



# MINI GUIDE

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR ADOLESCENT-RESPONSIVE CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE



## Acknowledgements

Anita Queirazza, from Plan International, and Tenzin Manell, at the time working at the Women's Refugee Commission, wrote the first draft of the mini guides and oversaw their development. Cassondra Puls, then at the Women's Refugee Commission, wrote the first draft of the evaluation mini guide.

On behalf of Proteknôn Foundation, Hannah Thompson reviewed, collated, and harmonized all the mini guides, and added some new sections. Rochelle Johnston input at the review stage. Sara Lim Bertrand and Kristen Castrataro led the final review and editing of the mini guides.

A special thank you to Lotte Claessens and Silvia Oñate, from Plan International, for their invaluable contributions and technical reviews of the various drafts. Additional thanks to the following colleagues who shared their input and experiences throughout the drafting and revision process: Dale Buscher, Diana Quick and Julianne Deitch, Women's Refugee Commission; Emilia Sorrentino, Jennifer McAteer, Aftab Alam, Emilio Paz, Marta Ricci, Ilenia de Marino, Domenico Di Nuzzo, Alexandra Parnebjork, Keren Simons, Sofia Sainz de Aja, Laetitia Sanchez, Christopher Kagab, John Richard Okumu, Dorah Musiimire and Doris Akello Otim, Plan International; Eleonora Mansi, International Rescue Committee; Lauren Murray, Save the Children; Mirette Bahgat, World Vision International; Sitnour Babiker, UNHCR.

The mini guides align with the Guidance on Designing Cash and Voucher Assistance to Achieve Child Protection Outcomes in Humanitarian Settings (Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2022).

## Contact

For more information, please contact:

Anita Queirazza, Global Lead Child Protection in Emergencies, Plan International; [Anita.Queirazza@plan-international.org](mailto:Anita.Queirazza@plan-international.org)

Noanne Laida, Cash and livelihoods Senior Advisor, Women's Refugee Commission; [NoanneL@wrccommission.org](mailto:NoanneL@wrccommission.org)



The development of this material has been financed by the Government of Sweden. Responsibility for the content lies entirely with the creator. Sida does not necessarily share the expressed views and interpretations.

# CONTENTS

<b>Overview</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Five Steps of Adolescent-Responsive CVA Needs Assessments</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>STEP 1: Determine what we need to know to be able to design adolescent-responsive CVA</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>STEP 2: Collect data</b>	<b>5</b>
Market assessment	6
Financial service provider (FSP) assessment	7
(Child) protection and safeguarding risk and benefit assessment	8
Participatory tools	10
<b>STEP 3: Analyse data</b>	<b>11</b>
Qualitative data analysis	11
Engaging adolescents in data analysis	11
Present the data analysis findings	11
<b>STEP 4: Validate findings</b>	<b>12</b>
Validation workshops	12
<b>STEP 5: Disseminate the results and use them to inform programme design</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<b>16</b>

# OVERVIEW

## PURPOSE

Guidance for conducting a needs assessment for adolescent-responsive cash and voucher assistance (CVA).

## HOW TO USE THIS MINI-GUIDE

Use this mini-guide to make your CVA needs assessment adolescent-responsive.

## TOPICS COVERED

Needs assessment, objectives of needs assessments, data collection, data analysis, data validation, needs assessment dissemination, financial service providers, financial service providers assessment, market assessment, (child) protection and safeguarding risk assessment, participatory tools, primary data collection, desk review.

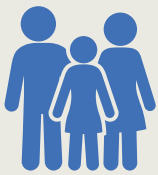
## SUPPORTING TOOLS

- 🔗 [Assessment Framework for Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance \(CVA\)](#)
- 🔗 [Adolescent Consultation Guide](#)
- 🔗 [Tips for Consulting Different Stakeholders when Implementing Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance](#)
- 🔗 [Urgent Action Procedures](#)
- 🔗 [Data Disaggregation for Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance](#)
- 🔗 [Adolescent-responsive Market Assessment](#)
- 🔗 [Staff Behaviours for Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance](#)
- 🔗 [Adolescent-responsive Financial Service Providers Assessment](#)
- 🔗 [Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit - Cash and Voucher Assistance and Child Protection for Adolescents](#)

# INTRODUCTION

A needs assessment should be carried out before deciding whether CVA should be included in an adolescent-responsive programme.

A needs assessment should gather information on:



The needs and priorities of diverse adolescents and their parents/caregivers. This should focus on the financial barriers they face in accessing goods and services.



The vulnerabilities and risks faced by adolescents.



The capacities and resilience of adolescents, their parents/caregivers and families.



The coping mechanisms used by households to meet basic needs.



Opportunities for adolescents to use cash to purchase food, household items, school materials, and to pay for transport and user fees for services.



Existing policies, laws and norms facilitating or inhibiting access to and use of CVA by adolescents and their parents/caregivers.

Ideally, information on CVA and adolescents should be gathered either

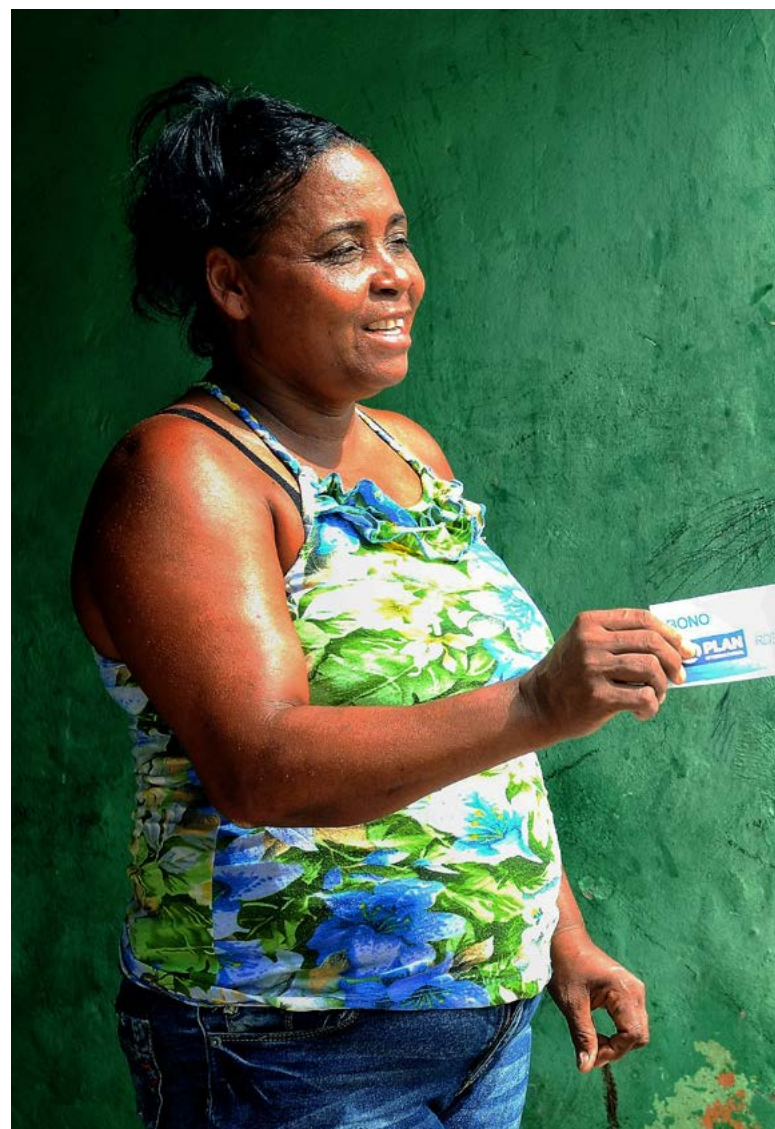
- 1 as part of a more comprehensive adolescent needs assessment; **or**
- 2 as part of a CVA assessment that targets all ages.



This mini-guide highlights:

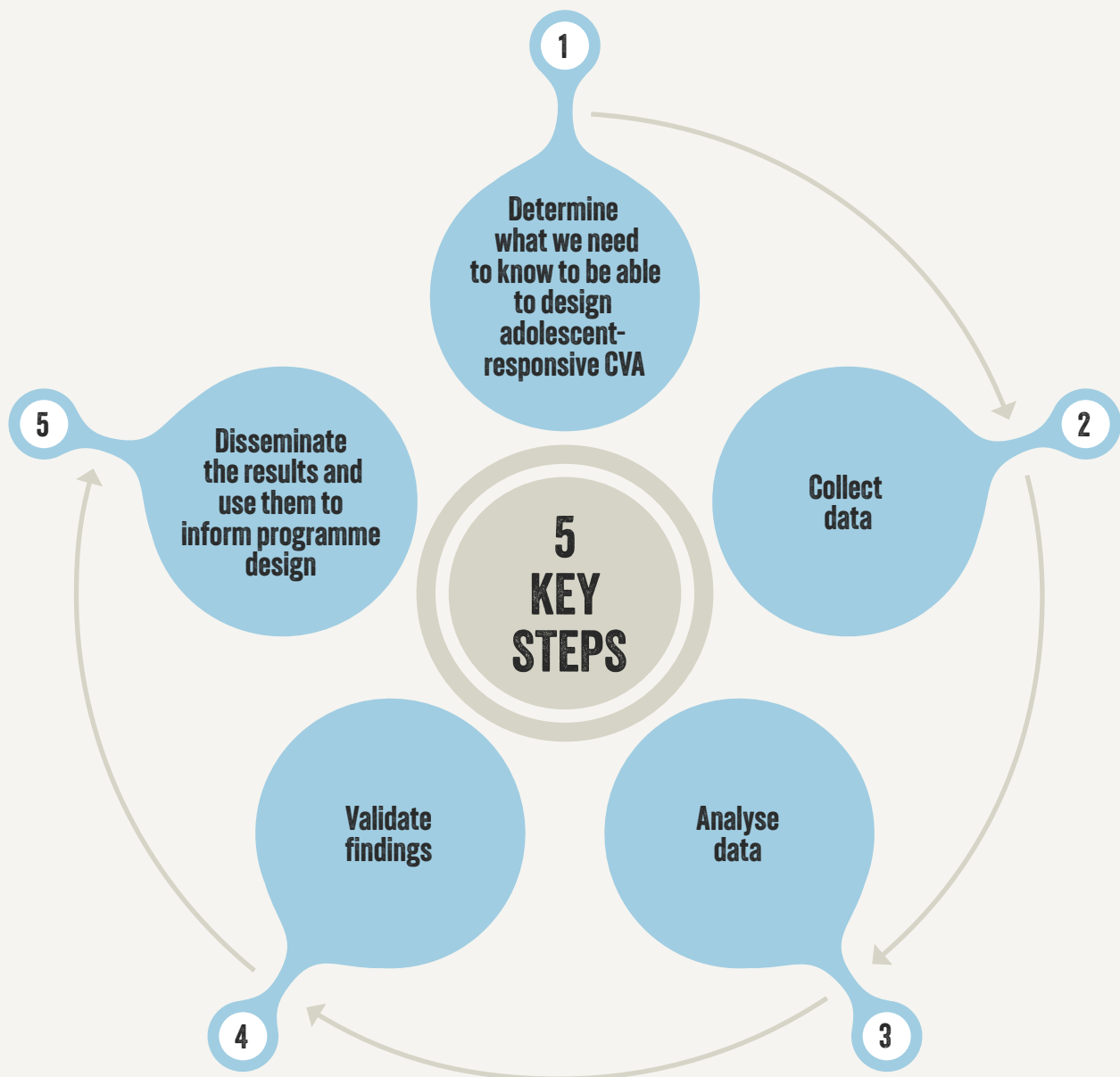
- Key questions to consider during assessments for adolescent-responsive cash and voucher assistance
- How to adapt the needs assessment process for adolescent-responsive CVA
- Key considerations for a data analysis process that can inform response analysis and design of adolescent-responsive CVA

This is *not* a stand-alone guide on how to conduct adolescent needs assessments. For such guidance, refer to the [Plan International Adolescent Programming Toolkit](#).



# FIVE STEPS OF ADOLESCENT-RESPONSIVE CVA NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Needs assessments for adolescent-responsive CVA follow five key steps:



Needs assessment data and reports must **Do No Harm**. To ensure this, data must be collected, transferred and stored in a way that safeguards the confidentiality of individuals, especially those who are vulnerable. **No information** that allows people to identify individuals, families, or communities who have experienced protection risks or participated in the consultation process may be included in publicly available materials.

## STEP 1 DETERMINE WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW TO BE ABLE TO DESIGN ADOLESCENT-RESPONSIVE CVA

The first step of the needs assessment process is deciding what information you need about adolescents, their families, the community and the society in which they live to help you to design adolescent-responsive CVA. Deciding which information is most important can help you (1) formulate the objective(s) of the needs assessment and (2) select suitable data collection methods and tools.

During the needs assessment, we must answer the following questions:

- What are the needs and priorities of diverse adolescents?
- What financial barriers do adolescents and/or their parents/caregivers face when trying to access goods and services?
- What capacities and resilience do diverse adolescents, their parents/caregivers and families have?
- What are diverse adolescents' vulnerabilities, and what risks do they face?
- What coping strategies do households use to meet their basic needs?
- How do diverse adolescents and parents/caregivers access cash, vouchers, assistance and markets?
- What social norms relating to gender, age and disability exist in the context that need to be considered and addressed for effective adolescent-responsive CVA programming?
- Do legal and policy frameworks enable or inhibit diverse adolescents and their parents/caregivers from accessing and using CVA?



**TOOL – Assessment Framework for Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)** provides an overview of key pieces of information to be gathered during a needs assessment to inform the design of adolescent-responsive CVA programming. You can refer to it when (1) collecting and reviewing data during a desk review and/or (2) when deciding what data should be collected during consultations with adolescents, their parents/caregivers, community members and other key stakeholders.

### Informed consent/ assent and ethics in needs assessments

#### Informed consent/ assent

Adolescents must give informed consent/assent (permission) before participating in any stage of a needs assessment process. The process for seeking informed consent/ assent from adolescents is less straightforward than informed consent for younger children. For this reason, it is especially important to review national legal frameworks and data protection protocols. These help you determine whether adolescents of different ages and legal statuses can consent or if a parent/caregiver or other legal guardian needs to consent on their behalf. Emancipated adolescents – those who have been legally freed from control by their legal guardians and whose legal guardians have been legally freed from responsibility for the adolescent – are able to consent themselves.

Even if an adult caregiver is present to give informed consent, unemancipated adolescents must still assent (agree) to participate.

For more information and tools see pages 113–199 of IRC and UNICEF (2012) [Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for health and psychosocial service providers in humanitarian settings](#).

#### Ethics

Your organisation or local authorities may have to review the needs assessment design and tools to ensure they meet ethical standards for research. Check to see if an ethics review is required. If an ethics review is required, leave enough time for the ethics review process and to adjust the design and tools based on any feedback you receive.


## STEP 2 COLLECT DATA

- **Conduct a desk review.** Before collecting any primary data, review existing information. Based on your review, determine what information is still missing. Helpful places to start looking for data on your operational context include the [Cash Learning Partnership Library](#), [ReliefWeb](#), and [OCHA](#).

Consult relevant in-country CVA reports developed by other organisations and national coordination mechanisms. The results of needs assessments or plans for conducting them are often shared during in-country cash working group meetings.

- **Attend inter-agency coordination meetings working to support adolescents and/or CVA programme implementation.** At these meetings you can ask that all organisations and sectors (1) disaggregate data / analyse by age, sex, and disability as a minimum and (2) integrate adolescents' needs into broader CVA assessments.  
**If another needs assessment process is underway or planned, it is better to integrate your data needs into that process than to set up a parallel data collection process.**
- **Collect primary data**, if necessary, to complement the information collected through the desk review. **If the data you need on adolescents has already been collected by other actors, do not carry out another primary data collection process.**

- Conduct data collection ethically and confidentially.
- Maintain data security throughout the process.
- Seek informed consent/ assent for participation from adolescents and, if necessary, their parents/ caregivers or other legal guardians.
- Put in place safeguarding mechanisms when you are carrying out data collection processes so that adolescents and their parents/ caregivers are not harmed through the data collection process.

 **Use TOOL – Adolescent Consultation Guide** for details on how to engage adolescents safely and ethically.

 **Use TOOL – Tips for Consulting Different Stakeholders When Implementing Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance** for engaging adults who have regular contact with adolescents.

### URGENT ACTION PROCEDURES

Whenever you are carrying out direct consultation with adolescents, their families, and communities, put in place a system to respond if a child protection, gender-based violence or safeguarding incident is disclosed, suspected, observed or reported.



**See TOOL – Urgent Action Procedures** for guidance on actions to take when there is a suspicion or report.

- **Disaggregate information during the desk review and primary data collection process according to adolescent age ranges** (10–14 years, 15–17 years, and 18–19 years) as well as by sex, disability and other individual-level characteristics that may be relevant.



**Use TOOL – Data Disaggregation for Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance** for guidance on how to disaggregate your data during data collection and analysis stages.





### Lessons learned: Reports on humanitarian CVA programming rarely disaggregate by age, obscuring whether adolescents are included in CVA programming<sup>1</sup>

Plan International and WRC's desk review found that most programmatic reports for humanitarian CVA do not consistently disaggregate by age. This makes it difficult to know whether programmes included adolescents and, if so, how programmes affected adolescents. Generally, data gathered on those aged 0–18 or 19 years were aggregated together, obscuring specifics for children versus early adolescents versus older adolescents. The Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action (2019) affirmed that “there are currently no reliable figures showing how many young people are direct beneficiaries of cash assistance in emergencies”. A lack of disaggregation of the effects of CVA on adolescents means that the unique needs of adolescents and the potential of CVA to support these needs are overlooked.

To highlight adolescents and facilitate comparability across projects, it is recommended to monitor sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data. This enables analysis that disaggregates for diverse adolescents.

- **Include a range of different forms of assessment** such as market assessment, financial service provider assessment and risk and benefit assessment.  
Select the forms of assessment and methodologies based on the information gaps that exist and the data that needs to be collected in order to understand needs, capacities, and available services. Each of these forms of assessment uses a range of methodologies such as key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) and other participatory tools for collecting data.
- **Focus on collecting information on (child) protection and safeguarding risks and mitigation strategies** in each case. Integrate considerations specific to the lives of adolescents. Look at adolescents' capacities and the risks they face.

## Market Assessment

A market assessment gauges if markets are functioning and accessible. Markets are functioning when goods and services are available and people are able to access them. When this is the case, markets may offer an efficient, cost-effective way to meet basic needs.

- Identify key services or commodities that adolescents and their parents/caregivers say are their priorities through the market assessment.
- Use secondary data to assess the market, if available.
- Undertake the market assessment as an inter-agency activity, where possible.
- Always coordinate and cross-reference your market assessments with the local Cash Working Group.
- Assess diverse adolescents' ability to access those markets.



### Use TOOL – Adolescent-responsive

**Market Assessment** to identify the information a Market Assessment needs to collect to be adolescent-responsive.

## Key considerations for an adolescent-responsive market assessment<sup>2</sup>

### *Analytical scope of the assessment*

Seek to understand:

- Key commodities and services related to meeting diverse adolescents' and/or parents'/caregivers' needs.
- The critical market systems that meet those needs – this includes networks of buyers, sellers and other actors that come together to trade a given product or service.
- Explore how different parts of the system have been affected by the emergency and may be affected by future emergencies.
- Determine which adolescents' needs may be covered by the adolescents and parents'/caregivers themselves. For example, families may grow their own fruit and vegetables, reducing the need for adolescents to access markets for certain foods.

1. Plan International (2020) Cash and voucher assistance for adolescents: An evidence review of how cash and voucher assistance can achieve outcomes for adolescents in humanitarian settings. United Kingdom: Plan International and Women's Refugee Commission.  
2. The following guidance is extracted and adapted from Annex 1: Market Analysis Checklist (p.29) of Juillard, Helene (2018) Minimum Standard for Market Analysis (MISMA), CaLP, <https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/minimum-standard-for-market-analysis-misma/>.

### Access and safety

- Determine how diverse crisis-affected adolescents and their diverse parents/ caregivers typically access markets and services.
- Assess access to the market for people of different genders and ages, as well as ethnic, religious and social backgrounds. Consider, for example, freedom of movement; distance to markets; market hours; school hours; gender and social norms; childcare responsibilities; inter-group tensions and discrimination; discriminatory practices; risks faced on the way to markets; lack of identification; exposure to abuse and exploitation; and physical barriers caused by chronic illness, impairments or disabilities.
- Consider any potential tensions or violence between diverse adolescents or their parents/ caregivers and local traders in the market.
- Assess safety on the road to and from the market and within the marketplace itself.

### Data collection (and analysis) team

- Recruit market assessment team members that have sufficient local and technical knowledge. This should include knowledge of adolescents' needs and the principles and objectives of adolescent-responsive programming.<sup>3</sup> This will help them to understand the questions they are asking and the data to be collected.
- Set terms of reference for the person coordinating the market assessment. Clarify that market assessments should inform the design of any adolescent-responsive CVA (where markets are functioning and CVA is feasible).
- Allocate clear roles and responsibilities for each member of the data collection team.
- Select at least some staff who have skills in working with adolescents. Some specific knowledge, experience and competencies needed include:
  - Understanding of child development
  - Familiarity with the specific needs and vulnerabilities of adolescents
  - Experience securing informed consent/assent from diverse adolescents and their caregivers
  - Skills in adolescent-appropriate communication



#### Use TOOL – Staff Behaviours for Adolescent-responsive Cash and Voucher Assistance

- Designate a focal point within the data collection team who will uphold accountability to adolescents. They should receive reports regarding misconduct – including sexual exploitation and abuse – and provide support where needed.



### Financial Service Provider (FSP) Assessment

FSPs may include banks or credit unions, cooperatives, remittance agents, insurance companies, mobile telephone companies, microfinance companies, local traders, security companies and post offices. Understanding which FSPs have the capacities and reach in the target area(s) will help determine the best ways to deliver CVA to intended recipients. Some ways to deliver CVA may include cash in envelopes, bank accounts, debit cards, smart cards, mobile phones, or digital platforms.

A financial service provider (FSP) assessment maps:

- Existing FSPs who are able to deliver CVA
- The infrastructure used to transfer cash
- The regulatory environment that may impact adolescents' access to CVA



#### Use TOOL – Adolescent-responsive Financial Service Providers Assessment

to define additional information that needs to be collected during a Financial Service Providers (FSPs) Assessment in order for it to be adolescent-responsive.

3. See the objectives on page 19 "Results framework" and the principles on page 39 "Programming Principles" of Plan International (2020) Adolescent Programming Toolkit: Guidance and Tools for Adolescent Programming and Girls' Empowerment in Crisis Settings, United Kingdom: Plan International, <https://plan-international.org/publications/adolescent-programming-toolkit/>.

4. The following guidance is extracted and adapted from the CaLP (2018) Minimum Standard for Market Analysis (MISMA), Annex 1: Market Analysis Checklist (p.29).

## Key considerations for an adolescent-responsive FSP assessment<sup>4</sup>

- Identify any barriers diverse crisis-affected adolescents and their parents/ caregivers face when trying to access and use CVA due to the current policy environment.
- Issues may include:
  - “Know-Your-Customer” regulations<sup>5</sup>
  - Legal age restrictions on banking or mobile network operators distributing SIM cards to adolescent
  - The need for parents/ caregivers to provide informed consent for adolescents, despite the adolescent being unaccompanied
- Assess FSPs’:
  - Experience working with adolescents
  - Capacity and commitment to uphold child safeguarding policies and data protection standards.
- Identify and mitigate potential barriers preventing adolescents, particularly girls, from using digital technology for CVA. Barriers may include limited access to mobile phones, illiteracy, lack of technological skills and/or gender stereotypes.
- Assess the possibility of vulnerable cash recipients nominating a trusted family member or friend to receive the cash on their behalf, if they wish.

## (Child) Protection and Safeguarding Risk and Benefit Assessment

CVA is not inherently riskier than other modalities of assistance *as long as* risks are identified and mitigated during programme design. This is true for all assistance modalities. Carrying out a (child) protection and safeguarding risk assessment is thus an essential step in preparing for and designing adolescent-responsive CVA.

A (child) protection and safeguarding risk assessment identifies:<sup>6</sup>

- **(Child) protection risks** associated with the introduction of CVA. Adolescent-responsive CVA should take into account the challenges and risks that adolescents face and whether gender, age, disability, status or other personal characteristics may increase any CVA-associated risks.
- **Child safeguarding issues.** As with all humanitarian interventions, it is vital that all actors identify any possible safeguarding risks for adolescents or their families caused by humanitarian staff, operations or programmes. Once identified, these risks must be mitigated.

- **Possible risk mitigation strategies** to ensure the safe receipt and use of CVA. Discussions with adolescents, their families, and communities can help identify mitigation strategies. The information gathered can help programme teams design programmes that proactively mitigate child protection risks and maximise protection benefits.

## Key considerations for adolescent-responsive CVA

- Carry out the risk assessment through consultation with older adolescents, parents/ caregivers and community leaders.



**Use TOOL – Story-Based Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Older Adolescents (15-17) and parents/caregivers** to Identify Benefits and Child Protection and Safeguarding Risks Before Starting Cash and Voucher Assistance.<sup>7</sup>

- Identify (child) protection and safeguarding risks that could arise during or be exacerbated by CVA programming through analysis of information gathered through these consultations.



**Use TOOL – Adolescents’ Protection and Safeguarding Risks Analysis** to analyse potential risks and identify risk mitigation measures. This tool outlines the range of possible (child) protection and safeguarding risks throughout all stages of the CVA programming cycle and shares tips on risk mitigation. This is part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit | Cash and Voucher Assistance and Child Protection for Adolescents.



5. Know Your Customer (KYC) is the “information that the local regulator requires financial service providers (FSPs) to collect about any potential new customer in order to discourage financial products being used for money laundering or other crimes.” Cash Learning Partnerships (2019) Glossary of Terminology for Cash and Voucher Assistance, <http://www.cashlearning.org/resources/glossary>

6. The following guidance is extracted and adapted from Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2021) [Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Child Protection when using Cash and Voucher Assistance \(Tool 1\)](#).

7. The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2023) *Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit | Cash and Voucher Assistance and Child Protection for Adolescents*. <https://alliancecpa.org/en/learning/monitoring-and-evaluation-toolkit-cash-and-voucher-assistance-and-child-protection-adolescents>

## Case study: Adolescent boys and girls in Uganda discuss the use of and risks associated with cash and voucher assistance

In 2019, Plan International conducted focus group discussions in Uganda<sup>8</sup> with refugee adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 years who received CVA. The aim was to determine their perspectives on cash and vouchers, and what they perceived to be the risks of this form of assistance.

	Girls	Boys
<b>Decision-making</b>	<p>Girls mentioned their spending choices being influenced by others, in positive and negative ways. This suggests that girls are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported in managing their finances – <i>“someone would advise her to keep the money properly”</i>.</li> <li>• Subjected to coercion – <i>“some people will disturb her [pressure her] to use the money in a different way”</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Boys were confident in their ability to make decisions on how to spend money provided.</p> <p>Regarding household dynamics, the boys reported that they would be the one to make decisions about cash, even when younger female siblings were the primary recipient of the cash. This corroborates the girls’ opinions that they would experience social pressure if they were the primary recipient of CVA within their household.</p>
<b>Risks</b>	<p>The girls perceived receiving and using CVA to be riskier than the boys did. These risks included physical violence, theft and robbery, verbal abuse and psychological hostility due to jealousy from those they trusted. These risks were faced at school, with neighbours as well as with potential future husbands.</p>	<p>They explained that verbal and physical attacks, as well as theft, may occur, if recipients were not willing to share money.</p>
<b>Exit and transition</b>	<p>The girls predicted they would resort to negative coping mechanisms if assistance were to end. This included dropping out of school, getting married, begging, self-harming, and suicide.</p>	<p>The boys felt more resilient than the girls if assistance were to end. They mentioned investing the cash in productive livelihood activities such as petty trading.</p>
<b>Positive outcomes</b>	<p>More positively, the girls pointed to the potential of CVA to improve living conditions. Cash enabled them to make improvements to their shelter, increase their access to food and travel to neighbouring refugee camps to visit family.</p>	<p>The boys indicated that they would use transfers to re-enrol younger sisters at school, build and improve shelters, increase food availability at home to achieve a balanced diet, and pay for medical expenses.</p>
<b>Community relationships</b>	<p>The girls expressed fear of physical and emotional abuse due to possible jealousy among neighbours.</p>	<p>They said they would share the money with host community members to ease any social tensions arising with non-recipients.</p>


Read the full case study [here](#).

8. Plan International (2020) “Safe Programming in Design of Cash and Voucher Assistance – Lessons learnt”.



## Participatory Tools

- Carry out participatory consultations with adolescents and their parents/ caregivers as part of needs assessment in the first phase of the response. This should also continue during programme implementation as part of routine monitoring.
- All participatory processes engaging adolescents must meet The Nine Basic Requirements for Meaningful and Ethical Children's Participation.
- Hold either a rapid consultation or a more detailed consultation, depending on the stage of the crisis. Rapid consultations can be held first and more detailed consultations can follow where time, resources and the security situation allow.


 **Refer to TOOL – Adolescent Consultation Guide** which provides guidance and top tips for conducting successful consultations with adolescents, including establishing clear safeguarding procedures.


- Select tools suitable to the context that allow you to gather the information required about adolescents' situations and the need for adolescent-responsive CVA.


The following participatory and adolescent-friendly tools can be used together or individually to collect data on CVA with diverse adolescents and their parents/ caregivers. The tools can help you to understand diverse adolescents' and their parents'/ caregivers':


- Access to CVA
- Use of CVA
- Preferences regarding CVA
- Barriers they face when using CVA

For example, the Participatory Preference Ranking might be useful for understanding which assistance modalities or delivery mechanisms adolescents and/ or their parents/ caregivers prefer for meeting adolescents' needs.

 **Use TOOL – Visioning Exercise** to help diverse adolescents articulate their future goals and aspirations and share any financial barriers to achieving these goals. It is helpful to understand these barriers so we can see which can be addressed through CVA.

 **Use TOOL – A Day in a Young Person's Life** to understand the daily roles and responsibilities of adolescents including the opportunities they have to manage cash.

 **Use TOOL – Diamond Ranking** to help adolescents prioritise issues or options. For example, you can use it to prioritise risks related to CVA or prioritise preferred cash modalities.

 **Use TOOL – Preference Ranking** to help adolescents prioritise CVA modalities and delivery mechanisms.

The tools above are part of the [Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit | Cash and Voucher Assistance and Child Protection for Adolescents](#).

More information on the tools, their purpose and when to use them can be found in the summary table at the end of this mini-guide.

## STEP 3 ANALYSE DATA

Methodologies for data analysis are broadly the same for needs assessments for adolescent programming as for programmes targeting all the affected population.<sup>9</sup> When carrying out participatory assessments with and for adolescents, additional considerations for analysis are necessary.

- Put in place systems to maintain the confidentiality of needs assessment participants in order to Do No Harm.
  - Securely record and transfer any identifying information like names or specific locations of participants.
  - Record and save sensitive information in locked cabinets or encrypted/ password protected electronic files. Sensitive information may include: names of children who were formerly associated with armed forces or groups; details of abuse by government authorities; etc.
  - Remove all identifying information before any data is recorded, transferred and/or analysed, wherever possible.
- Disaggregate data according to adolescent age ranges: 10–14 years; 15–17 years; and 18–19 years.

### Qualitative Data Analysis

Most of the data collected using participatory tools is qualitative. It needs to be coded and aggregated to identify and interpret patterns. Qualitative data, including that gathered in consultation with diverse adolescents, can help you to (1) uncover new or hidden issues that humanitarian actors or even adults from the community may not be aware of, (2) explain quantitative findings, (3) develop theories about what is happening, and/ or (4) take into account local understandings and beliefs.

Questions qualitative data analysis can address include:

- How are adolescents making decisions about what to buy with their cash and/or vouchers?
- What barriers exist to accessing markets?
- What risks have diverse adolescents and their parents/ caregivers faced when accessing markets?
- Which adolescents are facing the greatest risks and why?
- What coping strategies are diverse adolescents using to protect themselves?

Care needs to be taken in generalising qualitative findings to an entire study population or community. For example:

If **70% of adolescent interviewees** spoke of being coerced in their spending habits:



Then we  
**CAN SAY:**

“In this community adolescents may be experiencing coercion in their spending.”



But we  
**CANNOT SAY:**

“70% of all adolescents in the community experience coercion in their spending.”

This would not be automatically accurate.

### Engaging Adolescents in Data Analysis

If a participatory needs assessment is being conducted, it may be possible to engage adolescents in the data analysis phase. In particular, you can engage adolescents and young adults who have participated in collecting the data.



See **ACTION 7** – Analyse and interpret the data with adolescents on pages 27–30 of the **Mini-guide: Evaluation** for details on partnering with adolescents in the analysis process.

### Present the Data Analysis Findings

- Capture your initial analysis in a short draft report.
- Translate at least a summary of the key points raised in the report into languages spoken by diverse adolescents and their parents/ caregivers.
- Prepare a range of different supporting products (for example, a presentation and/ or a visual poster or diagram) that captures information in the preliminary short draft report.

9. You can, for example, see guidance for analysis of data generated through Market Assessment at: Key Action 4: Analysis on pages 23–25 of Juillard, Helene (2018) Minimum Standard for Market Analysis (MISMA), CaLP, <https://www.calpnetwork.org/publication/minimum-standard-for-market-analysis-misma/>.

## STEP 4 VALIDATE FINDINGS

Validating data is a process to check or prove that information is logically or factually correct. Validating the findings that result from data analysis is especially important for needs assessments with adolescents. Validation is helpful when:

- Adolescents do not understand the questions asked during needs assessments in the way the adults conducting the assessment intended
- Adults misinterpret the data provided by adolescent participants
- There are important differences between youth culture and adult culture
- Members of the research team are from outside the assessment community

Engaging adolescents in data validation is a show of respect. It is also a way of practicing accountability to adolescents and the whole community. However, there remain large power differences between adolescents and the needs assessment team. Because of this, adolescents may be reluctant to criticise the assessment team and its work or voice concerns about how they or their community are portrayed in the assessment. Holding back criticism may be more likely if community members feel they need to agree with the assessment to receive assistance.

### Validation Workshops

It is good practice to validate findings through a validation workshop that uses the following guidance:

- Explain systems for **maintaining confidentiality** of information relating to research participants, research team and validation group members.
- Identify a focal point for responding to any **protection concerns** that may arise during the validation process.
- Reassure participants that **assistance and entitlements will not be negatively affected** as a result of feedback received. Modalities may change in response to feedback, but the amount of help available should not.
- Consider if you need to hold **separate validation workshops for diverse groups**. While validation workshops should involve a range of individuals, it may be a good idea to hold separate workshops for those of different ages (for example adolescent participants) or genders.
  - Adolescents may need a different type of explanation about the research than adults to help them understand the findings and how they will be used.

- Adolescents may not feel comfortable speaking openly in front of adults from their community or their elders in general, especially on sensitive issues.
- If gender-based violence or other sensitive issues figure prominently in the assessment, separate workshops for male and female participants may be necessary.
- Design and deliver the workshop in a way that is **youth friendly**. Having a youth member of the needs assessment team present or co-present the preliminary findings can be an excellent way to make adolescent participants feel comfortable.
- Consider and address any possible **secondary distress** or trauma that may come about when sharing research findings. There is a risk that sharing information about protection issues can be upsetting or psychologically harmful to those listening, especially if they themselves have experienced trauma. Given their developmental stage, adolescents are especially vulnerable. Adolescents should be warned before the workshop about the risk of having upsetting or even damaging reactions, and child protection staff should follow up with participants who need support.
- **Seek informed consent/ assent** from adolescents, and in many cases their parents/caregivers, before they participate in validation processes.
- Protect the **confidentiality** of needs assessment participants during a validation workshop by removing all identifying information and altering any quotations or case studies presented. Allow participants to confirm that the needs assessment team has not inadvertently revealed information that someone within the community could use to trace an individual. For example, a finding might be illustrated by a story about a young person publicly confronting a trader in the market for cheating them. Unknown to an outsider, this event may have been widely discussed in the community and may allow someone hearing the story to identify the young person and the trader.
- **Present** the preliminary results that were generated by the need assessment team and captured in your draft report. Use the visuals, presentations and other media used in the previous step.
- Give needs assessment participants the **opportunity to discuss** and agree on how the results should be interpreted. This can be an opportunity for the participants to identify results that lack validity, correct mistakes the research team might have made, and draft recommendations based on the research.

## STEP 5 DISSEMINATE THE RESULTS AND USE THEM TO INFORM PROGRAMME DESIGN

- Revise and finalise the full needs assessment report. This must include any changes to analysis and new recommendations made during the validation workshop.
- Prepare a short summary of your overall report in the language(s) of adolescents and the community.
- Develop a range of other products that summarise findings to make the results accessible to diverse adolescents.
  - Examples may include an infographic version, a video and/ or a presentation.
  - Engaging adolescents in developing products to disseminate assessment results can also be highly effective.
- Share the results of the assessment with adolescents who participated in the assessment and validation processes. Make the report findings accessible to all adolescents in the community whenever and wherever possible.
- Hold sessions for collective discussion of the results with the staff across different organisations and sectors who are responsible for designing and implementing your adolescent-responsive CVA programming.
- Run planning meetings with the same staff.
- The plan that is developed should set out priorities, a clear timeline for implementation, and clarification of who is responsible for which action to achieve adolescent-responsive CVA.
- Implement a process of meetings and supervision to ensure follow-up for implementation of agreed-upon actions.

### Summary of Key Needs Assessment Data Collection Tools

Name of the tool	Purpose of the tool	Who uses the tool?	Who should the tool be used with?	When should the tool be used?
<b>1. Adolescent-responsive Market Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine how diverse adolescents and their parents/caregivers typically access markets for goods and services.</li> <li>• Identify which needs of adolescents are usually covered or could be covered through markets and which are not.</li> <li>• Determine financial barriers to accessing goods and services for adolescents and/ or their parents/ caregivers.</li> <li>• Assess access to the market for diverse adolescents, that is adolescents of different genders, ages and other identities (such as disabilities; diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics [SOGIESC]; ethnicity; religion; social status; etc.).</li> <li>• Assess safety on the road to and from the market and within the marketplace itself.</li> <li>• Consider any potential tensions or violence between adolescents and their parents/ caregivers and local traders at the market.</li> </ul>	Cash staff	Vendors	Once: before starting CVA



Name of the tool	Purpose of the tool	Who uses the tool?	Who should the tool be used with?	When should the tool be used?
<b>2. Adolescent-responsive Financial Service Providers Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine what barriers adolescents and their parents/ caregivers may face when accessing and using CVA given the current policy environment. For example, help to understand:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– “Know-Your-Customer” regulations</li> <li>– Legal age restrictions on banking or mobile network operators distributing SIM cards to adolescents</li> <li>– Parental/ caregiver consent for adolescents, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assess the possible (child) protection and safeguarding risks associated with different FSPs.</li> </ul>	Cash staff	FSPs	Once: before starting CVA
<b>3. Story-Based Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Older Adolescents (15-17) and Parents/ Caregivers to Identify Benefits and (Child) Protection and Safeguarding Risks Before Starting Cash and Voucher Assistance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define perceived risks for adolescents and their parents/ caregivers associated with CVA.</li> <li>• Identify ways to mitigate any associated risks.</li> <li>• Define perceived (child) protection benefits of CVA for adolescents and their parents/ caregivers.</li> <li>• Determine who in the household makes spending decisions and who makes the purchases.</li> <li>• Identify attitudes held by parents/ caregivers about targeting adolescents as direct recipients of CVA.</li> </ul>	M&E, cash and child protection staff <i>Must have technical support from child protection staff</i>	A sample of diverse adolescents and parents/ caregivers who represent the affected population who will receive CVA Community representatives	Once: before starting CVA
<b>4. Visioning Exercise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand adolescents’ aspirations and goals for their future.</li> <li>• Identify what factors may enable them to achieve their aspirations and goals.</li> <li>• Identify barriers and solutions to reaching their aspirations and goals.</li> <li>• Understand the roles of cash and vouchers (as enablers) and limited purchasing power (as a barrier) to supporting and achieving adolescents’ aspirations.</li> </ul>	M&E, cash, child protection, education or other sector staff <i>Must have technical support from child protection staff</i>	A sample of diverse adolescents who represent the affected population due to receive CVA	Once: before starting CVA

Name of the tool	Purpose of the tool	Who uses the tool?	Who should the tool be used with?	When should the tool be used?
<b>5. A Day in a Young Person's Life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore adolescents' daily routines, risks and agency and how their activities and/ or (gender) roles have changed as a result of the crisis.</li> <li>• Understand the opportunities adolescents have to handle cash and vouchers and their role in taking decisions over which household resources should be purchased.</li> </ul>	<p>M&amp;E, cash, child protection, education or other sector staff</p> <p><i>Must have technical support from child protection staff</i></p>	<p>A sample of diverse adolescents who represent the affected population due to receive CVA</p>	<p>Before starting CVA and as part of regular monitoring and evaluation activities</p>
<b>6. Diamond Ranking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise the modalities/ delivery mechanisms that crisis-affected adolescents and their parents/ caregivers prefer to address adolescents' needs.</li> <li>• Identify possible mitigation mechanisms for any CVA-associated risks.</li> </ul>	<p>M&amp;E, cash, child protection, education or other sector staff</p> <p><i>Must have technical support from child protection staff</i></p>	<p>A sample of diverse adolescents and parents/ caregivers who represent the affected population due to receive CVA</p>	<p>Before starting CVA and as part of regular monitoring and evaluation activities</p>
<b>7. Preference Ranking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand participants' views regarding conditions and restrictions on transfers. This can inform decisions on whether or not to use conditions to support programme objectives and/ or if there is any advantage of transfer restrictions.</li> </ul>	<p>M&amp;E, cash, child protection, education or other sector staff.</p> <p><i>Must have technical support from child protection staff</i></p>	<p>A sample of diverse adolescents and parents/ caregivers who represent the affected population due to receive CVA</p>	<p>Before starting CVA and as part of regular monitoring and evaluation activities</p>

Tools 3–7 are part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit | Cash and Voucher Assistance and Child Protection for Adolescents and are available at:

<https://alliancecpha.org/en/learning/monitoring-and-evaluation-toolkit-cash-and-voucher-assistance-and-child-protection-adolescents>

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [CaLP Programme Quality Toolbox](#), specifically the Situation Analysis section.
- Plan International, [CVA Programming Step-by-Step Guidance](#).
- Plan International, [Adolescent Programming Toolkit](#).
- The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, [Designing Cash and Voucher Assistance to Achieve Child Protection Outcomes in Humanitarian Settings](#), especially section 7.1 Assess and analyse the situation, pages 21–31.
- Save the Children, [Child safeguarding for cash and voucher assistance guidance](#).
- OCHA, [Needs Assessment and Analysis](#), for an overview of inter-agency and intersectoral needs assessments processes.





**Plan International Global Hub**

Dukes Court, Block A, Duke Street,  
Woking, Surrey GU21 5BH, United Kingdom

Tel: (+44)1483 755 155

To learn more about our actions for children,  
visit [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)

**Women's Refugee Commission**

15 West 37th Street, 9th Floor,  
New York, NY 10018

Tel: (+1) 212 551 3115

[www.womensrefugeecommission.org](http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org)