

Distribution Community Involvement

Key Actors

It is important to know the roles and responsibilities of the main actors involved at various stages of commodity distributions. In most circumstances, key actors include the following:

- Affected people: IDPs, returnees, host communities or other potential recipients of aid.
- Distributing agency: Agency, NGO or any of kind of partner conducting the distribution.
- Donor or Contributing Organisation: Agency contributing with stock, funds, or other kind of support to the distribution.
- Government authorities: local or national authorities covering the area of intervention.
- Cluster: coordinating body that can assist in the organisation of the intervention.

The roles and responsibilities of each of these key actors may include:

Actor	Roles and Responsibilities
Affected People	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistance in distribution planning.• Assistance in the identification of people at risk.• Establishment of committees with adequate representation of women.• Information-sharing on the specific concerns of different groups.• Dissemination of information on the commodities and the distribution process and system.• Crowd control at the distribution site and other casual labour for distribution related activities.• Assisting vulnerable members of the displaced population.
Distribution Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of distribution site and distribution-related processes.• Dissemination of information to affected populations.• Management and equitable distribution of relief commodities using the appropriate distribution system.• Participation, inclusion, safety, and accountability in the distribution process.• On-site monitoring of distribution processes.• Reports on quality, quantity and impact of commodity distributions.
Donor or Contributing Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Movement of stocks to the field for distribution (if applicable).• Provision of funds or other types of support for the intervention.• Guidance on technical issues where appropriate, e.g., protection referrals.• Monitoring the distribution program and reporting to donors and governments as relevant.

Actor	Roles and Responsibilities
Government Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security and the creation of safe spaces for distribution. • Creation of initial beneficiary lists in consultation with communities (when appropriate). • Free and safe access of relief personnel to beneficiaries and of beneficiaries to aid. • Consultations on distribution set up, approach, and process. • Relevant permissions.
Clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of the distribution and support for additional capacity if needed. • Advocacy around access. • Receipt and review of distribution reports. • Information management • Creation of intersectoral coordination spaces.

Adapted from Shelter Cluster

Distribution Committees

To assure the affected population involvement in the process and guarantee that its participation is efficient and effective, a best practice has shown to be the creation of distribution committees. Distribution committees tend to work better in stable environments, should ideally reflect the ratio of men and women in the population, and all population groups should be represented. Committees can meet both before and after distributions, where all issues related to distribution should be discussed freely inside the committee and brought to the appropriate agency's attention. These committees will act as a link between the agency in charge of the distribution and the affected population, helping to:

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

Protection Considerations

Protection mainstreaming means distributing organisations, partners, employed third parties and all other entities involved in the distribution are undertaking activities in a manner that safeguards people from violence, coercion, deprivation, and discrimination.

The distributing organisation should undertake all effort to integrate protection into every part of the distribution process incorporating the four key elements of protection mainstreaming, which include:

1. Avoiding causing harm and prioritise safety and dignity.
2. Ensuring meaningful access.
3. Practising accountability.
4. Promoting participation and empowerment.

A protection-based approach should be included when planning the logistics of distribution to advocate and highlight the importance of impartiality and non-discrimination to achieve a successful and sound distribution. All members of the team have a role in ensuring the safety, dignity and integrity of people in aid distribution. Coordination, fairness and planning are crucial to respond to their specific needs, cultural values, physical context and environment preservation.

As a compendium, the following list should be considered:

- Distribution times are safe for beneficiaries to travel to the distribution point and return home without exposure to further risk of harm.
- Physical location of the distribution can be easily and safely accessed, particularly against the risk or threat of gender-based violence and attacks from armed groups.
- Commodities distributions are designed to be respectful and inclusive of cultural and religious practice.
- Commodities distribution methodology are designed to preserve safety and dignity.
- Options for home delivery of shelter materials/NFIs for vulnerable persons (e.g., persons with disabilities who cannot access the distribution point, elderly, child-headed households, etc.) or systems by which representatives can collect assistance packages on their behalf.
- Commodities are packaged in a way that avoids injury or strain to beneficiaries. Distributed items should not be of excessive size or weight, and should be easy to manage for elderly or persons with disabilities.
- The provision of additional NFIs essential for personal hygiene, dignity and well-being, including sanitary materials for women and girls are consistent with cultural and religious traditions.
- Complaints mechanisms and monitoring are integral to the distribution plans.