

## A checklist for community engagement and accountability (CEA) and protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) for relief distributions

This checklist provides practical actions you can take before, during and after a relief distribution to help it run as smoothly as possible by ensuring a good level of engagement with the community and PGI. The checklist is on the first page, and additional guidance is on the following pages if you need help the implement the actions.

FIRST CONTACT	REGISTRATION PROCESS	AT THE DISTRIBUTION		
		BEFORE	DURING	AT THE END
Meet with community leaders, including at least one female representative, before the distribution and ask for advice on the best method to register and distribute NFIs. Explain who you are and why the location has been chosen and be clear what you need from the community leaders, so they understand their role. <sup>1</sup> <i>Some questions to ask leaders are below.</i>	Train or brief volunteers on basic community engagement and PGI before the registration process. <sup>2</sup> <i>List of training topics below.</i>	Lots of signage around the distribution site, in pictures and using local language. <sup>6</sup> <i>See below for list of signs you should have</i>	Keep repeating key information throughout the distribution. Have flip charts with you to add new signs. <sup>4</sup> <i>Refer to list of key information to share</i>	Using the megaphone, explain the distribution has ended and the information desk will close.
	Provide a question and answer sheet to volunteers to use when in communities to help them share consistent information. <sup>3</sup> <i>Questions for a Q&amp;A below.</i>	Have an information desk with a clear process for how to deal with different questions, complaints and feedback. <sup>7</sup> <i>See information desk advice below</i>		
Meet with elderly, disabled and other vulnerable group representatives – or at least ask about the needs of this group and if they would face barriers accessing the distribution site. If so, look for solutions.	For those who are receiving items, explain the distribution process, ticketing and how much items weigh and if they need to organise transport. Warn the most vulnerable they will need help to carry items home. <sup>4</sup> <i>See below for list of key information to share with people.</i>	Make sure you have enough volunteers for good community engagement. Seek to establish a team with a balanced representation of different genders and ages. <sup>8</sup> <i>See below for number and roles.</i>	Serve vulnerable groups first –pregnant women, elderly, anyone with disabilities.	At the end of the distribution, if you have goods left try not to have them visible as people will not understand why you cannot distribute them.
Targeting specific groups can potentially cause tensions in a community. Discuss the proposed selection criteria with community leaders and ask them if they agree, and what challenges this might cause and how they could be addressed.	Allow time for volunteers to explain to each household the targeting criteria and the reason behind it. Take extra time to explain to those who were not selected – they are the ones who will disrupt your distribution.	Consider sharing the beneficiary list with community leaders for verification. Depending on the context and culture you may also want to post it publicly.		
If it is a distribution of menstrual hygiene management materials this must be conducted in a sensitive manner. This might include distribution through women’s groups or at venues where girls are together.	Consider putting posters in the community with key information. <sup>4</sup> <i>See below for list of key information to share with people.</i>	Have an updated list and contact details of agencies and professionals for SGBV, child protection, legal and psychosocial support services to which you can refer survivors of SGBV or children who reveal an incident of violence to you.	Don’t distribute in the dark. It can put at risk of breaking the do no harm principle.	Hold a debrief with volunteers and community leaders to collect their feedback on what can be improved for the next distribution.
	Involve the community leaders in the registration process.			
Depending on the context, consider a meeting with the whole community to explain selection criteria and distribution process (more appropriate for small communities).	Communicate widely in the community that aid is free to minimise the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and corruption. <sup>5</sup> <i>A list of ways to do this is below</i>			

### **1. Questions to ask during initial meeting with leaders**

- What language do people most commonly speak in the community?
- What is the best method to inform people in the community of what is happening? For example, which communication channels do they use?
- Are there any tensions in the community we should be aware of when conducting this distribution? Is there a chance we could put anyone at risk?
- When should the distribution happen so that both men, women, persons with disabilities, labourers, single-headed households etc. are able to attend?
- What would be a safe location for the distribution point? Are both men, women, elderly, persons with disabilities etc. able to safely travel to this point?
- How can we ensure that people living with disabilities and elderly have access to the distribution?
- How can we ensure that children do not become separated at the distribution point?

### **2. Training topics for volunteers (CEA & PGI)**

- Overview of the organisation (especially if volunteers are new to the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement) purpose of the assessment, distribution processes and selection criteria rationale so that volunteers can confidently answer questions from community members
- All staff and volunteers should have signed the Code of Conduct and have received a briefing on it, including prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and how to report misconduct
- Good communication skills and how to speak to people clearly and with respect
- How to answer questions honestly and clearly, including sensitive issues linked to sexual exploitation and abuse, violence or corruption
- Go here for CEA training materials <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/tool-14-training-communication-skills-training-materials/>

### **3. Common questions to include on a question and answer sheet for volunteers**

- Who is the Red Cross Red Crescent?
- What items will I receive?
- When will the distribution happen? What will be the process?
- What are the selection criteria and why?
- Why are you not helping everyone?
- Do I have to pay for this help?
- We need help now, so why are you asking all these questions?
- When will you come back, and what will you do?
- Why are you providing this, when we really need something else? (e.g. food, hospital care, water etc)
- How can I become a volunteer?
- How can I complain?
- Go here for a sample question and answer sheet <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/tool-6-qa-for-volunteers-and-staff/>

#### 4. List of key information to share with communities

- What aid is being provided – so people know what they should receive
- Give information, demonstrations or leaflets on how to use the items being distributed – this helps ensure people use items correctly
- That aid is provided free of charge – to minimise the risk of corruption and sexual exploitation and abuse
- What your selection criteria is – use pictures to demonstrate this (e.g. a poster of a pregnant women, a picture of a fully destroyed house)
- How you are selecting people – to demonstrate this is done fairly and transparently and address any concerns people have about not being included
- Why you are not able to help everyone – limited resources, need to prioritize the most vulnerable of the aid is targeted at a specific group
- The process for distribution – date, times, location, whether people will need transport to take the items home, what they need to bring with them
- Process to complain (if one exists)
- Go here for a template poster <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/tool-13-template-leaflets-posters/>

#### 5. Methods of sharing information with communities

Firstly, it is important to find out how the community gets information now. You can do this by asking the community leaders, checking with the local volunteers or through secondary data about the media landscape in the country (google 'media landscape guide <name of country>'). Good options include;

- Through community volunteers – but they need to be trained and you need to check they are definitely spreading the information widely
- Putting up posters in key locations in the community (notice boards, schools, health centres, markets, bus stations – anywhere people gather)
- Holding a community meeting – if the community is small enough
- Asking the leaders and community representatives to spread the information – but you need to check that they are actually sharing the information
- Send out SMS to people in the community if you have their telephone numbers – you can do this through a bulk SMS service (google 'bulk SMS service')
- Announcements on the local radio
- Through sound trucks – loudspeakers on a vehicle that play recorded messages and travel around the community
- Through social media if the community has wide access
- Go here for more information on choosing channels of communication <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/tool-8-communication-channels/>

#### 6. Signage you should have at your distribution

Signs should use local languages and pictures if literacy is low and include;

- A list and pictures of exactly what people will receive – this helps prevent corruption and alerts you instantly if something has been mistakenly missed
- Different areas of the distribution – for example where the information desk is, where people go to queue, where the entrance and exits are
- Signs of the geographical area you are covering in the distribution – this helps respond to people who turn up who are not from the area you are targeting
- Pictures and explanation of the selection criteria – pregnant women, elderly person, fully destroyed house etc
- Posters that explain all aid is free to minimise the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and corruption
- Posters highlighting any telephone helplines that exist for people to raise concerns, including reporting sexual exploitation and abuse, corruption or where to get help in relation sexual and gender-based violence

## 7. Advice on having an information desk

An information desk is very important at a distribution as it gives people a place they can go to ask questions that is separate from the main distribution, meaning your distribution is less likely to be disrupted and the community feel their concerns have been listened to. Some advice for an information desk includes;

- Develop a clear process for how to respond to different questions and complaints – decide in advance how you will respond to likely questions like ‘I meet the criteria and you didn’t assess me’ and be clear about what you can respond to and what you cannot. If possible, have an investigation process if people genuinely seem like they were missed in the registration. An option could be using local leaders (if they are trustworthy) to verify the claims people are making
- Provide extra community engagement training for the volunteers who will manage the information desk
- Prepare a question and answer sheet to help information desk volunteers respond to the different questions they will likely receive
- The information desk should be separate from the distribution and give people privacy to make a complaint and include a male and female volunteer
- Have a table and chairs for both the volunteers and the person making the complaint
- The information desk should be clearly signposted
- Have a method for recording the feedback you received – this can be on paper, on a spreadsheet on a laptop, on a mobile device using mobile data collection
- If possible, have a list of other agencies you can refer people to for specific services (SGBV, hospital, water, food distributions, PSS etc)
- Go here for more guidance and tools on feedback systems <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/document/tool-15-feedback-starter-kit/>

## 8. Community engagement volunteer roles for relief distributions

In addition to the volunteers you need for distribution, consider adding;

- 2 volunteers for the information desk
- 2-3 volunteers to circulate in the crowd and provide information depending on the size of your distribution
- The volunteers at the entrance and exit to the distribution line should also be ready to provide information and answer questions

## 9. CEA and PGI questions you can include in your post-distribution monitoring

- Were you informed in advance about the registration? About the distribution? By whom?
- Were you satisfied with the amount of information shared with you before the distribution? If no, what was missing?
- Are you satisfied with the selection procedure for this distribution? If no, why not?
- Can you name the main reasons why you were selected?
- Did you have to pay to be added to the distribution list? If yes, to whom?
- Were you given enough information about how to use the items given to you?
- Were there any security problems during / after the distribution? Did you feel unsafe at any point?
- Would you have preferred to receive a different type of assistance instead?
- Did you know how to ask questions or make a complaint at the distribution?
- If you used the information desk, how satisfied were you with the response you received?
- How satisfied are you with the overall behaviour and support of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff?
- Do you have any comments, ideas for improvement or anything else you would like to mention?