

# FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND NON-FOOD ITEMS



## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ People should have access to adequate and appropriate food and non-food items in a manner that ensures their survival, prevents erosion of their assets, and upholds their dignity.
- ▶ The participation of both male and female camp residents is essential in designing both ration card systems and distribution procedures in order to protect access to commodities for all groups.
- ▶ It is essential to share information with camp residents about the items to be distributed, the quantity to be distributed and the distribution procedures. Checking that the information has been understood by all can be done through monitoring.
- ▶ Assessments, house visits, warehouse checks, post-distribution monitoring surveys and interviews with camp residents should be conducted, to understand how commodities are used (or misused) and address any shortcomings. This should be done in cooperation with the food and NFI distributing agencies. For camp residents who are not familiar with the distributed items, information sessions should be organised.
- ▶ Persons with specific needs and groups at risk need to receive priority treatment in a camp setting. Depending on the nature of their vulnerability, fast access at distribution sites should be ensured, and increased amounts of items, and special assistance programmes like supplementary feeding centres, should be advocated for.
- ▶ The safety of staff, camp residents and commodities during distribution must be ensured.

## INTRODUCTION

Food and non-food items (NFIs) are vital to people's survival, health, well-being and dignity. In camp settings, where the population is likely to have limited or no access to outside resources, service providers may need to provide a full food basket, in addition to the most essential NFIs. Food and non-food items are valuable commodities in a camp setting and can cause serious security challenges. The distribution of food and NFIs therefore requires careful planning and management, to ensure equitable assistance to the displaced population and the safety and protection of all involved.

Ensuring camp residents' access to food and proper nutrition is a top priority, particularly in emergency situations. Displaced people have very little time and limited possibilities to take adequate amounts of food with them when they flee. Commonly, prior to flight they have been living in situations where they have been unable to meet their basic food requirements. Many arrive in camps already suffering from malnutrition.

Food security is closely linked to other camp sectors like water, sanitation, health, nutrition and protection. Ensuring that inter-sector linkages are made, and service providers coordinate smoothly at camp level, is the responsibility of the Camp Management Agency.

**!** Food security was defined by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) at the 1996 World Food Summit as ensuring, "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".

Non-food items are also connected to other camp sectors – especially shelter, water and environment. Individual households need to be provided with essential goods to protect them from the climate and maintain their health, privacy and dignity.

Whether the Camp Management Agency is supervising another agency or carrying out the delivery directly, distributions require very clear and transparent processes. They can take place more effectively and smoothly by forming and cooperating with a camp distribution committee with clear roles and responsi-

bilities, from within the camp population. Optimally, the committee should be involved in:

- assisting vulnerable members of the displaced population
- planning the distribution
- explaining the distribution process to the overall camp population
- managing the crowd during the event
- monitoring the distributions (food basket as well as post-distribution monitoring).

Throughout a distribution, staff will very likely be approached by beneficiaries, authorities or others with questions and complaints. Issues that frequently arise are:

- lack of familiarity with distribution procedures and location
- lost, missing or incorrect ration cards
- faulty items or bad quality food
- false claims in order to receive more items or food.

It is strongly recommended to appoint a focal point among the distribution staff to resolve these cases together with a representative from the camp distribution committee. Efficiently responding to questions and complaints will have direct impact on the number of issues likely to further arise.

## KEY ISSUES

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At the outset of an emergency, the context, urgency and available response capacities will dictate who will take responsibility for food and NFI distributions. Depending on the pace at which aid agencies arrive, as well as the size of the camp, the Camp Management Agency may have to, at least initially, assume the lead role as the distribution agency. At a later stage however, it may be more suitable to pass over this responsibility to other agencies that specialise in food or NFI distributions. Even if the Camp Management Agency is not conducting distribution directly, it may be required to dig deeper into distribution issues to know where camp residents' needs have and have not been met. The following are general guidelines to follow while supervising the work of food or NFI distribution agencies.

- ensure overall coordination between the distribution agencies, camp residents and distribution committees, and local authorities
- monitor the camp community's needs and gaps, with a particular focus on the needs of persons with specific needs and those at risk
- develop common procedures for carrying out distributions in the camp, and establish a camp distribution calendar that includes the day, time and any site and distribution-specific parameters. Harmonising approaches and cooperating with the camp distribution committees will be seen as more transparent
- check the warehousing, storage and upkeep of partner stockrooms to make sure that items intended for the camp population are kept safely and hygienically
- coordinate the security arrangements for distributions with the relevant authorities
- establish a post-distribution monitoring system to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of items and food distributed
- update and circulate demographic data on the camp population (changes in births, deaths, new arrivals or departures, as well as specific emerging needs) to the distribution agencies.

▶▶ *For more information on registration, see chapter 9.*

- advertise NFI and food distribution times, locations or changes in the food basket to the camp population
- set up camp distribution committees.

▶▶ *For more information on participation of the camp population, see chapter 3.*

- inform partner agencies of any changes that will affect the required number of commodities. Writing a formal written memo, even in a small harmonious working environment, is always a good idea. Keep copies of all official correspondence
- formalise the roles and responsibilities between the Camp Management Agency and the partner agencies for food and NFI clearly. Write them down and specify exact parameters of duties. The level of formality of these written agreements will vary in different contexts and depend on the stage of development of the camp or emergency, and may involve preparing a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

**!** If possible, the same distribution systems and procedures should apply equally for food and non-food commodities.

## **WORKING WITH DISTRIBUTION SERVICE AGENCIES**

Although several NGOs and humanitarian organisations are specialised in the food sector and distribution and may contribute to the donation of food in camps, the major food pipeline agency worldwide is the World Food Programme (WFP). The major suppliers for NFIs include UNHCR, UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and governments. There are also many other entities (for example national and international NGOs, local religious organisations or private initiatives) which contribute NFIs, often as strategic or implementing partners of the organisations mentioned above.

The general responsibilities of a distribution agency may vary from context to context but generally comprise:

- conducting needs assessments (inter-agency or location specific)
- making logistical arrangements (including ordering, transport)
- coordinating the delivery of commodities
- warehousing and storage of items
- managing the on-site distribution
- monitoring both during and post-distribution, including the use and quality of donated commodities.

Food needs assessments in new sites should be a joint operation between the Camp Management Agency, camp residents, authorities and aid agencies, and usually cover the population's:


- nutritional status
- potential to increase self-reliance
- vulnerability
- access to cooking fuel
- food preferences.

If some of the population is severely malnourished, the assessment may require more specialised calculations and referrals for therapeutic feeding centres.

## DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

There are three types or systems of distribution applied by UNHCR. They are distributions to:


- Groups of beneficiaries through the group leadership. This option is an approach frequently applied in the earliest phase of an emergency with large influxes of people. When registration has not taken place yet, and/or ration cards have not been issued, this may be the only option. One of the challenges of this system is that it increases the risk of abuse and can make some individuals more vulnerable, as leaders may distribute according to their own preferences.
- Representatives of a group of household heads, who then immediately distribute to the individual household heads. This system may be chosen in the transitional period between the earliest emergency phase and the establishment of a proper camp, or even in situations when there is little space to distribute and only a limited number of people can be received at distribution points. If it is well organised, a group system of distribution decentralises control and increases the level of community involvement and self-management in the distribution process.
- Individuals directly who act as heads of households, preferably women. Depending on the context, this is often the most preferable and common system used once a camp is established, and registration and the issuing of ration cards has taken place. Only distribution to individual household heads will make sure that all individuals in the camp receive their rations equitably.

 Encourage women to represent individual households and receive food and NFI rations. Experience shows that frustration and aggression caused by displacement can make men behave inappropriately and sell parts of the rations.

►► *Detailed descriptions of distribution systems can be found in the Commodity Distribution Guide (UNHCR, 1998) on the CD which comes with this Toolkit.*

In order to make sure that a distribution system is soundly set-up and suitable for the camp population, the Camp Management Agency and the food providers need to:

- set up a ration card system before the distribution of commodities is to take place. Most food aid providers will have developed a ration card database which can be adapted to the local context
- make a predictable (monthly/weekly) distribution cycle. This is especially critical for food distributions. Having a regular cycle will also make it easier to follow up on problems that arise during distributions
- announce any distribution well in advance, so that no one misses out
- organise distributions so that only a limited number of beneficiaries will be present at one distribution site at any one time. This will avoid security incidents and delays, which can set back the overall distribution schedule
- establish complaints mechanisms, so camp residents can ensure a way to verify entitlements and services. In case of fraud, theft or abuse, camp residents must be able to voice their complaints and know that the Camp Management Agency or service provider will take action
- develop a post-distribution monitoring system. Evaluation of the quality, sufficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of distributions helps to improve the overall distribution system and approach.

 The development of the first Camp Management Toolkit in 2004 was in large part based on experiences in IDP camps in Sierra Leone. There, the quality of distributions varied a great deal from camp to camp. In poorly-managed camps, where complaints mechanisms were not in place, camp residents, particularly females, were frequently abused by humanitarian organisations' staff who took advantage of their superior positions and – with impunity – demanded bribes or favours in return for distributions.

 In neighbouring camps, distributions should take place simultaneously to prevent fraud, resale or recycling.



## CAMP DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEES

Establishing camp distribution committees will require a more or less stable environment but ideally ensures the participation and involvement of the camp population. Committees should ideally reflect the ratio of men and women in the population, and all groups in the camp should be represented. All issues related to distribution should be discussed freely here and brought to the appropriate agency's attention.

Using camp distribution committees as a link between the agency in charge of distribution, the Camp Management Agency and the camp population will help to:

- keep unrealistic expectations in check
- ensure overall understanding of procedures and restrictions
- ensure receipt of feedback from the camp population on all issues related to distribution.

**!** Make sure that the agency in charge of distributions establishes a code of conduct for the members of the camp distribution committee, including training and sensitisation.

## INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Messages informing camp residents on the arrival and distribution of supplies should contain the basics on who, what, when, where, and how. Pre-distribution announcements are the responsibility of the distributing agency, though the Camp Management Agency should monitor and supervise them. Such information announcements should:

- reach out to all different groups in the camp using multiple channels of communication
- particularly involve women and the camp distribution committees in order to avoid information going out only through the community leaders, who might have their own political agenda
- use different methodologies and means such as meetings with groups of beneficiaries (including those at risk), posters and picture messages, information boards, radio, megaphone and others
- use the local language and reach out also to those camp residents who are non-literate
- allow for camp residents to fully understand the messages and give feedback.

**!** Mistakes made during distribution may well lead to disorder, confusion or violence at the distribution site. Simple things like knowing what items (e.g. boxes, buckets, bags) to bring to the collection site in order to carry away received food can help a lot in keeping queues down and people calm and orderly.

►► *For more information on information management, see chapter 5.*

**!** Distributions should never coincide with local or camp populations' national holidays or religious festivals.

## **ORGANISING DISTRIBUTION SITES**

Distribution sites, whether designed by the Camp Management Agency or by a food/NFI service provider, must be constructed in such a way that distributions and the collection of commodities can be carried out safely, efficiently and in an orderly way.

UNHCR recommends at least one distribution site per 20,000 individuals and two distribution staff per 1,000 beneficiaries, not including monitors or security staff.

In general, distribution sites should be:

- centrally located with a limited walking distance to shelters (maximum distance of 5 km), and accessible for all beneficiaries/camp residents, including those that are less mobile
- secure, to ensure that items are not stolen or misappropriated
- organised in such a way that women do not have to travel after dark or go through military/police checkpoints to reach them
- not too close to congested areas such as open markets, clinics or religious buildings
- near to water points and constructed with separate latrines for men and women
- big enough for on-site commodity storage and shelter for queuing during delays or rain

- near to rest facilities for distribution workers
- constructed near to vegetation or trees, which provide shade and act as windbreaks
- provided with chairs or benches for persons unable to stand in line.

**!** In some cases, site access for bulky items like heavy shelter items may need to be considered and specific suitable locations identified around the camp.

**!** Experienced Camp Management Agencies suggest making sure that large maps of the camp distribution point(s) are drawn and made publicly and easily accessible for all camp residents in order to facilitate their understanding of where to go to receive different food or non-food items.

►► *For more information on organisation of a camp distribution system see the Tools section at the end of this chapter.*

**!** **Management of storage sites and warehouse facilities**

Each agency will have their own set of forms and commodity warehousing procedures. However, the tips below given by an emergency coordinator from an NGO will help the agency in charge of distributions to improve its warehouse and storage arrangements.

1. Wherever possible, employ a warehouse officer so as to ensure appropriate division of responsibility between procurement, transportation and programme functions. In conjunction with this division of labour, limit the number of people that have keys/access to the warehouse.

2. Implement a strong inventory management system based on way-bills, stock cards, bin cards and an inventory ledger. This can be computerised or paper-based, but everyone must invest in it and the management must audit it regularly. ►►

3. Have enough staff on standby who can be mobilised at short notice for loading and off loading of commodities.

4. Hire security staff for the warehouse. They can help make sure that other staff and stored items are not put at risk. Unfortunately, theft and fraud by an agency's own staff or as a result of criminality within displaced communities is often common in camp settings.

5. Ensure the warehouse is clean and, wherever possible, keep stock off the floor by using shelves and/or pallets. This will improve cleanliness, organisation and therefore accountability. Depending on what is being stored, rodent control is also a must. Consider getting a cat!

6. Invest in a clear and well-enforced stock-release request system where only a limited number of management staff can authorise the release of stock. Such a system should have clear time lines so programme staff understand how much notice they need to give the warehouse officer before their goods will be ready for pick up.

7. Take pride in the warehouse and its staff. Wherever possible, ensure that the warehouse officer has a lockable office, on site electricity and appropriate bathroom facilities. Invest in training, backed up by impromptu stock checks. If you provide support and show appreciation of the effort put into the management of the inventory, it is more likely to remain in the warehouse.

►► *For more information on the management of warehouses and storage sites, see the Tools section of this chapter*

**!** Remember that food is easily perishable and can quickly be affected by insects and rodents. Thus, secure storage of food will likely require different and more protective measures than the storage of NFI items.

## **SAFETY AT DISTRIBUTION SITES/CROWD CONTROL**

Distribution sites can quickly become chaotic, crowded and potentially dangerous places to both field staff as well as beneficiaries. In the event of riots or demonstrations, sometimes the only solution is to evacuate staff and abandon commodities. Prevent such situations through careful planning. The following recommendations may help:

- know the local context, existing or emerging tensions between groups within or surrounding the camp
- have security personnel/local authorities nearby to deal with problems if they get out of hand. In high security areas, it may be advisable to get permission before carrying out distributions
- identify potential threats that may disrupt the distribution site, through joint assessments including the displaced population, concerned humanitarian stakeholders and the local authorities. Mapping out the potential risks in the lay-out of the site or in the way the distribution is organised can help identify what changes need to be made before the next distribution
- ask the UN security and/or local law enforcement authority to assess the safety of distribution sites and make similar recommendations. Remember in most contexts, security during food and NFI distributions will be the responsibility of local authorities/local law enforcement agencies. However, in some conflict situations, local law enforcement agencies will not be viewed as neutral by camp residents, and other crowd control mechanisms may be necessary. The Camp Management Agency should have a contingency plan
- place a clear distance between queues and the piles of commodities being distributed. Lining up trucks or building fences will not deter a crowd set on reaching commodities in case of riot
- keep waiting time to a minimum, making sure that the distribution takes place in an efficient manner
- to avoid crowds, organise the distribution in such a way that a minimum number of beneficiaries will be present at any given time. This could be done by calling on the camp distribution committee to assist, or handing out tokens that tell people when to arrive

- put in place a distribution circuit through which the beneficiaries have to pass in order to receive assistance. Clearly mark boundaries of the distribution site and the queue systems through the use of signs or guide ropes
- place sufficient crowd control staff strategically around the site
- efficiently communicate key information, especially in the case of shortages or changes in the food basket or distribution systems
- appoint one person to be responsible for security decisions on the spot. Make sure that all other staff are aware of which person it is. S/he should be easily visible
- show the items that are going to be distributed to the distribution committee prior to the distribution taking place. This will allow them to verify the commodities and address any complaints that may arise from the camp population with more authority
- provide staff with communication means like radios, whistles or establish another method to signal an emergency
- treat cases of cheating or disorder quickly and fairly. Move offenders away from the distribution site as quickly as possible.

▶▶ *For more information on camp and staff security, see chapter 12.*

### **PERSONS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS AND GROUPS AT RISK**

The Camp Management Agency should encourage distribution agencies and food providers to organise:

- separate fast track queues – prioritising persons with specific needs and those at risk, such as larger families, separated children or older people. These criteria should be set out in the harmonisation process (the process used for all distributions), and be well known to the population
- transportation of heavy or cumbersome items from the distribution site back to individual homes with wheel barrows, donkey carts, or community support groups

- sun and rain-protected resting places reserved particularly for older people, small children, those with impaired mobility or breastfeeding mothers.

## **Distribution and Sexual Exploitation**

There have been many field investigations documenting the link between assistance delivered in a camp setting and sexual exploitation. Making sure the camp population know what commodities are being distributed (both within the food basket and at NFI distributions) can help in reducing exploitation and abuse. In particular, displaced women and girls may not be aware of what items they are entitled to, and feel forced to deliver sexual services in return for food or NFIs. To curtail sexual abuse and exploitation, the Camp Management Agency should:

- encourage distribution agencies to have women actively involved in assessments, planning and actual distribution of commodities. Where men are predominantly in charge of distributions, there is a greater risk they will demand bribes or sexual favours
- identify high-risk areas for women (girls) within and surrounding the camp. When food is insufficient or lacks certain essential traditional ingredients, people will normally try to supplement their diets. Women venturing out for complementary food are inevitably more at risk of gender-based violence (GBV). In such situations, food intervention programmes need to be adjusted so that the food basket is more in line with food practices of the displaced population
- take measures to reduce the risk of GBV through complementary programming. Introducing fuel-saving stoves, promoting community patrolling or other community-based initiatives (such as collecting water in large groups), may diminish risks of GBV for women and children. Addressing security risk areas and GBV requires an inter-agency approach.

▶▶ *For more information about protection, see chapter 8,*

▶▶ *For more information about GBV, see chapter 10.*

▶▶ *For more information about persons with specific needs, see chapter 11.*

## FOOD AID

Food rations are usually based on the minimum calorific intake of 2,100 kilocalories per person/per day. Using these calculations, an average adult will require 560 grams of food each day.

In protracted situations this figure is usually adjusted to suit local conditions and to take into account the population's actual nutritional requirements and ability to access and grow its own food. The requirements of micronutrients should also be considered.

Remember that pregnant women will need an additional 300 kcal per day as well as a balanced diet, whereas a breastfeeding woman will need an additional 500 kcal per day in order not to jeopardise her own or her child's health.

Knowledge of minimum daily food requirements will help a Camp Management Agency in the event that it is required to distribute or facilitate the ordering of food commodities. Note that a full food basket cannot always be sourced or distributed, and the agreed-upon contents should be discussed with the food sector lead. Usually, items in a full food basket will contain a combination of basic food items such as:

- wheat flour, maize meal, bulgur wheat, sorghum or rice (cereals) – 420 grams/day/person
- dried lentils or beans (pulses/legumes) – 50 grams/day/person
- cooking oil (fats) – 25 grams/day/person
- salt – 5 grams/day/person.

Calculated for a camp population of 10,000 people, this will give:

- fortified blended food – 40–50 grams/day/person
- daily – 5.6 metric tons
- weekly – 39.2 metric tons
- monthly (30 days) – 168 metric tons

One metric ton is 1,000 kg



Examples of daily rations for food-aid reliant populations  
(from WFP's Emergency Field Operations Pocketbook)

FOOD	TYPE 1	TYPE 2	TYPE 3	TYPE 4
Maize meal/rice/bulgur wheat	400	420	350	420
Beans	60	50	100	60
Vegetable oil	25	25	25	30
Canned fish/meat	-	20	-	30
Fortified blended food	50	40	50	
Sugar	15	-	20	20
Salt	5	5	5	5
Total (g/day)	555	560	550	565
NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF THE ABOVE RATIONS				
Energy (kcal)	2,113	2,106	2,087	2,092
Protein (g and % kcal)	58 g/11%	60 g/11%	72 g/14%	45 g/9%
Fat (g and %)	43 g/18%	47 g/20%	43 g/18%	38 g/16%

If maize is given as grain, it is necessary to consider loss during milling, including possible payments in food made by camp residents for the milling. It may therefore be necessary to increase ration size.

Additionally, depending on the situation, the following commodities may be distributed to the displaced population:

- sugar
- fortified blended food, like corn-soy blend (CSB)
- canned meat and/or fish
- fresh fruit and vegetables
- multi-vitamins.

**!** Baseline nutritional requirements (WHO): 2,100 kcal/person/day, including 10–12% of the total energy from proteins, 17% of total energy from fat, and adequate micronutrient intake through fresh and fortified food.

## **Food Basket Monitoring and Post-Distribution Monitoring**

At the time of distribution, make sure that the food agencies carry out Food Basket Monitoring. This consists of selecting a random number of families at the distribution site, weighing their rations and comparing the results with the planned ration and the family size mentioned on their ration cards.

After a distribution, a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey should be conducted. This aims to collect information at the household level on the quantity of food received, the use of food aid, and its acceptability and quality (WFP definition). PDM is carried out on average two weeks after a monthly distribution.

## **Additional In-Camp Food Programmes**

Depending on needs, context and feasibility, school feeding programmes are usually recommended as a way to encourage children to attend, and as a way to encourage parents to send children to school. When food is distributed to schools for storage and preparation, there is a need to closely monitor the use of quantities. Cooks, teachers and other staff involved need to be aware that the food is meant to feed school children rather than be an additional “source of income” for the school’s staff. The Camp Management Agency needs to monitor to ensure that no food is stolen and no children are asked to pay for meals.

▶▶ *School feeding programmes may also be linked to HIV/AIDS education. See WFP document in Reading and References at the end of this chapter.*

## **Supplementary and Therapeutic Feeding Programmes**

Supplementary feeding programmes (SFP) may need to be set up to prevent malnutrition by providing additional food, often only to a section of the population. Therapeutic feeding programmes (TFP) aim to reduce mortality by providing more individual treatment for those who are severely malnourished.

In situations where food is scarce, supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes are not always understood by all of the camp population and therefore can create envy or may even worsen the situation for children whose parents feel that they already get enough to eat at a clinic and do not have to receive food at home. To avoid more critical nutrition problems developing in the camp, the Camp Management Agency must do its utmost to ensure that the aim of supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes (including the grounds for admission to these programmes) is widely understood.

▶▶ *For more information on malnutrition, see chapter 16.*

**!** Exclusive breastfeeding is the healthiest way to feed a baby under six months old. Babies who are exclusively breastfed receive no pre-lactates (formula or other milk products), water, tea or complementary foods. Where the rate of exclusive breastfeeding is typically low there may be requests by the camp population for milk powder or other formula substitutes. It is important to work with health and nutritional service providers to promote and support exclusive breastfeeding techniques.

## **NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFIS)**

Shelter materials, water containers, clothing, bedding material, kitchen sets and other NFIs are probably the most essential commodities to meet immediate personal needs. By maintaining health and providing protection against weather conditions they give displaced persons back their dignity and provide comfort to meet personal needs, cook and eat food and construct or repair shelters.

Identifying the needs, gaps and access to NFIs is one of the primary responsibilities of a Camp Management Agency. Where resources are scarce and do not cover the needs of the entire population, distributions for persons with specific needs need to be prioritised.

### **Non-Food items for Construction and Shelter**

Involving camp residents in the construction of their shelters and latrines should be done to the maximum extent possible. Including camp residents in tasks like selecting building materials and tools, maintaining drainage systems, designing and positioning of camp infrastructure such as distribution sites, will all support the camp population to create initial order.

Depending on type of shelter and cultural context, shelter items often include plastic sheeting or tarpaulins. Both tools and materials wear out over time and follow-up distributions may be necessary. Tools may include:

- hammers
- shovels
- spades
- axes
- nails
- ropes.

**!** In malaria-risk environments, treated mosquito nets should be provided to each household.

▶▶ For more information on shelter construction see chapter 15.

## Clothing and Bedding Material

The following recommendations are made in the Sphere handbook:

- Every camp resident should be provided with one full set of clothing in the correct size. To enable laundering, particularly of underclothing, more than one set should ideally be provided. Make sure that clothing is culturally acceptable and suitable for the season and climate.
- Every camp resident should have access to a combination of bedding materials and mattresses/mats, to provide thermal comfort and allow for separate sleeping arrangements as needed.
- Infants and children up to the age of two must have a blanket of a minimum size of 100x70 cm.
- Culturally appropriate burial clothes are provided when needed.

**!** Sick people, those with impaired mobility, older people and children will have more difficulty in enduring cold weather conditions and will require extra layers of clothing to keep warm. Give them priority where the entire camp cannot be served.

## Personal Hygiene

Each person ideally receives once a month:

- 250g of bathing soap
- 200g of laundry soap
- sanitary materials for menstruation for women and girls
- 12 washable nappies/diapers (where they are commonly used) for infants and children up to the age of two.

Additional materials such as toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo and razors may be distributed depending on cultural appropriateness/availability.

**!** Older people, people who are less mobile, those who are chronically ill, people with incontinence problems, persons with disabilities and those living with HIV/AIDS should receive additional quantities of soap for bathing and washing clothes. (Sphere Handbook, 2004).

## Eating and Cooking Utensils

Each household in a camp should benefit from distribution of:

- a kitchen set including cooking, eating and drinking utensils. All plastic items should be of food grade plastic and all metallic utensils should be of stainless steel or alternative non-ferrous metal.
- two containers/jerry cans for water collection and storage, each holding 10–20 litres. Water collection containers should have lids, be easy to carry – even for children – and easily kept clean in order to avoid water contamination and subsequent risk of waterborne diseases.

Distributions of cooking and eating utensils will depend on the size of each family as well as the durability, quality and availability of the items.

▶▶ *For more information, see chapter 14.*

## Stoves and Fuel

While planning distributions of stoves and fuel, the responsible agency and the Camp Management Agency must consider:

- the availability and options of cooking facilities and fuel such as gas, kerosene or fuelwood
- fuel-saving strategies to preserve the surrounding natural environment. Some tips for fuel-saving cooking strategies are to:
  1. distribute split grains rather than whole grains – such as beans, lentils and rice – which take less time to cook
  2. encourage chopping and proper drying of firewood so that it burns at a higher temperature, and less is needed.

▶▶ *For information on energy-saving strategies see chapter 6.*

- information on who will be preparing food in individual households
- whether a stove and fuel are required for heating in colder climates as well as for cooking
- whether there is sufficient ventilation in housing if stoves are used indoors
- the design of stoves in order to lower the risk of fire and take into consideration local cooking practices.

Where possible, it is recommended to promote communal or shared cooking facilities. These reduce fuel use and reduce risks from exposure to fire and smoke – particularly for women and children.

**!** Where camp residents cannot be provided with the full amount of fuel required, they are likely to go outside the camp to collect more. Thus, introducing fuel saving techniques is an important protection function as it lessens the exposure of women and children, in particular, to harassment outside of camps.

It may be preferable to use fuel that is available locally, rather than transport it over greater distances. However use caution to ensure that local resources are not diminished to the point of exhaustion, both for environmental reasons as well as to keep good relations with the host community.

▶▶ *For more information on a camp's environmental management plan, see chapter 6.*

### **School Kits**

Where school kits are distributed to camp schools and pupils, they mostly include:

- notebooks
- pencils
- crayons
- rulers
- pencil sharpeners
- back-packs or bags to carry books to and from school.

►► For more information on school equipment, including a “school in a box”, see chapter 17.

## Gardening Sets

Depending on local horticultural practices, where tools and sets for vegetable cultivation are distributed, they usually include:

- seeds
- spades
- machetes
- rakes
- watering cans,
- buckets.

Where appropriate, gardening tools could also be provided in support of other livelihood activities.

**!** As part of post-distribution monitoring it is important to determine the extent to which distributed items are being sold or swapped. This can be indicative of errors in the distribution system, or of coping mechanisms which people use to obtain essential items that have not been distributed. It may also indicate incorrect population figures, that inappropriate items have been distributed or that people have a need for cash. This monitoring may be carried out at the household level or at the markets.

## CHECKLIST FOR A CAMP MANAGEMENT AGENCY

### Overall Issues and Principles for Commodity Distribution

- Decide on what distribution system best suits the context – for example, individual scooping or a group distribution system.
- Establish the required food distribution mechanisms, including Food Distribution Committees (taking into account appropriate gender representation).
- Ensure the beneficiary figures are known and that the amount of commodities available is sufficient to cover the whole group, be it a targeted or a general distribution.
- Ensure that information concerning the distribution – such as the items, quantities, target and procedure – is disseminated to the population concerned.
- Ensure that plans are in place to cater for groups with specific needs.
- Ensure that the appropriate security measures are in place to ensure a smooth distribution, such as crowd control and safety of commodities.
- Ensure that the required monitoring mechanisms are in place, such as on-site monitoring during distribution, food-basket monitoring (or NFI) and post-distribution monitoring.
- Put in place complaint mechanisms.

### Specific Issues to Consider in Preparation for and During each Distribution

#### *Organising Distribution Area*

- The distribution is organised so that people wait in an orderly manner, in queues.
- The food/NFIs are handled properly, and food is not spilled on the ground.
- The distribution area is properly sheltered from sun, rain and wind.
- The distribution area is kept clean.



- There is enough security provided to ensure an orderly distribution.
- There are enough staff present for crowd-control.
- The area is clearly defined by rope or plastic.

#### ***Distribution Process and Name Verification***

- The ration card is verified to check the holder's identity and to check whether the holder is on the beneficiary list.
- The ration card is punched or otherwise marked upon entry of the distribution site/upon receiving food/NFI.
- The agency uses a computerised beneficiary list.
- All food distributing staff wear gloves – observing hygiene rules – when handling food items.
- Family group sizes remain constant during the food distribution cycle and any changes in family size are recorded by the distribution agency.
- Loudspeakers are used to call out the names of the beneficiaries.

#### ***Distribution Equity and Vulnerable Beneficiaries***

- There is a separate line for easy access for persons with specific needs.
- A staff member is involved in assisting the more vulnerable persons or those at heightened risk in receiving their distribution/ration.
- A staff member is monitoring the line for persons requiring additional assistance.
- Persons who are not on the list are not given food/NFI items. Swift action is undertaken to find out why they are not on the beneficiary list.
- Everybody receives the same agreed upon ration and the quantities are monitored.

### *Information Sharing on the Distribution*

- All beneficiaries are well-informed of the distribution day, place and time and on the quantity of items they are to receive.
- All beneficiaries are well-informed of the quantity of food contained in one scoop in food distributions, and the scoop size is consistent.
- All beneficiaries are well-informed of changes in the food basket/ration.
- Information is disseminated at appropriate times and in appropriate ways.
- Different approaches are used to properly inform the persons with specific needs (minors/deaf persons/older persons/those who are sick).
- Standards of accountability (humanitarian code of conduct) are observed by the implementing partner.

### *Time of the Distribution*

- The distribution starts on time.
- The implementing partner arrives on time in order to make all the set-up preparations.
- The items are off-loaded and handled in a proper and safe way.
- WFP, UNHCR, USAID, (other donor agency), and the implementing partner on the ground are there throughout the distribution process.

### *If Scoops Are Being Used in Food Distribution*

- Standard scoops are used.
- All scoops are precise and marked to show the exact quantity.
- The same scoops are used for the different food items.
- If scoops are changed between distributions while food rations remain the same, this is clearly explained to the beneficiaries.

## TOOLS

**!** Almost all the tools, publications and other documents referred to are available on the Toolkit CD attached to every hardcopy binder. Weblinks are provided for downloadable online resources.

- **Examples for food and nutrition indicators.**  
[http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food\\_page.htm](http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food_page.htm)
- **Food Distribution Monitoring Checklist.**  
[www.the-ecentre.net/toolkit/Food/FTM-2\(b\).doc](http://www.the-ecentre.net/toolkit/Food/FTM-2(b).doc)
- **Gender and non-food items in emergencies (from the IASC Gender Handbook).** [www.who.int/hac/network/interagency/b6\\_non\\_food\\_items.pdf](http://www.who.int/hac/network/interagency/b6_non_food_items.pdf)
- **Key points for an effective distribution system (from UNHCR *Commodity Distribution Guide*, 1997).** [http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food\\_page.htm#FTP-3](http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food_page.htm#FTP-3)
- **Principles of storage and warehousing (from UNHCR *Supplies and Food Aid Handbook*, 1989).**  
[http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food\\_page.htm#FTP-3](http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food_page.htm#FTP-3)
- **Sample Food Plan.**  
[http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food\\_page.htm#FTP-3](http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food_page.htm#FTP-3)
- **Strategies to counteract ration shortfalls.**  
[http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food\\_page.htm#FTP-3](http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food_page.htm#FTP-3)
- **Warehouse checklist (from UNJLC).**
- **Warehouse Manager. Specific example of a Terms of Reference (from RedR).**
- **WFP, UNHCR. *Joint Food Needs Assessment*.**  
[http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food\\_page.htm](http://202.54.104.236/intranet/hfn/Food/Food_page.htm)

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