEF receives observations from MOSAL (SWF), MoPIC and SCMCHA on the UCT Component implementation and shares updates during the payment cycle with the objective of improving the quality of implementation.

This is done through:

1. Participating in the regular Consultative Committee meetings.

2. Joint monitoring missions of SWF, MoPIC, MoSAL where applicable in close collaboration with UNICEF to report back to the Consultative Committee on areas requiring improvement.

The Consultative Committee **is an advisory/consultative meeting platform with UNICEF** and not UNICEF contractors. The meeting is chaired by UNICEF.

### **11.7 UCT BENEFICIARIES**

As recipients of cash benefits provided by the UCT component, beneficiaries are one of the main stakeholders. They interact with the UCT Component during the verification process, payment process and grievance redressal mechanism, as well as outreach and third-party monitoring activities.

## **12. COST ESTIMATE**

**The SPCRP** will finance \$182 million under subcomponent 1.1 and \$10 million under subcomponent 3.1, covering four payment cycles. These two subcomponents will continue to support the implementation of the proposed CT program, administration, management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to ensure that the program is successfully and efficiently implemented in conformity with the design. These components will finance: (a) UNICEF's and the envisioned national transitional implementing organization.(SFD) direct costs, including staffing and operating expenses; (b) UNICEF's and the envisioned national transitional implementing organization (SFD) indirect cost and general management; (c) provision of consultancy services required for technical assistance and implementation support; and (d) UNICEF's Third-Party Monitoring. The cost for the implementation of the SIA will be covered by these subcomponents.

## 13. ANNEX: STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT

### 13.1 Community Outreach

Number of communities and participants reached

In the eighth payment cycle, the ECT project through the Facilitation Organization engaged nearly 130,000 people, including local actors and beneficiaries<sup>2</sup>, from 37,980 communities (33,413 in rural areas and 3,764 in urban areas). The engagement happened through around 27,500 face to face meetings (for 75 per cent of the communities) with exception of communities with less than 6 beneficiaries where the engagement happened through phone calls (25 per cent). Outreach field visits started on 26 June 2020 and lasted between 7 and 16 days in each district, taking place at different days in each community.

Table 1 illustrates the total number of villages/localities covered by the Facilitation Organization meetings/calls with the local actors in the rural and urban districts.

**TABLE 1: OUTREACH FIELD VISITS/CALLS CONDUCTED BY GOVERNORATE**

Governorate	# Of Covered Villages/localities	Total
Abyan	1,780	4,401
Ad Dali	1,319	3,650
Aden	253	944
Al Bayda	1,587	5,915
Al Hudaydah	2,510	10,948
Al Jawf	473	1,847
Al Mahrah	304	689
Al Mahwit	1,231	5,784
Amanat Al Asimah	872	1,785
Amran	1,740	7,716
Dhamar	3,225	9,622
Hadhramout_Al Mukalla	948	3,054
Hadhramout_Seiyun	1,135	2,605
Hajjah	3,812	14,434
Ibb	2,969	13,269
Lahij	3,803	7,968
Marib	465	1,443
Raymah	750	3,483
Saadah	1,147	4,127
Sanaa	2,130	8,351
Shabwa	2,814	7,253
Socotra	482	908
Ta izz	2,231	9,162
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,980</b>	<b>129,358</b>

Type of local actors

<sup>2</sup> Up to a maximum of 6 beneficiaries by community

Type of actors	Total actors
Beneficiary	40,190
Social Actor	35,033
Ameen/Aqil Hara	13,179
Education Staff	10,707
Imam	5,863
Gov employee/authorities	4,965
Sheikh/Tribal leader	5,440
Local Council	3,440
Health Staff	1,479
Other	9,062
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,358</b>

#### Topics discussed

The engagement focused on the project parameters and dates, including:

- Beneficiary eligibility criteria;
- Requirements to receiving project benefits;
- Top-up to the benefit amount provided in payment cycle 8;
- Grievance redressal mechanism, notably the UNICEF call centre number;
- Scheduling mechanism, its importance and ways of receiving information on the dates and locations to be paid;
- Reinforce the messages for those who were never served to reach out to the call centre for support in having their identities verified;
- Importance of the COVID-19 preventative measures that were being implemented by the project, notably at the payment sites, as well as the measures beneficiaries were expected to adhere to.
- Obtain their feedback regarding movement restrictions or accessibility concerns and security of beneficiaries.
- Seek cooperation of the local actors in disseminating information to the beneficiaries and the community.
- Seek their support in resolving issues that arise during implementation, ultimately guaranteeing that beneficiaries and service providers are granted access to the geographic areas.
- Receive advice or information regarding suitable local actors to assist and support at the village/locality level.

#### Outcome of these meetings

- Participants learned the key messages to be delivered to their communities as per the topics above; and the cascaded communication to reach beneficiaries was initiated.
- An agreement was reached in relation to the best location within the community to place the scheduling poster containing the date and location of payment, ensuring it could be accessible to all;
- Areas with accessibility and movement restrictions were mapped out. Examples of this were areas in Hadhramaut Sayoun and Amran, where some roads had been destroyed due to the floods; or areas with COVID-19 related restrictions. This information was used during the process of review of the payment plan to advise on required changes to the initial payment locations, in order to ensure that payment sites could be reached by all beneficiaries in a safely manner.
- Local actors committed to support in solving any bottlenecks arising; or identified who in the community could support in solving with specific matters. Any new local actor identified during these meetings was then approached to secure their support.
- Local actors committed to inform the Facilitation Officer in case the beneficiaries in their localities faced challenges in accessing the payment sites.
- In the displacement destinations of Al-Jawf and Marib governorates, local actors provided information on the areas where displaced people had recently settled to inform the location of payment sites.

#### COVID-19 preventative measures

The planning of community meetings was subject to different adjustments compared with previous payment cycles due to the COVID 19:

1. All facilitators made use of masks, gloves and hand sanitisers.
2. Where possible, meetings were organised outdoors.
3. Number of participants in one meeting was limited to five unless the meeting was located outdoors in a location where social distancing could be ensured.

#### Communication network

To complement these efforts, the Facilitation Officers also made use of their networks, including local councils, community leaders and other local actors, to request their support in reaching out to beneficiaries. The total number of people in this network included 150,424 of which 13 per cent were females. In light of the gender norms in Yemen, female network groups included only females. A number of those in the communication network were also participants in the outreach meetings.

## 13.2 Images from the field



Facilitation activities taking place in an outdoor space in Sana'a governorate

A female facilitation officer conducts an outreach meeting in Sharas district, Hajjah governorate



In Hajjah, Abs, community meeting takes place at a school premises, with all participants using masks

In Mabyan district, Hajjah, a group of female local actors and beneficiaries join an outreach meeting conducted outdoors



A community outreach meeting in Bani Maatar district, Sana'a.