Emergency Food Security and Resilience Programming
EFSP Program Overview

• **Goal**: Strengthen the resilience of 150 communities, in Sana’a and Dhamar Governorates

• **R 1**: 9,000 households build community level assets to strengthen resilience through:
  – Asset building
  – Receiving food vouchers for participating in Food for Asset activities
  – # of people trained on the construction and maintenance of asset
  – Skills training for youth.

• **R 2**: Increased adoption of key infant and young child feeding, care and hygiene practices (behavior change communication) through:
  – Establishment of Mother To Mother Support Groups
  – Training of Community Volunteers
  – Infant Young Child Feeding/Information, Education, and Communication/Complementary Feeding and Referral
Paper Vouchers and E-Voucher Pilot

- **Year 1**
  - Project utilized paper based **Commodity Voucher** to be redeemed for specific food basket

- **Year 2**
  - Planned to move to e-voucher, however conflict started and revised plan to slow pilot
  - Started pilot of E - cards with **100 households** and one vendor
  - However, given ease of roll out and team motivation, decided to revise plan and moved more quickly
    - 100 Households * piolet
    - 2,090 Households
    - 6,050 Households
Paper Voucher Program Steps

• Met with **Government** to explain program design
• Selected and coordinated with **other actors** in the areas
• Formation of **Community Resilience Committees** (household selection committees)
• Village Sensitization on program, how beneficiaries will be selected (**selection criteria**), what beneficiaries are eligible for, and how to register issues and complaints
• **Beneficiary Selection**
• **Beneficiary Verification**
• **Voucher Printing**
Paper Voucher Program Steps

- Tender to select the vendors.
- Verification by vendors Selection Committee
- Vendor Selection and Contracting
- Vendor Training
- Provide Vendors with Distribution Plan
- SC Yemen Program Team informs CRCs of Distribution Plan and Distribution Site (shops or other location)
- Food Vouchers Distributed to Beneficiaries on Monthly Basis by SC Yemen Program Team
- Beneficiaries attended distribution site on specified day and time
Paper Voucher Program Steps

- SC Yemen staff on site for distribution with CRC members
- Beneficiaries required to bring ID card plus voucher to receive food basket
- Every beneficiary issued with a copy of invoice.
- Post Distribution Monitoring
Paper Voucher Reconciliation Process

- Vendors had to **reconcile all paper vouchers** and invoices (paper based)
- **SC Yemen Finance team** had to work very intensely with vendors to physically count vouchers
- SC Yemen Finance team made receipt of number of vouchers
- Vendors had to make an invoice for submission to SC Yemen
- **SC Yemen had to manually enter into Excel** individual beneficiary registration number and voucher number for all beneficiaries – was very time consuming and human error
- SC Yemen printed this spreadsheet for vendor, vendor then signed
Paper Voucher Reconciliation Process

• Overall, paper voucher reconciliation process took on average 15 working days, sometimes longer if vendor has misplaced any paperwork or and voucher was torn.

• Many staff were required to support the Finance Team in counting, reconciliation and filing of vouchers

• Vendors had to wait until reconciliation process was complete before SC Yemen would release the payment (on average took 2-3 weeks from distribution for vendors to receive payment)
Lessons Learned from Paper Voucher

• **Time and resource** intensive for beneficiaries, vendors, and SC staff
• Vendors were frustrated with the time and effort needed to receive payment
• Large quantity of paper **documentation** was difficult to maintain and archive for backup and audit purposes
• **Beneficiaries had to congregate** in large groups for voucher distribution and redemption (security risk)
• **Cannot preposition** paper vouchers because have to change color or other characteristics
• Able to **share nutrition messaging** and other important messaging on a monthly basis when distributing vouchers
Why Pilot Electronic Vouchers?

- **Time needed** to distribute vouchers every month (100+ communities in very remote locations, required significant time to reach and distribute)
- Vendors frustrated over **length of time require to reconcile** voucher to receive payment
- Beneficiary and staff **security concerns** – queue to receive vouchers, queue to receive food baskets
- Limitation on **staff movement** given crisis – staff couldn’t reach all communities to distribute paper vouchers
- During conflict, **fuel shortages** and fuel cost to transport staff to distribute vouchers
Electronic Voucher Program Steps

Followed **same beneficiary selection and sensitization process**; same vendor selection process
Vendors were provided **tablets and readers** and were trained on using MasterCard Aid system
Beneficiaries were sensitized on how to use MasterCard Aid e-voucher and how to enter **pin code**
**E-cards were distributed one time to beneficiaries**
**E-cards were reloaded electronically on a monthly basis**
Days were selected for redemption of e-cards at traders so that SC staff could be on hand to support.
**E transfer process was faster than the paper voucher, reducing waiting times.**
E-transfer cycle

- Configuring
- Implementing (updating the profiles of merchants and recipients)
- Reporting
- Redemption
- Training
Electronic Voucher Reconciliation Steps

• The *reconciliation process was dramatically shortened* because transactions were stored on the vendor’s tablet and uploaded to the MasterCard Aid Web Portal

• *Information was downloaded* from the MasterCard Aid Web Portal by SC Yemen Finance Staff and printed and used for re-payment – *No additional documentation*

https://www.mastercardlabs.com/mcaid/;jsessionid=A58C7AF7432301EE88CCE1BABDBDEBF4#/report
Electronic Voucher Lessons Learned

- Transaction **time was reduced** for beneficiaries
- Improved vendor relationships – time needed for payment reduced to **1 – 5 days**
- By using electronic vouchers, the **audit trail, payment information, and beneficiary transaction history** is stored in the Web portal and always available for review – even if office was destroyed or unable to be safely accessed.
- In **conflict situation**, the program was able to **continue** even when SC staff could not travel to the field because e-cards were loaded electronically.
Electronic Voucher Lessons Learned, Continued

- Procurement / Customs challenges
- Beneficiaries forgetting PIN numbers, lack of familiarity
- Need to install software on vendor tablets to prevent settings from being changed
- Need for continual refresher with beneficiary and vendors on technology (protecting cards, protecting tablets and card readers)
- Internet connection in Yemen for program setting up.
## Multiple transfers cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>paper voucher</th>
<th>e-transfers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
<td>$6,050</td>
<td>$30,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of vendors</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of beneficiaries</td>
<td>$799</td>
<td>$133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of vouchers</td>
<td>$23,400</td>
<td>$3,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Fee charges for all 6 transfers for 6,050 Beneficiaries</td>
<td></td>
<td>$54,450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>$30,399</strong></td>
<td><strong>$88,883</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Remote Monitoring

• The web portal allows program staff to log in and see how the program is progressing from anywhere, verify transactions and triangulate data

• However, portal does not monitor quality, so Post Distribution Monitoring and Complaints Mechanism remains crucial
Community Perception

• Community acceptance: it saves time and efforts
• Opportunities for women to collect their food
• Easy use of the cards
• Confidentiality while using and reporting
• Communities/ vendors comfortable in technology use
Questions?

• Mustafa Ghulam, Program Manager, Save the Children Yemen
  Email: Ghulam.Mustafa@savethechildren.org

• Alexandre Liege, Vice President, International Development, MasterCard
  Email: Alexandre.Liege@mastercard.com