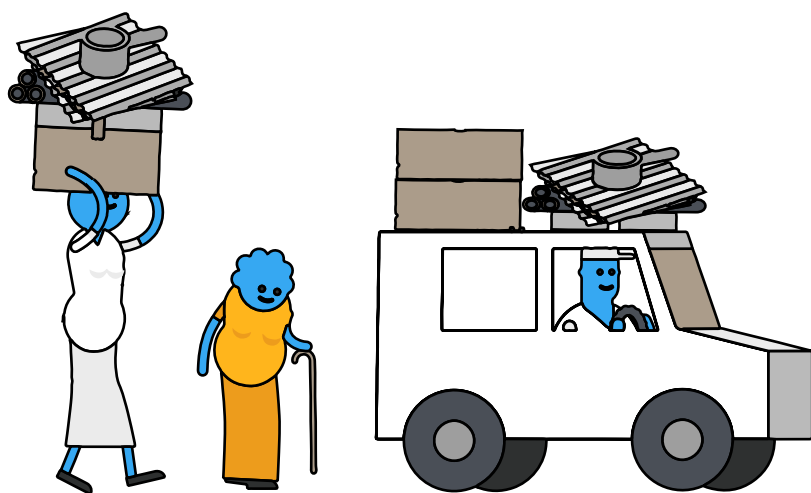


DISTRIBUTION SHELTER MATERIALS, NFI and CASH

**Guidance to Reduce the Risk of
Gender-Based Violence**



FIRST EDITION

DISTRIBUTION SHELTER MATERIALS, NFI and CASH

*First Edition
August 2018*

*I am busy implementing my project...
why should I bother reading this?*



*Because this is about good shelter and
NFI programming.*



*And the primary goal of any emergency
shelter and NFI programme is to
improve living conditions and safeguard
the health, security, privacy and dignity
of people affected by crises...*



i.1 Acknowledgements

This booklet was developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and CARE International UK in collaboration with the IASC GBV Guidelines on behalf of the Global Shelter Cluster Working Group on Gender-Based Violence Risk Reduction.

The Global Shelter Cluster, and the lead agencies of this document, would like to acknowledge the valuable inputs of the following individuals who have provided time, feedback, documents and resources, in the development of this guidance:

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For any feedback and comments on how to improve it, please contact us at: gbv@sheltercluster.org

First edition, August 2018.

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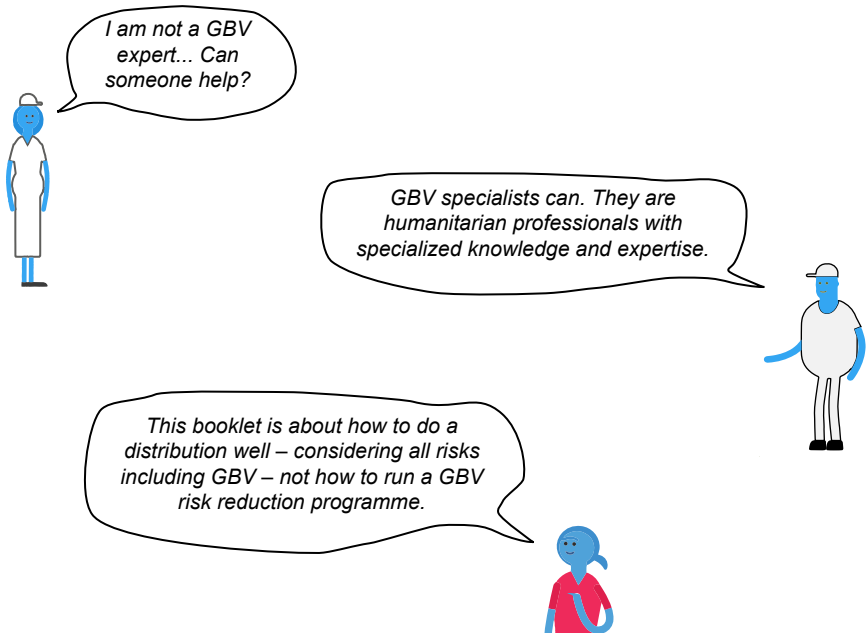
i.2 Overview of the booklet

This booklet provides guidance to shelter and non-food items (NFI) practitioners on essential actions to be undertaken to reduce risks of gender-based violence (GBV) associated with the distribution of shelter and NFI, including both in-kind and cash-based assistance.

The booklet describes how to ensure that the health, security, privacy, and dignity of affected populations is safeguarded throughout the distribution process. More specifically, it looks at how shelter and NFI distributions can contribute to reduce and mitigate existing or potential GBV risks in emergencies; and how shelter and NFI agencies can reduce and mitigate risks directly associated with distributions processes.

A short video on shelter/NFI distribution accompanying this booklet can be found in several languages at <https://www.youtube.com/user/ShelterCluster/videos>.

At the end of the booklet, guidance is also provided on how shelter and NFI staff can support when information about a GBV incident is disclosed to them.



i.3 GBV risks and humanitarian crises

What is gender-based violence?

GBV is “an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private” (📖 IASC, 2015).

Not only can gender discrimination cause violence, it also contributes to widespread acceptance and invisibility of the issue. Perpetrators are often not held accountable and survivors struggle to speak out and access support.

In humanitarian crises, communities and individuals may face significant losses – of their homes, property, livelihoods – and have to rely on humanitarian assistance to meet their most basic needs. As an individual’s safety and security is affected, their dependence on external humanitarian assistance can significantly increase risks of exposure to violence and exploitation, including forms of GBV.

During humanitarian crises, GBV can affect everyone (women, girls, men and boys) but in different ways.



Forms of GBV

I was attacked when I tried to collect firewood to cook food.

Inflicting physical harms

I have been sexually abused by my uncle ever since they placed our two families in one shelter.

I was raped in the alleyway behind some shelters.

Inflicting sexual harms

Men insult me and tell me to use the woman's latrine because I'm gay.

Inflicting mental harms

My caretaker will not let me go to school if I don't have sex with him.

Women from my ethnic group are not allowed to leave their homes, and I have to look after my children.

Exclusion

My husband will not allow me to go to the market or the bank.

Some men harass us near the latrines – we fear what they will do next.

I am scared to go to the clinic because someone threatened to rape me the last time I went.

Threats

A member of distribution team suggested that I would receive building materials if I had sex with him.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

My family forced to marry my cousin, to get a better shelter plot in the camp.

Coercion

Who is at risk?

Women and girls tend to be affected disproportionately by GBV in emergencies. Indeed, gender inequalities tend to be exacerbated, leading to increased dependence and exclusion. This can directly impact on their capacity to access external assistance and restrict and/or influence individual coping mechanisms.


Moreover, women and girls may be exposed to additional risks in daily activities such as accessing latrines, collecting water and firewood. This is particularly the case if the activities they conduct are far from their shelter. Men and boys are also exposed to specific forms of GBV during humanitarian crises, as are other groups with specific vulnerabilities – children, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex (LGBTI), etc.

Applying a gender lens

Using a “gender lens” means trying to understand whether a crisis might affect men, women, boys and girls differently, whether they might have specific needs, or might be facing specific vulnerabilities or be exposed to risks. For example, an assessment may indicate specific items of clothing to be distributed, or it should be checked that women are able to open bank accounts.

Although not all information might be available at the very onset of a crisis, coordinating with protection and GBV specialists early on helps to ensure a good situational analysis, understand risks that groups and individuals might face, and how the response can mitigate some of the challenges they have identified.

Inclusion of persons with disabilities

The term “persons with disabilities” refers to people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others ( UNCRPD).

An inclusive Shelter and NFI distribution can facilitate access of persons with disabilities to distribution sites, contribute to overcoming the barriers they may face and ensure that their specific vulnerabilities and needs have been taken into account in the distribution process. Failure to consider these groups may result in potential exclusion of a considerable number of vulnerable people in need.



I did not know how to reach the distribution site and how to transport items, but with the help of community volunteers and paid porters I was able to set up a temporary shelter.

i.4 GBV risks and shelter and NFI interventions

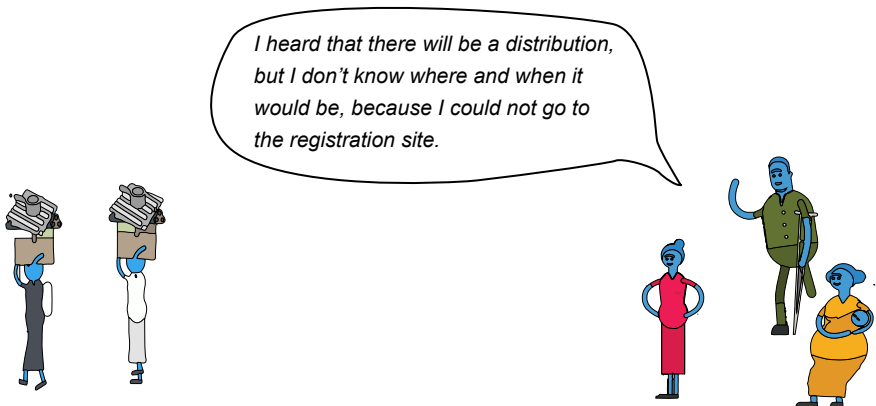
Well-planned and implemented shelter and NFI interventions can act positively on the safety and well-being of populations and contribute to addressing some of the GBV risks directly linked with shelter and NFI conditions in emergencies.

However, if shelter/NFI interventions are not carefully designed and implemented, activities can increase the protection risks, including forms of GBV.

Some of the most common GBV risk factors associated with shelter and NFI are:

- **Overcrowded living conditions**, increasing the risks of domestic violence, and exposure to violence by non-family members;
- **Poorly designed shelters**, providing insufficient security, safety, privacy, creating unsafe conditions inside the shelter and its immediate surrounding;
- **Insufficient / inadequate assistance**, exposing groups and individuals at risk of exploitation and violence;
- **Poor selection of beneficiaries and communication regarding selection criteria and process**, creating tensions within communities which can put individuals at risk;
- **Poorly organized distributions** of shelter and non-food items, potentially exposing recipients to risks at the distribution site, leading to the exclusion of groups and individuals, increasing the risks of violence, including situations of exploitation to obtain items essential to survival.

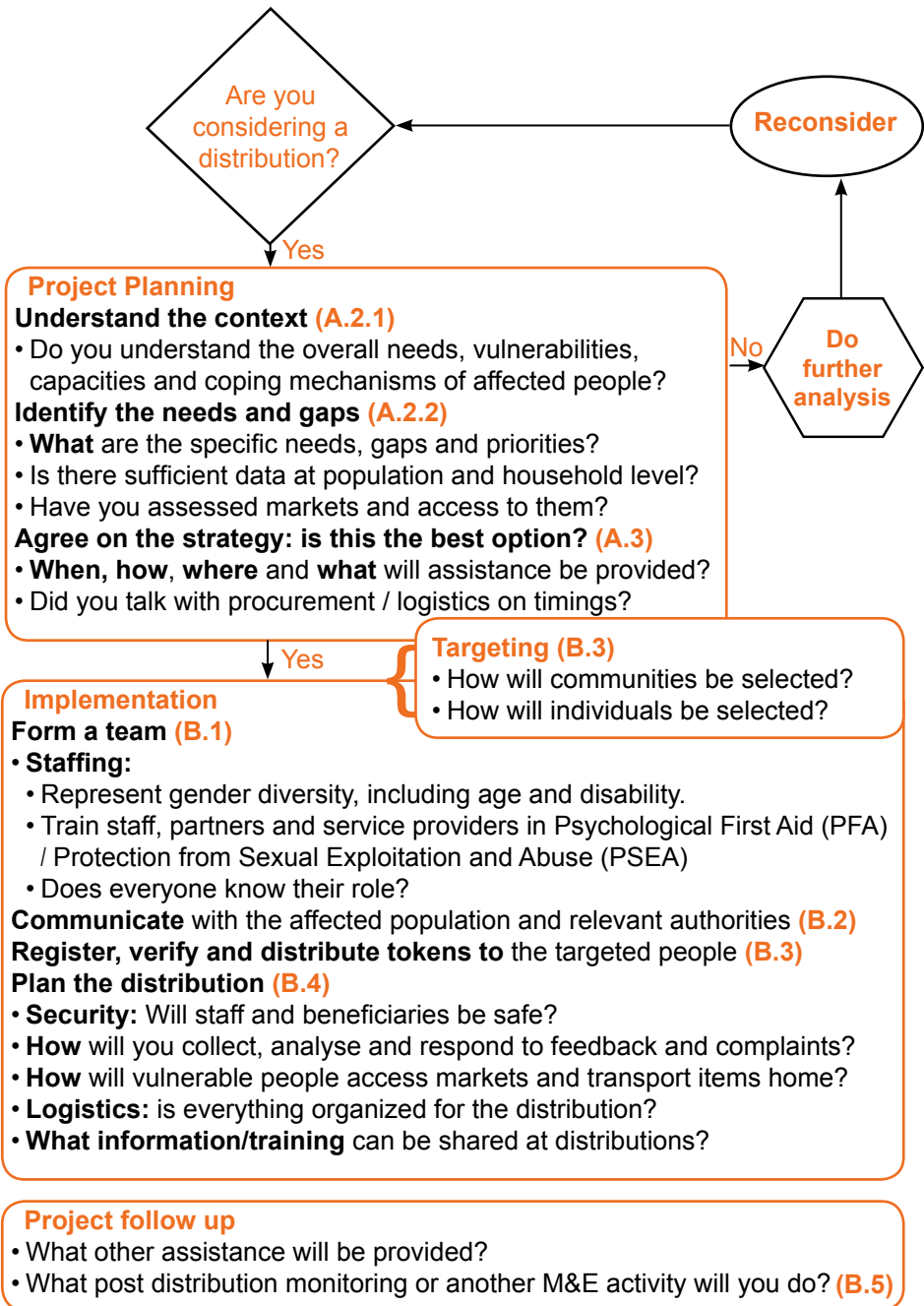
To ensure that GBV risks are identified and mitigation measures are put into effect, specific actions should be undertaken at each step of a distribution project cycle. Actions are similar, regardless of whether distributing **shelter materials, household items, cash or vouchers**. The next section outlines key actions in the design of shelter, NFI and cash distributions.



SECTION A

PROJECT PLANNING

A.1 Deciding to do a distribution



A.2 Assessments

A.2.1 Understand the context

When deciding whether to distribute cash, NFI or shelter materials, you need to understand the situation so that different ways of responding – as well as risks – can be identified. Understand the context and local economy to ensure whether a distribution will help to meet people's needs or whether it will create additional vulnerabilities.

In both rapid onset and protracted crises, the situation and markets will change, and so should be continually monitored and programmes adapted accordingly.

Joint inter-sectoral assessments

Joint needs assessments will provide information on the population/household profiles, displacement trends, and urgent shelter and NFI needs. However, more detailed information is required to define shelter and NFI responses and programmes. Consider asking:

What are the impacts on shelter conditions, and which groups are most vulnerable?

To define if a shelter response is likely and who to be particularly aware of.

What kind of crisis is it and how big is it?

Asked to find out the likely options and scale of the response.

Where have people settled?

Don't forget impacts on host communities!

What are the traditions and practices, that might impact gender dynamics?

Will these change the response?

What are the socioeconomic situation and coping mechanisms?

Which people are likely to need assistance? And can people get what they need from markets?

Who in the family lives in each shelter/compound, and has that changed?

To define how many people are in a household and possibly dictate the level of shelter technical support required.

Who does which tasks and chores within the household?

Does this change who should receive construction materials or cash?

Are there specific groups at risk of exclusion? (e.g. minorities, marginalized groups, elderly, persons with disabilities, LGBTI)


Do not forget those who may be marginalized.

A.2.2 Assess the needs and gaps

Assess shelter and NFI needs

Assessments should identify lifesaving activities at the outset of an emergency, including for people with specific needs. For instance, a beneficiary with a physical impairment might require an additional blanket or assistance with transportation of goods. Assessments should identify potential issues the distributions may cause, such as attracting people to a dangerous location. Above all, distributions should avoid doing harm to the population, staff and beneficiaries.

In a first phase emergency, rapid decisions are often required to enable delivery at scale. As a result, broad consultation with affected populations may not always be possible before starting projects, and distributions may begin whilst assessments are ongoing. However, be prepared to revise the planning as new information comes in.

Remember to assess the local markets to consider potential positive and negative impacts of the response on the local economy, as well as different ways to deliver assistance ( [EMMA Toolkit](#)).

Population and household level data

Data for shelter and NFI responses is often collected at 1) population level and 2) at household level. In both cases, it should be divided by sex and age (Sex and Age Disaggregated Data, or SADD) to allow a better understanding of the context. Disability data should also be collected, to better understand specific needs in relation to any shelter response.

Population level data

Breaking down data by sex and age encourages staff to recognize diversity of the population. Significantly skewed populations in terms of the elderly, young or women should link with other assessments as to why that is the case and whether additional assistance is required, in terms of transportation from distributions or support with construction.

Household level data

Shelter assessments and responses are usually carried out at the household level. Good household level data allows:

- Determination of family size and corresponding response;
- Understanding the proportion of households headed by elderly people, children or women, people with special needs, or other vulnerable groups;
- Understanding types of materials required, like fabric for women's clothing.

❖ **Benin:** In Benin, during the 2010–2011 floods, poor targeting in some cases resulted in increased risks of GBV. Many households who practiced polygamy were considered as one unit, despite the fact that they were made up of an extended family with children from multiple wives. The cash and NFI were only given to one woman in the household. These distributions did not sufficiently provide for the second wife and her children, leading to subsequent tensions between wives and their husbands, including verbal and physical abuse.

Assess markets

All shelter programmes should assess capacities of and access to local markets. A market analysis should allow you to decide whether to use cash, vouchers, in kind or a combination. Examples of considerations are:

- Consider exclusion from markets for individuals or groups on account of gender, age, disabilities or ethnicity/caste;
- Consider how people will be able to ensure quality of items that they do not normally purchase. Will it compare to the quality that agencies are able to provide directly?

Seek to identify and collaborate with service providers who can assist with specific needs of persons with disabilities and older people, e.g. for mobility and assistive devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, white canes, spectacles.

Coordinate to understand gaps and response

Coordinate with other agencies to find out what assistance they are planning to deliver or have already provided. This is required to avoid duplication, but also to ensure consistency of response. Working through the cluster/sector coordination team is normally the most efficient way to obtain relevant information.

Coordinate with other sectors to ensure that the response meets a broader set of needs than just shelter. For example, you may coordinate with the WASH sector regarding the distribution of hygiene items with NFI kits, or the set-up of sanitation facilities around shelters, etc.

If cash is the selected response modality, check for a coordinated cash transfer value set for meeting shelter and NFI needs. If not available, coordinate in terms of market price monitoring, so cash/voucher values can be set in accordance to real market prices.

A.3 Agree on the shelter response strategy

Assessments and analysis of the data available should lead to a broader sectoral strategy, coordinated with other partners, such as local disabled people's organizations and local authorities. When distribution is chosen as an assistance modality, it should be linked to the broader strategy of where and who will be assisted. Also consider how people will be assisted. For example, in a certain context, vouchers for household items may be provided to those living in host communities, to reduce the pull effect of distributing only in collective centres.

We are going to focus on displaced households living with host communities.

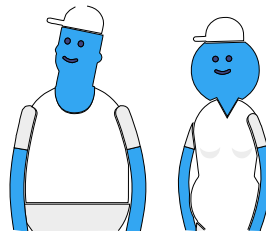
We allowed flexibility to distribution teams to provide more items to large households, and adjust the items according to assessed need at household level, but this makes it difficult to estimate numbers for procurement.



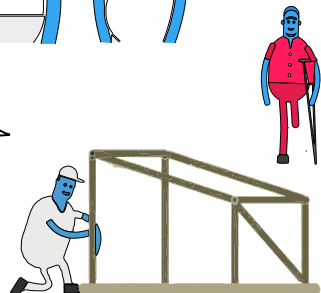
We considered different options: in-kind distributions, in-kind/cash assistance plus technical trainings, vouchers, unconditional or conditional cash distributions, rental assistance.

We discussed with the WASH team and will combine distributions to include hygiene and sanitary items in NFI distributions. They will also conduct hygiene awareness activities at the distribution.

We are going to include traditional cloths used by women for clothing in the NFI kits.



We were worried that using in-kind distributions and technical support only would not be enough for households headed by people with limited mobility, as they might also need support to access distribution sites, transport the items and set-up shelters.

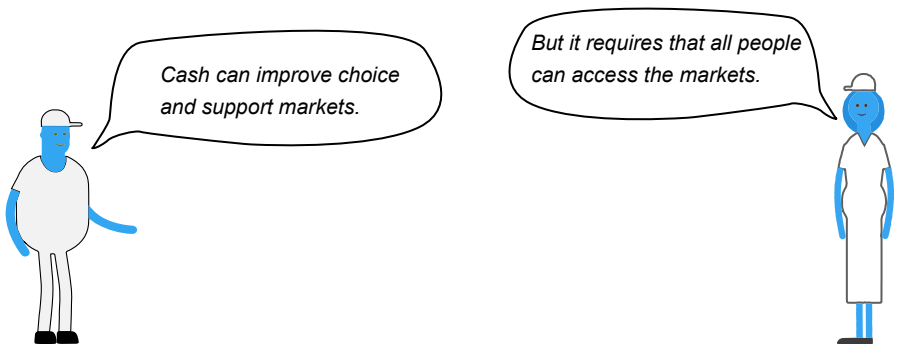


A.4 Cash, vouchers and markets

Market based approaches

Cash and vouchers represent an alternative to in-kind assistance (which is the supply of goods). Cash and vouchers can offer more choice to affected people and can support local traders and market systems. However, they can also create risks, especially for vulnerable people, and critically require an understanding of what is available, and what access people have to the markets supplying required commodities and services.

The use of cash or vouchers is not new to shelter responses. Recently, evolving technology and acceptance of its use mean that cash has become an increasingly common feature of humanitarian responses. Issues such as the high financial value of shelter and housing, and risks of building structurally compromised shelters, make the use of unrestricted cash in shelter response different from other sectors. This is why technical assistance and quality assurance processes remain fundamental to achieving good shelter outcomes.



Programme design

Although technologies for the transfer may vary, much of the distribution intervention process is the same for cash and vouchers programming as for in-kind distribution of shelter materials or household items. This includes assessment (both at community/household level and of markets), analysis (including risk analysis), forming strategy, implementation and following up after the distribution.

Throughout this document we highlight some cash specific considerations. But we do not discuss how to choose the mechanism to transfer the cash (for example mobile money, banks, vouchers, cash in envelopes, voucher fairs, etc.).


Definitions: Restricted, Unrestricted and Conditionality

A **restricted transfer** requires the beneficiary to use the assistance provided to purchase particular goods or services. This has implications for cash distributions as systems need to be in place to ensure that the restrictions are followed prior to providing further assistance.

we provided vouchers which can be used to purchase agreed NFIs and/or shelter materials. This was a restricted transfer.

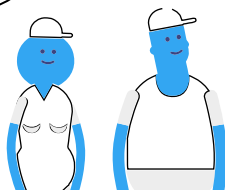
Unrestricted transfers can be used entirely as the recipient chooses, i.e. there are no direct limitations imposed by the implementing agency on how the cash is spent. For shelter programming this means that there is no way to ensure that the transfer will ensure shelter outcomes, however it can give a higher degree of flexibility on the use of assistance.

We provided all beneficiaries with unconditional/multipurpose cash which they could use however they wished, but we were unable to ensure that they used it for shelter.

Restriction is distinct from **conditionality**, which applies only to prerequisite conditions that a beneficiary must fulfil before receiving a transfer. When there are such conditions in place, the distribution process will need to include activities to ensure that the conditionality is adhered to ( CaLP).

We provided cash linked to construction progress. This was a conditional transfer.

After assessments showed only some materials were available on the local market, we decided to provide a combination of cash-based and in-kind assistance.



SECTION B

IMPLEMENTATION

B.1 Form a team

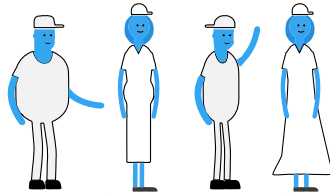
Represent: Who is on your distribution team?

The following actions should be made when choosing staff for distribution teams:

- Hire both men and women – aim for a gender balance;
- As far as possible, reflect the diversity of cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of the population;
- Build a team with a mixture of skill sets – to reflect roles and responsibilities to be fulfilled – including in terms of outreach to specific groups/individuals.

Aim to represent different genders, ages and ethnicities within the team. However, consider the impact on communities' perceptions, as hiring individuals from specific groups might be negatively perceived and create risks for the staff.

Remember that team members will often enter private spaces, and engaged with people who potentially suffered from trauma. Staff must receive adequate trainings, understand socially acceptable behaviours, and abide by the code of conduct they signed.



Engaging volunteers and casual labourers

Engaging volunteers is very common in distributions. It can be a practical way of getting the on-site team needed and also help to build acceptance, ensure greater outreach, mobilization and ensure participation. As for staff, gender and diversity representation should be sought, but with adequate considerations of community perceptions.

When using volunteers, be aware of the risks of situations where volunteers may abuse or exploit their position or engage in corruption. To mitigate these risks, in general, volunteers should not hold key responsibilities; such as compiling beneficiary registration lists, be responsible for distributing items, or leading post distribution monitoring activities, etc.

Always be clear with volunteers about expectations that you have of them, and they have of you. Agree terms of payment and compensation.

When using volunteers, agencies should conduct regular checks to identify any possible situations of abuse or discrimination.

Team trainings and GBV referral pathways

Train team members on distribution processes so that everyone knows their role and good practices. Trainings should ensure that team members understand appropriate ways to engage with communities, possible sensitivities they might face, and how to respond to them. Build practical awareness and knowledge amongst team members on how to approach and communicate with persons with disabilities. Gender, protection and GBV specialists should help train the teams.

Staff members should be trained so that they understand referral pathways in case of disclosure of a GBV incident. This should include basic dos and don'ts to ensure the safety and confidentiality of the survivor and oneself (see the Annex).

“A **‘referral pathway’** is a flexible mechanism that safely links survivors to supportive and competent services, such as medical care, mental health and psychosocial support, police assistance and legal / justice support” (IASC, 2015).

Code of Conduct and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

All team members should sign a code of conduct and understand. Specific orientation and awareness on PSEA must be provided to all team members. Any complaints must be investigated and disciplinary measures implemented.

Training is not a one-off event. Offer trainings and mentor team members on an ongoing basis, covering the set of professional skills, but also ethical and socially acceptable behaviours. When monitoring the programme, ensure that staff members understand and adhere to codes of conduct.

When using service providers, such as with cash or vouchers programmes, ensure that they are well briefed about protection standards and that they also sign up to codes of conduct as part of their contract.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) linked to distributions: The distribution of relief items introduces valuable resources into the community that can be misused and abused. This can increase protection risks to vulnerable groups, increasing chances of SEA or GBV. One way to reduce the risk of SEA perpetrated by the humanitarian staff is to make sure that the distribution is done by a gender-balanced team and inform the community of that. Explain that Humanitarian assistance is free of charge and does not require favours in return. Ensure that a monitoring system must be in place.

B.2 Communicate with the affected population

Shelter and NFI staff engage with affected people throughout the process of a distribution: at assessment, distribution or post distribution monitoring phases.

Consider how interviews and interactions take place:

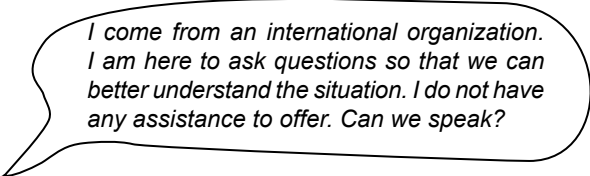
- Should people/groups be consulted separately based on their gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.?
- Is it appropriate to speak to someone from the other gender or enter someone's home?
- Seek out the perspectives of people with a range of different impairments.

When approaching a community or an individual, communicate clearly:

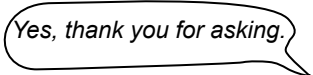
- who you are (present ID) and the purpose of the activity;
- Who the organization you work for is, and what they do;
- If relevant: why are you speaking to men and women separately or setting up focus groups discussions?

If applicable:

- Who will be receiving assistance and why;
- What assistance they will receive, and if there will be repeat distribution(s);
- What they need to bring with them to the distribution;



I come from an international organization. I am here to ask questions so that we can better understand the situation. I do not have any assistance to offer. Can we speak?



Yes, thank you for asking.

Keep in mind that in some cases, like highly volatile, insecure or hard-to-reach environments, the exact items to be distributed cannot be communicated well in advance. This can instead be done at the day of the distribution, also using boards, videos, posters and pictures, or live demonstrations.

The teams should not ask questions about difficult experiences – whether people have been directly affected by violence, including GBV. This can cause additional trauma for the individual. If a GBV incident is shared during an assessment (this is described as “disclosure”), the team members need to follow established protocols and referral pathways ([see the Annex](#)).

B.3 Targeting, registration and verification

B.3.1 Location and community selection

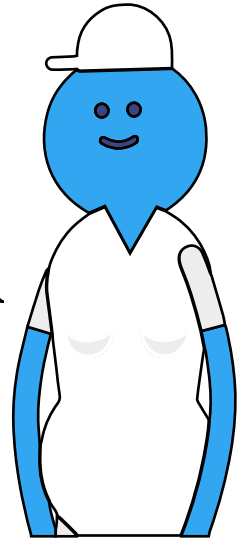
One of the biggest choices in any distribution programme is in which communities the activities take place. Take a little extra time to talk through this choice with staff, representative community groups, local authorities and implementing agencies if applicable, to understand with the team and partners why you are going to work at this location.

Why was this community chosen?

Was it chosen after review of assessment data?

Was it chosen because we had an existing partner or project here?

Was this municipality selected because of corruption or a political agenda?



B.3.2 Targeting and beneficiary selection

Blanket versus targeted distributions

Depending upon various factors, including assessed scale of need and phase of response, you may decide to distribute to every household at a location (“blanket” or “general” distribution) or to targeted households. The decision to trigger a general blanket distribution may be based on statistical sampling, it may be agreed for all arrivals to a new site, or it may be an agreed set of criteria at organization or sector/cluster level.

Household targeting criteria

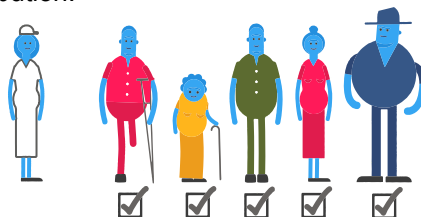
When distributions are targeted, the selection of households should be based on agreed vulnerability criteria. They may include several of the following:

- ☑ Newly displaced households;
- ☑ People with heavily damaged or destroyed houses;
- ☑ Female-headed and child-headed households;
- ☑ Households with pregnant and lactating women;
- ☑ Religious, ethnic minorities or other socially marginalized groups;
- ☑ Widows;
- ☑ Households with older persons (above 60), and households headed by elderly;
- ☑ Households with people with disabilities (mental or physical);
- ☑ Households with people with chronic diseases/serious medical conditions;
- ☑ Chronically poor households;
- ☑ Marginalized individuals;
- ☑ All adult women in families with multiple wives;
- ☑ Isolated elderly.

Targeting can be sensitive and can result in creating tensions within the affected populations and increase risks of violence. An imbalance perceived by host communities might be the source of tensions, particularly in cases where host communities face very similar living conditions as affected populations, or when support is provided that has a negative impact on their own living conditions. Make sure that the criteria for beneficiary selection is clear to the community, to avoid conflict once you finish the distribution.

Do not overlook people

Some people might face challenges reaching out to humanitarian actors, accessing distribution points, carrying materials and building shelters after the distribution – such as pregnant/lactating women, children, persons with disabilities, elderly, etc. Agencies should take measures to ensure that they are not overlooked, and that specific needs they might have are taken into account when planning distribution.



B.3.3 Registration and verification

Registration is required to identify who will receive assistance. It may use biometric identifications, or it may be the simple distribution of tokens to identify those registered. In most cases donors will require that you keep “muster rolls”, i.e. lists of those who will receive assistance.

In some contexts, beneficiary lists are provided by the local authorities. Depending on the context, you may decide to verify each household, or choose a random sample of households, to ensure that correct selection and vulnerability criteria were followed, and that people eligible to assistance were not overlooked.

Data protection

Be aware that any individually identifiable data collected can be sensitive. If it falls into the wrong hands, it can threaten the safety of those that you aim to assist.

Training on data protection for staff and data protection clauses should be in the contracts of any service provider and there should be measures in place to limit the access to data.

If you are delivering cash transfers electronically, bank statements may suffice as the distribution log. However, you may need to get data access consent forms signed by the recipients, so you can access their statements of receipt.

Communications

Wherever possible, consult and communicate clearly, in the correct language, with affected people about the selection of the beneficiaries, before the registration and verification. Also explain what will happen after registration.

Engagement with the authorities is critical to the success of any distribution. Communicate before and during distribution with local officials/leaders and the community about your role, procedures and selection criteria, to avoid causing conflict and tension between the community and other NGOs working in the area.

Planning questions during the registration

During the registration, shelter agencies should answer essential questions for the planning of the distribution.

- How far will each family have to travel to bring items home?
- Are the routes safe?
- Which family members will be able to come to the distribution?
- Will the family be able to use the items once they have received them?
- Who will need help with transport and with building shelters after the distribution?

B.4 Plan the distribution

Plan the distribution in consultation with the women and men of all ages and abilities. Include those from marginalized groups within the affected population, the authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

Wherever possible, give out tokens before the distribution



Don't just turn up with a truck on the day - you risk creating a riot!

B.4.1 Location and time

Decide on which distribution locations are most suitable from a logistics perspective, but also to ensure that everyone can access the site. Coordinate with the relevant authorities to ensure safe access to the distribution site.

- ☑ Make sure the location is safe and the space is easy to secure and accessible by all. Avoid busy road sides or congested locations.
- ☑ Identify a neutral location, already public and known and used by all groups in the community, such as near water points, village meeting points, etc.
- ☑ Ensure there is sufficient space for the NFI to be distributed safely.
- ☑ Consider accessibility of the distribution site for trucks and/or other transport; including transport for those that cannot carry items themselves.
- ☑ Ensure the routes between the distribution site and the affected population's shelters are safe for beneficiaries.
- ☑ Wherever possible, consult with different groups on where they feel safe.
- ☑ Facilitate accessibility to distribution sites for people with disabilities.

Note: In some circumstances, direct distribution to shelters may be possible. Distribution to the household, by shelter, or by “plot” can improve the chances that the intended beneficiaries receive the NFI and can reduce protection risks related to travel. However, this is time consuming and can limit the scale of the project.

If you are delivering cash/vouchers, and it is not centralized and a same-day type distribution, ensure you clearly stipulate the period for redeeming assistance. Establish a cut-off period in order to support financial reconciliation, and leave enough time before the end of the project, in case of any failed transactions.

Time of day

Consider the time of the day of the distribution. Often this is limited by logistics and access issues but, if possible, consider how it will fit in with the daily schedules of those that you are seeking to assist. Also, be aware that it may be hot queuing at mid-day, so you may consider putting up shading at the distribution site. Note that you also want to ensure everyone can return home before dark!

❖ **Nepal:** Female staff members noted that Female-Headed Households (FHHs) would have little time left after their domestic chores and childcare to reach the distribution points, and other groups would not be able to wait for a long time in line. A priority lane was set up for the elderly, pregnant and lactating women, people with disabilities and FHHs, to reduce waiting times.

B.4.2 Items to be distributed

Although the items to be distributed will be decided from assessments of needs, gaps and available resources, different items may be provided depending upon family needs and size. Some flexibility in what can be provided per household will help best meet needs, but too much flexibility can lead to inequalities, tensions and challenging distributions. These can be reduced by explaining variations, either before the distribution or in the waiting area (see B.4.4).

Generally, items such as clothing and shoes are difficult to distribute, on account of varying sizes and qualities. Use of kits can make the distribution easier, but means that recipients may need to swap or sell items after the distribution.

Cash transfers targeted towards women can cause tensions and potential violence in the household, as they can challenge traditional power relationships and decision-making structures. Those who traditionally hold powerful relationships in the family (i.e. men) may react through physical and/or emotional backlashes against those whose position of power is increasing (i.e. women). Consult men and women separately, to identify appropriate distribution modality to mitigate risks of GBV.

Transportation volume and weight

Be aware of what will be distributed and how people will get it home. For example, a shelter kit or even a tent may require several people to carry it. Wherever possible, package materials for easy transportation, but also inform people on what they will receive and whether they will need additional support to carry it home. For instance, consider using cash grants for transportation to assist the most vulnerable, or mobilizing community members or volunteers to support them.

B.4.3 Complaints and feedback mechanisms

Complaints and feedback mechanisms should be accessible to community members at all stages of the distribution process, but should be particularly visible and additionally staffed at distribution sites, along with information about the selection criteria and content of the kits.

Set up complaints and feedback mechanisms or desks that are clearly marked at the site and make sure that feedback is treated as confidential.

Mechanisms which allow an official communication line with the community should be set up from the beginning of the project. Examples of different **complaints mechanisms** include hotlines, help desks, letter boxes, text support, etc. All of these types must consider anonymity and access. How do different people access these mechanisms and use them effectively without endangering themselves? Feedback should also only be read by staff trained in confidentiality. Response mechanisms must also be functioning, so that people who feed into the complaints mechanism can have confidence that their complaints are being heard and addressed (📖 IASC, IOM, et al., 2016).

B.4.4 Arrangements for the distribution day

Distributions require careful logistics, site layout and crowd control. Poorly managed distributions can result in violence and even fatalities. Careful planning and active communication is critical to ensure that they run smoothly.

Plan for the correct number of beneficiaries and consider staggering distributions over several days, at different times during the day or in multiple distribution sites. This will help to reduce queues and avoid over-crowding.

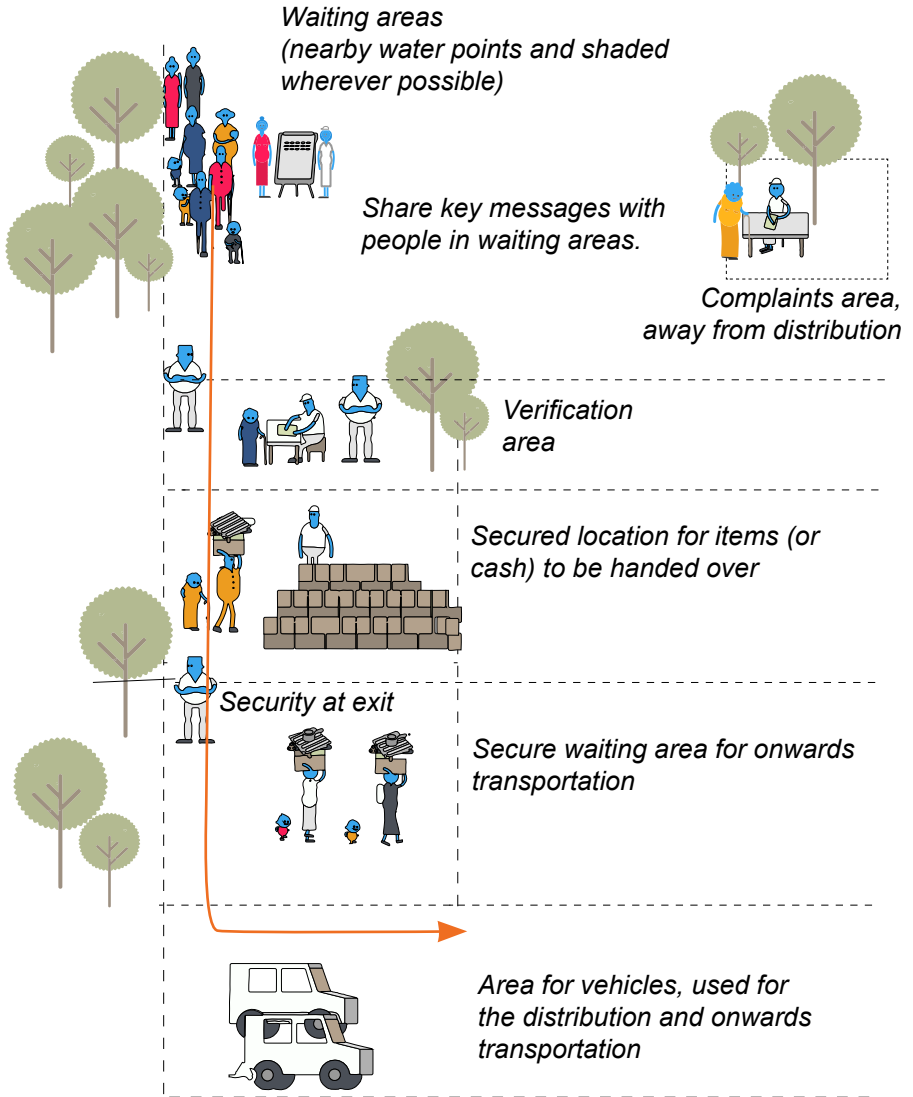
Engage the community and/or the authorities to help safeguard the materials as they await distribution. Ensure safety and security personnel (if possible, both male and female) are available to handle any issues. Remember that safety of staff and beneficiaries has priority over delivery of assistance.

Aim to use natural shade for all parts of the distribution site, or construct secured and shaded areas if the site will be used many times.

Do not forget that distributions points should be easy to evacuate in case of an emergency, especially for people with disabilities, who should be able to exit safely and with dignity.

If taking photos for public information purposes or social media, refer to the media guidelines available in the country and/or from your own organization.

Schematic illustration of distribution site



Distribution site layout

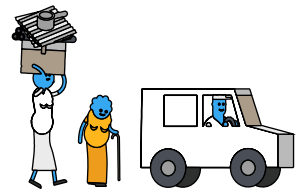
Lay out distribution sites to consider the flow of people. Generally, there should be separate areas, with buffer zones and space between them. Include space for:

- ☑ Waiting areas – before people are verified (you may need to separate queues for different groups). Ensure there are shaded where possible;
- ☑ Verification (requires desks and chairs);
- ☑ Handing over of items;
- ☑ Waiting areas – for onwards transportation;
- ☑ Vehicles used in the distribution - including turning room;
- ☑ Complaints – away from crowds where people can talk in confidence;
- ☑ Water point and latrines near the site.

Prioritization and home transport

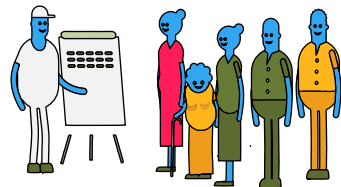
Consider providing a priority line for groups with specific needs and those who are most vulnerable. Alternatively, find other distribution arrangements for these people.

Wherever possible, support those with limited mobility or who feel vulnerable to transport items to their home. For those people who are unable to get to the distribution site (the elderly, women with infants, caretakers of children with disabilities, etc.), consider providing door-to-door transportation, or nominate a friend to collect goods.



B.4.5 Information campaigns at the distribution site

A distribution is a significant opportunity to share information. This may take the form of trainings on issues such as hygiene promotion and public health messaging, or how to use the distributed materials, or why vulnerable groups may get additional items. For example, train people in how to use tarpaulin so that it can last longer.



When cash is being provided as part of a distribution, it may be possible to do some awareness raising on financial management or shared household decision making.

B.4.6 After the distribution


When shelter materials or cash are distributed, be aware that more vulnerable households may need additional support to convert the materials into a safe shelter. Do not simply rely on the “community” to build the shelter for them, as vulnerable households may not be well supported.



It may be possible to form a team of volunteers who can help vulnerable people to build shelters. These volunteers should be supported and monitored by staff.

B.5 Post Distribution Monitoring

After a distribution, there are several monitoring and evaluation activities that can be conducted, including Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM), satisfaction survey and impact evaluations. Their purpose is to ensure accountability to the affected population and identify how to improve ongoing activities and future projects. PDM is conducted to understand the satisfaction of affected people with the distribution process, and if the assistance received is of adequate quantity, quality and range to meet the needs.

The timeframe should allow enough time for the people to use the items so that they can comment on their quality and immediate impact, but not too long that they forget the process of the intervention. It is usually carried out from two weeks after the distribution. However, rapid monitoring can also be conducted at the distribution site. Although it will not focus on the use of the items received, it can alert the team of issues that can be addressed immediately. Both female and male members of staff should be present ( IRC, Mercy Corps and WRC).

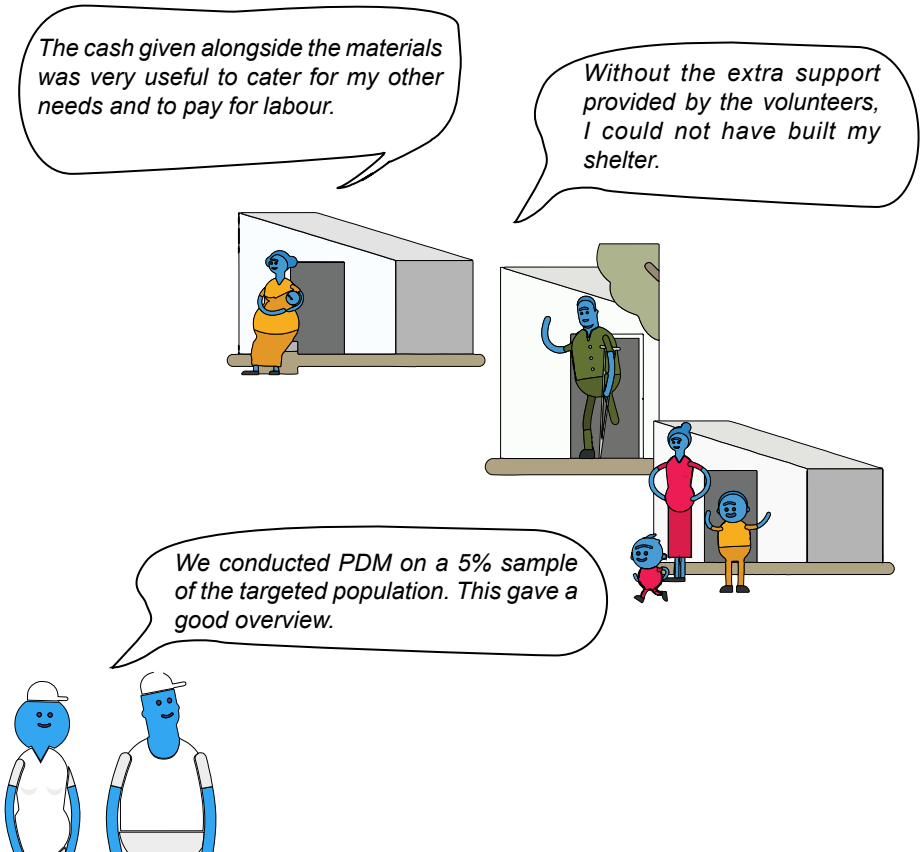
PDM can be conducted through a combination of methodologies, including desk reviews, household interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews and direct observations – even a market analysis if time allows. If conducting interviews, it is not necessary to visit every house. Instead, use a sampling approach in combination with focus groups. To the extent possible, try to have all the groups represented.

House-to-house visits do offer an important opportunity to ensure vulnerable groups had adequate support to transport and use the assistance to provide themselves with suitable shelter.

Ensure that the results of PDM informs any required adjustments and future programming. Allocate time and funds to PDM to gain greatest impact. Wherever possible, share findings with Cluster and other organizations.

Questions need to be tailored depending on the distribution modality. For cash-based interventions, a more in-depth market analysis will also be required. Conduct ongoing market price monitoring to determine if the cash transfer value needs to be adjusted, the impact of material distributions and to ensure that any cash transfers are not causing localized inflation.

PDM can enable you to ask about cross-cutting issues, including those related to gender and safety concerns. However, questions should not be directed to finding out about GBV incidents, as this may endanger survivors as well as staff.



ANNEXES

GBV Constant Companion

This annex contains a “cut-out & fold” Constant Companion that explains what to do if a GBV incident is disclosed to you during your work.

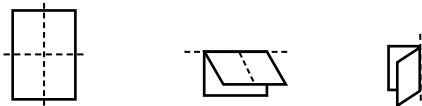
More versions in different languages, along with a video on GBV disclosure, are available at www.sheltercluster.org/gbv

Instructions

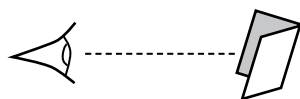
Cut it out.



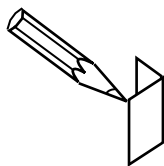
Fold it...



Read it.



Identify available services and contacts.



And keep it in your pocket....



- DO NOT **force help** on people, be intrusive or pushy.
- DO NOT **pressure** the survivor into providing information or further details.
- DO NOT ask questions that make survivor **relive the experience**.
- DO NOT **doubt or contradict** the survivor.
- DO NOT **trivialize** the violence.
- DO NOT **provide counselling**. This is the role of a social worker/case manager.
- DO NOT offer advice or **judgements**.
- DO NOT **make false promises** or provide false information (or information you are not sure about).
- DO NOT **mediate** between the survivor and the perpetrator or a third person (e.g. family).
- DO NOT **share details of the incident** or personal identifiers unless the survivor says to do so (this includes family, police, community leaders, supervisors, etc).
- DO NOT **write down any details** of the incident or the survivor's personal details.
- DO NOT **assume you know what a survivor wants or needs**. Some actions may put the survivor at further risk of stigma, retaliation, or harm.
- Once a GBV referral has been made, DO NOT **ask for extra information or contact the survivor directly**.

DO NOT

DO'S AND DON'TS TO PROMOTE SAFETY, DIGNITY AND RIGHTS

- **DO be prepared**. Be informed about the services and support that are available in the location ahead of time.
- **DO address basic urgent needs**: Some survivors may need urgent medical care or clothing.
- **DO** make sure that both the survivor and you are **safe from immediate danger**.
- **DO provide practical care and support** (e.g. offer water, somewhere to sit, etc).
- **DO offer to contact a friend, family or other that would make the survivor feel safe and supported**.
- **DO** treat the information with **confidentiality** and listen to the disclosure in a safe, private place.
- **DO** behave appropriately by **considering the person's customs, religion and gender**.
- **DO offer comfort** to help reduce anxiety. Reassure the survivor that this was **not his/her fault**.
- **DO** be aware of and **set aside your own judgements**.
- **DO** respect the right of the survivors to make their own decision, **inform, do not give advice**.
- **DO** limit the number of people informed about the case (refer the case confidentially to appropriate GBV focal point, and only with the informed consent of the survivor).
- **DO** know how to **safely and confidentially refer** or link survivors with services where available.

DO

Gender-Based Violence Constant Companion

Location: _____

Available services and contacts:

In the absence of a localized referral pathway and GBV or Protection focal point, contact a provider of last resort (this may be a national GBV coordinating agency or agency specific Protection or GBV advisor, amongst others).

Gender-Based Violence Constant Companion

Contents of the fold-out:

This fold-out contains three basic tools for field practitioners to know what to do in case a GBV incident is disclosed to them.

- Do's and Dont's
- Responding to a GBV disclosure
- Location-specific available services



SAFELY AND ETHICALLY RESPONDING TO A GBV DISCLOSURE

...by the survivor
her/himself

A GBV incident is disclosed to you...

...by someone
else

Provide Psychological First Aid (PFA), if you are trained in PFA. If you are not trained in PFA, listen attentively and supportively using guidance on the reverse of this card.

Provide up-to-date and relevant information regarding services and support that may be available to the survivor. Encourage the individual to share this information safely and confidentially with the survivor so that s/he may disclose as willing.
Note: Do not seek out GBV survivors. Ask advice from a GBV or Protection specialist if you believe the survivor to be in imminent danger.

IS A REFERRAL PATHWAY AVAILABLE?

yes

no

Use the referral pathway process to inform the survivor about available services.

Communicate accurate information about services available or those that are not. Offer to seek advice from a GBV specialist on potential options available to the survivor.

Does the survivor choose to be referred to a specialized GBV service?

no

yes

Maintain confidentiality regarding the information shared. Explain that the survivor may change his/her mind and receive support at any time.
Note: If the survivor is in imminent danger, seek advice from a GBV specialist.

Refer the survivor in a safe and confidential manner adhering to local protocols and procedures. Do not share information about the case to anyone without explicit and informed consent of the survivor. Do not record details of the incident or personal identifiers of the survivor, this is the role of a case manager only.
Note: If concerned about the wellbeing of the survivor after referral, reach out to the GBV service provider directly, not to the survivor.

!
72-hour window!

Receiving quality medical care within 72 hours from an incident can prevent transmission of STI, and within 120 hours can prevent unwanted pregnancy.

CHILD PROTECTION

A child's best interests, his or her physical and emotional wellbeing as well as safety, are central to how we respond to GBV incidents experienced by persons under the age of 18. Sharing information should happen only after obtaining permissions from the child/caregiver, unless reporting is mandatory. Depending on the level of maturity of the child and local laws, children aged 15-17 can generally provide their own permission (for example, when a perpetrator is a parent or caregiver). Where mandatory reporting procedures exist, communicate these to the child and their caregiver. It is always essential to understand that the risks to girls and boys may be different, and female staff should always be at the frontline of response for child survivors. Always seek advice from child protection/GBV specialists wherever possible.

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 - 📖 Shelter Cluster at country level: [Safe Distributions](#).
See: <http://tiny.cc/safe-distribution-Iraq> (Examples of context-based guidelines for reducing risks in NFI and food distributions: Iraq).
 - 📖 Shelter Cluster: [Post distribution monitoring tools](#).
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Distributions are more than giving out items off the back of a truck.

Distributions are the most common component of Shelter/NFI programming and are conducted in wildly varying contexts.

Well planned and managed distributions can help safeguard the health, security, privacy and dignity of crisis-affected people, while poorly managed distributions can undermine these.

This booklet is aimed at Shelter/NFI team members working in distribution assessments, planning, implementation and post distribution monitoring. It highlights ways in which distributions can reduce some of the risks of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and avoid doing harm.

Simply put, this booklet is about good distributions...

Digital versions of this booklet are available for free download at:

www.sheltercluster.org/gbv



Global Shelter Cluster
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter