

PROJECT SUMMARY

- AFOD-Uganda is implementing the food and cash project in partnership with WFP in Adjumani district, this include; the general food distribution, extended delivery points (EDPs) and secondary transportation of food in refugee settlements in Adjumani district. AFOD is working in close collaboration with key stakeholders namely; UNHCR, Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the district local government.
- Challenges experienced during the last one year of implementation include; manual system of verification of distribution list at all food distribution points (FDPs); longer waiting time for beneficiaries i.e. average time taken for each beneficiary to be served was 4 hours (UNHCR report 2017) and yet this was for group distribution. With the new donor recommendation of individual scooping, it is expected that the average time taken to serve a beneficiary would double hence worsening the situation.
- To address the above challenges, AFOD Uganda developed an ICT based innovation to improve food distribution. This system makes the entire process faster including data access and remote access, the system also helps in verifying targeted beneficiaries and managing distributions of food through a biometrics identification system using both thumb prints and iris scans. This provides a better and more reliable statistics to both management and partners, reducing time spent during distribution gives beneficiaries time to attend to other household activities.
- Using a master list verified using Information Technology, supports timely management of complaints which promotes beneficiary satisfaction. It is also addressing further oversight controls and contributing in building confidence across the matrix of management, staff, implementing and operational partners and refugees. The implementation of biometrics food verification and distribution has improved reconciliation of food tally sheets and accountability of food aid by providing clear audit trail to management and partners. In addition, the system is promoting better crowd control of the food distribution process and significantly reducing abuse of food assistance, while providing better coverage to the target beneficiaries.

Broad objective:

- Improving food distribution by reducing waiting time, fraud and promoting beneficiary satisfaction.

Specific objectives:

- To reduce the service time taken during food distribution
- To reduce risks of frauds and inefficiencies in the food distribution processes
- To improve the quality of data collection for real time analysis and decision making.

Old Distribution approaches

The food distribution site was classified into 6 zones, namely; the waiting/registration zone, Coupon Issue point, lining zone, food piling zone, sharing zone, and complain/Exit zone. The waiting zone, as the name signifies was an area where beneficiaries would wait to be briefed, addressed and allocated Distribution assistants to handle the registry of specific family sizes/category. In this area, beneficiaries were arranged according to their family sizes to facilitate the registration process and sharing of the heaps amongst themselves. The registration was therefore done as per the allocation by the AFOD team leader. The beneficiaries would then be directed to the stage where the coupons were issued. This area was manned by AFOD field monitors. After issuing coupons to the beneficiaries, they would proceed to the lining zone where they would be organised according to their family sizes upon producing the coupons. The family size stands/blocks were arranged in the lining area. The food piling zone was an area where the different types of heaps were laid and transferred to the group of beneficiaries. The sharing zone was an area where beneficiaries shared the allocated food according to the instruction from the distribution assistants. The complaint mechanism zone was an area where beneficiaries would share their concerns and complaints and got feedback accordingly.

The new distribution model:

- Mobilization of the refugees is done prior to the distribution date through their leaders & OPM
- On the day of the distribution, the refugees of the particular mobilized category or settlement are addressed outside the Final Distribution point (FDP) at a designated point. During the pre-distribution address, issues of; food utilization, ration entitlements, Food basket, protection and gender issues are addressed.

New Distribution Model

- After the address, sixty beneficiaries are released to enter the distribution area. At the main entrance (gate) , a team consisting of a member of the Food Management Committee (FMC), a representative from the partner (AFOD) and an Usher directs the beneficiaries to a waiting shelter en route to the rub hall (where food is stacked).
- 40 out of the 60 beneficiaries are released to an enclosed structure where food is stack. The food beneficiaries are biometrically verified by WFP & AFOD staff at the entry point to the enclosed food shade using a thumb print and iris scan as below
- WFP/OPM staff taking iris scan of a beneficiary**



- The cleared beneficiaries proceed to another verification desk manned by two AFOD staff. The beneficiaries are verified at this point against a printed copy of the beneficiary list by ticking
- After this stage, the beneficiaries are allowed to receive their food items in the order of Salt, Vegetable Oil, CSB, Pulses (Beans/Peas), Cereals
- Illustration of scooping stage of the new food distribution model**



New Distribution Model Cont...

Upon receipt of the last commodity, the beneficiary will have the food weighed. At the end of the last stack, there is a weighing scale that each beneficiary will weigh all the received food items. Note that the weighing is **Compulsory**

- From the weighing point, the food collector proceeds to the last point which is the acknowledgement point. AFOD and WFP staff are staged at this point to ensure the beneficiaries acknowledge food receipt by thump printing on the beneficiary list while the WFP staff does the barcode scan of the ration card.
- The beneficiary exits at this point through the exit gate
- Other points available are;
- The litigation desk** manned by UNHCR and OPM; handling complaints related to lost cards, missing names, updates etc.
- Complaint Desk** supervised by WFP and AFOD; deals with cases of quality assurance and food measurements

M&E, Learning and Accountability:

- Food log is received from UNHCR/OPM, HHS allocated by timeslots and days, a request for food made to warehouse for each location and by day. Beneficiary list and confirmation of receipt of entitlement is signed by food monitor to acknowledge receipt of food from warehouse, daily food physical inventory tally sheet, report from biometrics on number of participants and HHS served, signed partners FDP food return sheet (Internal food return sheet). Daily FDP distribution reports (key bullet points), Monthly settlement distribution reports (CPDRs) and Monthly Narrative report, Monthly invoices submitted (CPs), Quarterly reports and review and final annual report compiled and shared/disseminated.

Display of daily food distribution schedule



LESSONS LEARNED AND CONCLUSIONS

Lessons learned:

- Eliminated fraud emanating from double beneficiary registration.
- Reduced waiting time at the FDPs minimized protection risks.
- Improved real time data analysis and reporting for decision making

Results

- Average time per beneficiary served reduced from 4hrs to 1 hr. 20mins
- No suspected fraud cases reported.
- Reduced beneficiary complaints from 65% to 30%.
- Improved quality of data and reports generated.

Conclusion:

ICT based distribution model has improved delivery of humanitarian food aid and system flow in west Nile region of Uganda. In addition, it has freed time for beneficiaries to participate in other household and livelihood activities. Similarly, it has contributed to reduction in protection risks, promotion of accountability to affected population and client satisfaction. This approach can therefore be adopted and replicated by other similar humanitarian and development interventions.

