

MINIMUM STANDARDS OF UPG

While Graduation interventions vary based on local context, the underlying minimum standards of the approach remain the same. ***In order to qualify as a World Vision Ultra Poor Graduation Programme it must meet the following criteria:***

1. **Integration of four core Graduation pillars:** Graduation must include interventions integrated across four core pillars - social protection, livelihoods promotion, financial inclusion, and social empowerment, with household-level coaching as a cross-cutting intervention.
2. **Assessment of the local context prior to implementation:** Graduation must be adapted to the local context based on assessments that have been conducted before implementation. The assessments must be recent, adopt an ultra-poor and child-focused lens, and assess the context, vulnerabilities, markets and livelihoods, gender and social inclusion, and existing stakeholders and services.
3. **Rigorous targeting:** Graduation must adopt rigorous targeting involving multiple steps and verification, that is transparent, gender disaggregated and gender sensitive, to reach ultra-poor households with vulnerable children, living under \$1.90 USD per day (contextually adjusted). The targeting process must engage local stakeholders including the government (where relevant) and the local community.
4. **Time-bound approach:** Graduation must be time-bound and last for an implementation period of 18-24 months after participants have been selected.
5. **Clear exit strategy with linkages to services, markets and community support:** Graduation must have a clear exit strategy where households link to social protection services, markets, financial services, and community resources so that families continue to progress after the programme ends.
6. **Well-defined and measurable Graduation criteria:** The Graduation approach must have clearly defined, gender-inclusive, measurable Graduation criteria related to livelihoods, savings, food and nutrition security, social empowerment, and child well-being.
7. **Strong monitoring and adaptive learning framework:** The Graduation approach must have a monitoring framework that measures household progress towards Graduation in regular intervals (at least monthly) and use this to incorporate an adaptive learning process.
8. **Regular household coaching for participants:** Graduation must include a robust coaching component, involving regular check-ins by frontline staff. This is critical because coaching deepens a participant's learning, helps them resolve challenges, manage livelihoods effectively, and adopt positive behaviour. Coaching also helps to address unequal gender relations within households and communities.
9. **Adequate ratio of dedicated Graduation staff to participants:** Levels of staffing must be sufficient to ensure regular household-level support is provided on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, with variation based on contextual factors.¹ Staff need to be familiar with Graduation processes, be trained and able to apply gender-sensitive approaches and be sympathetic to supporting the ultra-poor.
10. **Commitment to Gender Equality:** Each intervention within the Graduation approach must apply a gender equality lens, which includes incorporating gender into the assessment, design, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the Graduation programme.

¹ Staff to participant ratios may vary according to factors such as population density, cost of travel to remote households, cost of labour, etc. Adequate ratios typically range from 1 facilitator to 40 households in very sparsely populated areas, or 120 households in very densely populated areas.