Mitigating risks of abuse of power in cash assistance

TOOLS: Understand how cash recipients want to receive information and provide feedback

KEY ACTIONS	
	✓ Conduct a desk review of communication, information and language preferences of the affected communities to inform communication with affected people.
	✓ Ensure communication is respectful and conducive to sharing and receiving information safely through beneficiary preferred channels.

TOOL: Menu of questions to understand how people want to receive information, provide feedback and participate in decisions about the response

What is in this tool?	This is a 'menu' of 24 potential questions to choose from and adapt to the context, situation and phase of a response, including assessments and monitoring. The questions are designed for use in multi-sector needs assessments for collective responses but could also be adapted for sector-level assessments at both inter-agency and agency levels.
How?	These questions will help you understand how crisis-affected people wish to receive information, provide feedback and participate in decisions about the overall response.
When?	During the needs assessment and analysis phase.

These colour-coded questions come with accompanying guidance on how they should be asked and are designed to elicit responses from crisis-affected people to inform you about:

- **Direct feedback from affected people:** people's views and perceptions about the response.
- **Design of AAP systems:** communication strategies, inter-agency feedback mechanisms and participation strategies.
- **Adaptation of AAP systems**
- **Language barriers:** where language barriers are limiting people's access to information or ability to provide feedback on the response.

GUIDANCE: UNHCR: Community-Based Protection in Action - Effective & Respectful Communication in Forced Displacement

What is in this tool?	This short document shares advice on respectful communication strategies.
How?	Adopting the correct communication style is essential to making sure that cash recipients feel safe to share risks of abuse of power. The tips in the guidance can be used as a checklist to ensure communication by all stakeholders involved in the provision of cash assistance is appropriate.
When?	Throughout implementation.

Humanitarian agencies should dedicate enough time, resources and expertise to improving communication with cash recipients at every stage of programme implementation. Using a variety of media (oral, visual) and approaches (meetings, radio, theatre, posters, games) will help communicate with the diverse groups among cash recipients, some of which have specific vulnerabilities and disabilities.

It is important to raise awareness amongst cash recipients of consumer rights vis-à-vis financial service provider agents and traders so that they feel empowered to uphold these rights. At the same time, work with financial service providers to update communication strategies to ensure information provided on cash transfers is simple, jargon-free, accurate and in the right language.
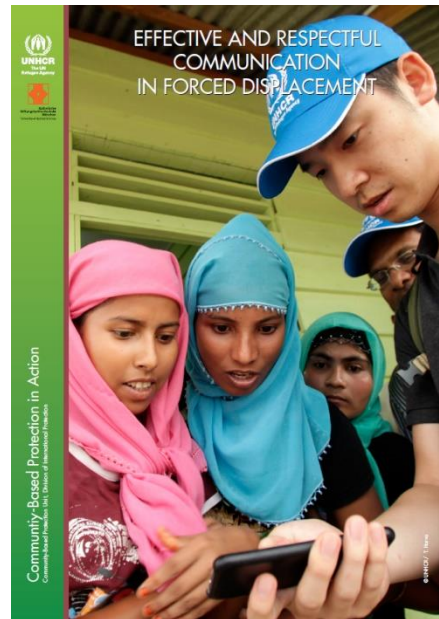
The key considerations put forward in the guidance are:

1. **At the beginning of an interaction:**
   - Create an environment which fosters trust, safety and respect;
   - Ensure confidentiality;
   - Use interpreters in a careful manner;
   - Understand the purpose of the interaction;
   - Manage expectations.

2. **During the interaction:**
   - Pay attention to cultural considerations;
   - Listen actively;
   - Ask questions;
   - Respond effectively;
   - How to talk to persons who are distressed;
   - Provide space for managing anger;
   - Consider non-verbal behaviour;
   - Overcome common barriers to communication;
   - Check for effective communication.

EFFECTIVE AND RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION IN FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Community-Based Protection in Action

TOOL: IFRC/ICRC Beneficiary Communication Template

What is in this tool?	This one-page template summarises all the information cash recipients and the wider community need to know about the cash assistance that is being distributed, including the objective, eligibility criteria, amount, distribution modalities, and contact information of the organisation.
How?	You can use the template as part of your awareness raising activities by distributing this information on flyers to cash recipients and community relays. The template will help you focus on the key elements of your cash programme.
When?	Throughout implementation.

The template prompts you to:

- Explain precisely the objective of the programme and what each recipient will receive.
- Detail who is eligible for the programme.
- Explain the modalities of the cash transfer.
- Give precise information on the distribution site and/or cash delivery mechanisms.
- Provide additional information, e.g. on risks of abuse of power such as those related to appropriate agent behaviour.
- Explain how to contact your organisation.
- Provide a "security phone" number if one exists.

TOOL: IFRC/ICRC Cash assistance FAQs template

What is in this tool?	During the implementation of a cash programme, staff will receive many questions from stakeholders, community leaders and beneficiaries. They should be able to answer these questions in a clear way. This one-page template helps you list all the frequently asked questions (FAQs).
How?	The programme team should first brainstorm on all possible questions people might have about the programme and then design a simple and concise answer for each question. Use the FAQs as part of your awareness raising activities by distributing them to cash recipients and making them available to community relays.
When?	Throughout implementation.

The sample questions presented are:

1. Why are people receiving cash grants?
2. Who is providing the cash grants?
3. Who is eligible to receive cash grants?
4. How much is the cash grant?
5. What are the cash grants for?
6. How will the beneficiaries receive their cash grants?
7. Where should the beneficiaries go to collect their cash grants?
8. What kind of ID is needed to redeem the cash grants?
9. Can *anyone* in the household collect the cash grant?
10. When will the beneficiaries receive their cash grants?
11. What should the beneficiaries do if they have any problems?
12. What will happen if the voucher is lost or stolen?
13. If somebody thinks s/he should be part of the programme and did not receive the cash grant, what should s/he do?
14. What should be done if there is any security issue during programme implementation?
15. Will there be any other cash grant distributions after this one?