**Roadmap for Voucher Issues in the Programme Cycle**

**INTRODUCTION**

This roadmap will go through some of the specificities of voucher programmes, providing you with guidance and introducing you to tools that can help you consider voucher-specific issues in the different phases of the project cycle. This roadmap and the tools presented here should not be taken in isolation, as they complement the information provided in the CiE Toolkit. If you need more detailed guidance on voucher programmes, consult the reference documents suggested at the end of the roadmap.

**MINIMUM STANDARDS**

* Both beneficiaries and traders should be sensitized on the use of vouchers, so that voucher redemption, reconciliation and reimbursement can happen smoothly.
* Finance and Logistics should be involved in the process of selecting and contracting traders.
* Traders’ selection should be based on a set of relevant voucher-specific criteria.
* Contracts with traders should include some key voucher-specific aspects (e.g. commodity specification, trader payment terms, quality inspection and acceptance).
* Voucher distribution planning should involve Management, Finance, Logistics and Programme, and allow for a clear picture of where and when voucher distributions will take place, how many and which type of vouchers will need to be prepared.
* Reconciliation and trader payment should be based on voucher redemption summary forms submitted by traders.
* Voucher programme monitoring should be based upon information gathered from both beneficiaries and traders.
* Monitoring should be conducted at the end of (exit monitoring) and a few weeks after the redemption process (PDM).

**Sub-steps and tools**

**Assessment**

***Assessing traders’ capacity and voucher-specific risks.*** During assessments, you will conduct focus group discussions and/or interviews with market representatives, key informants and traders in order to map the traders’ experience, capacity and willingness to partner with your agency in the implementation of a voucher programme.

In the Assessment toolbox you will find a list of questions that can be re-elaborated and incorporated into focus group discussions and individual interview questionnaires. Also, you will find a tool describing the most common voucher-specific risks and suggesting some mitigation measures.

**Set-up and Implementation**

***Sensitizing beneficiaries and traders****.* During the set-up of the programme, both beneficiaries and traders should be sensitized on the use of vouchers, so that voucher redemption, reconciliation and reimbursement can happen smoothly. In the Set-up toolbox you will find a list of key information to be conveyed to both groups. Additional guidance and tools on beneficiary communication and accountability are available in the CiE Toolkit Module 4.

***Selecting and contracting traders.*** The process of selecting and contracting traders for a voucher programme should involve Finance and Logistics, and start with the establishment of a set of criteria that traders have to meet in order to be considered by the voucher programme. Based on these criteria, interviews with individual traders or a formal tendering process will be conducted. At the end of this process, selected traders will be contracted.In the Set-up toolbox you will find a list of criteria commonly used by agencies to select vendors for a voucher programme, a set of questions developed based on these criteria, and a checklist of requirements for a trader to participate in a value card (e-voucher) programme. You will also find a template with the key contents to be included in a contract for voucher redemption services.

***Voucher distribution.*** Voucher distributions should be carefully planned, in a process involving Management, Finance, Logistics and Programme units. The aim of this planning process is that all units involved have a clear picture of where and when voucher distributions will take place, how many and which type of vouchers will need to be prepared. In the Set-up toolbox, you will find voucher distribution forms including a voucher distribution plan, a voucher distribution list and a voucher distribution summary. The voucher distribution list will be used to crosscheck beneficiary data, fill out voucher-related information and have recipients sign or thumbprint confirming the reception of the vouchers. At the end of the distribution, the voucher distribution summary will be completed and submitted to the office together with the voucher distribution list and a list of vouchers to be returned.

***Voucher redemption.*** In order to keep detailed record of all redeemed vouchers, traders are asked to fill out a redemption form after each voucher transaction, and a summary at the end of a given redemption period. In the Set-up toolbox, you will find voucher redemption forms, including a redemption form and a summary form. The completed voucher redemption summary form will be sent to the agency together with all the redeemed vouchers, for final reconciliation.

**Monitoring**

***Monitoring the voucher programme.*** One of the particularities of a voucher programme is the need to monitor the traders selected and contracted to redeem vouchers. Beneficiaries will be asked about the voucher distribution and redemption process, as well as about how they used the vouchers, and how the items exchanged has impacted their situation. Traders, on the other hand, will be asked about the voucher redemption and payment processes; the price, quantity and quality of commodities sold; and the impact of the project on their businesses. In the Monitoring toolbox, you will find a voucher fair exit questionnaire for beneficiaries and one for traders. These tools are voucher-specific can be either used as they are or completed with more general questions from the PDM questionnaires available in CiE Toolkit module 5.

|  |
| --- |
| **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**ICRC (2014) ECOSEC Executive Brief on Fairs. Democratic Republic of CongoMercy Corps (2016) Voucher and Fair Implementation Guide. <https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/VoucherFairGuide.pdf> FAO (2013) Guidelines for Input Trade Fairs and Voucher SchemesCRS (2002) Seed Vouchers and Fairs. *A Manual for Seed-Based Agricultural Recovery in Africa.* [www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/seed-vouchers-and-fairs.pdf](http://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/seed-vouchers-and-fairs.pdf)CaLP (2012) Voucher fairs a quick delivery guide for cash transfer programming in emergencies. <http://www.cashlearning.org/downloads/resources/tools/CaLP_VoucherFairs_booklet.pdf>  |