

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADJUSTING NFI & EMERGENCY SHELTER DISTRIBUTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

As of 17 March 2020¹

As the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread in an unpredictable manner it presents a growing risk to partners, staff and beneficiaries during NFI, shelter kits and tent distributions as well as installation of emergency shelter materials.

This document aims to provide guidance during NFI and emergency shelter distributions/installation to minimize the risk of exposure of personnel, partners and beneficiaries. Adjustments should be in line with instructions provided by the World Health Organization and Ministry of Health.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Organize and clearly mark the allocated spaces at the distribution site

- Identify the reception point, verification point, collection point and exit to channel traffic and allow for personal space of at least one meter between each beneficiary.
- Set-up hand washing area with adequate supply of hand washing gel or soap.
- Allocate areas for body temperature check by health officials.
- Establish sheltered/covered area for beneficiaries that do not receive clearance at the body temperature check point. The allocated area should be spacious enough to allow beneficiaries to sit/stand at least one meter apart from each other.
- Ensure that there are clearly marked entrance and exit points in the distribution area, provided with the appropriate hand sanitation supplies in line with the government mitigation measurements.

2. Organize distributions ahead of the scheduled distribution to prevent over-crowding

- If not already prepositioned, offload the NFIs, tents and emergency shelter kits into the temporary storage and organize entitlements ahead of the scheduled distribution.
- Separate storage from the collection points where possible.
- If possible, one-meter area around the desk should be cordoned off (with a rope or tape) at the collection point. This will ensure the collection point is accessible to only one beneficiary at a time.
- Stagger distribution times and number of beneficiaries to arrive.

3. Do not allow crowding around the distribution point

- Communicate measures with beneficiaries in advance.
- Instruct beneficiaries to maintain a distance of one metre from each other throughout the distribution process.

4. Manage the flow of traffic at the distribution site

- Upon arrival at the distribution site, direct beneficiaries to the hand washing area and then to the temperature check area to have their body temperature assessed using a non-invasive thermometer. *Ideally, the temperature check should be conducted by a medical or health professional endorsed by government authorities. Distribution staff to inform identified beneficiaries that they will receive assistance irrespective of the results of the temperature test.*

¹ These guidelines were developed based on guidance from WFP regarding food distributions and the Syria Health Sector lead by WHO.

- If a beneficiary is detected to have a fever, they should be directed to the specified sheltered/covered area for a follow up by the local government or health official.
- Beneficiaries cleared at the temperature check area are to be directed to the (identity) verification checkpoint.
- Beneficiaries should not pass through the distribution point more than once.

5. Consider hygiene and sanitation measures for NFI, Emergency Shelter and Tents installation

- There should be no physical contact between distribution staff, laborers installing tents or shelter kits, and beneficiaries or between beneficiaries.
- Staff at the collection point should place the assistance on the tarpaulin/table at the distribution point and step back, permitting the beneficiary to collect the assistance.
- Following the collection of items, beneficiaries are to be directed to exit the collection site and encouraged to depart the distribution site.
- For emergency shelter repairs, ensure staff and laborers follow preventive measures as indicated by the Ministry of Health and WHO; including handwashing, hygiene and sterilization practices.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTNER STAFF AT THE DISTRIBUTION SITES (*Reception point operator, Queue Management Operator and Distribution Point Operator etc.*)

- Monitor the entry of beneficiaries into the distribution point channel.
- Instruct beneficiaries to maintain a distance of one-meter at all points during distributions.
- Ensure that the hand washing point is supplied with appropriate quantities of hand wash solution or soap.
- Ensure that all beneficiaries wash their hands at the hand washing point and have body temperature checks before approaching the identity verification checkpoint.
- If a beneficiary presents high temperature, they must be directed to the sheltered/covered area and referred to the relevant health authorities.
- Oversee and assist with offloading and organizing items before distributions are scheduled to start.
- Step back from the assistance and direct the beneficiary to collect the assistance and leave via the marked exit route.
- Instruct the beneficiaries to leave the distribution site immediately after the collection of assistance.
- On completion of distribution, ensure that the distribution point (room/ area/ tarpaulin) is swept clean and sprayed with disinfectant (0.5% chlorine solution). Once dry, the tarpaulin should be folded away for storage/transportation. The broom may be used again after bleach spraying to remove any debris.
- Remove all tapes, ropes and signage.
- Clear hand wash station and remove/store hand washing solution.
- It is mandatory that all staff at the distribution site perform hand sanitation and follow general hygiene practices.

KEY LINKS TO INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/infection-prevention-and-control>