

INTRODUCTION

This document was prepared by a technical Task Force of the Shelter Working Group (SWG) in Jordan for the Syrian refugee response. These guidelines have been developed to ensure the distribution of sealing-off kits (SOKs) interventions are consistent in terms of the selection of beneficiaries and the level and type of assistance provided.

Jordan hosts more than 633,000 registered Syrian refugees, the equivalent of approximately 10% of its population. As of January 2016 some 83% or 538,000 registered Syrian refugees were living in host communities throughout the country in urban and rural areas; 25% of individuals are severely shelter vulnerable and 50% are highly shelter vulnerable. They report shelter as their single most pressing need, and the search for shelter is now one of the key sources of tension between Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities. For refugees that have been able to secure a roof over their heads it is often at relatively high rental prices. High rental prices increase vulnerability and contribute to insecurity of tenure. One in five Syrian refugee families in host communities do not have any form of rental contract.

UN Agencies and NGOs have been assisting Syrian refugees by improving their shelters, especially to mitigate harsh winter conditions. SOKs provide a quick impact measure. The intention is not to provide the same level of assistance as a full-scale housing repairs project, but to enable households to carry out quick and basic improvements. Due to the comparatively low cost of this intervention compared to other shelter interventions, this assistance is a cost-effective way to reach a large number of beneficiaries from both the refugee and host community populations.

DEFINITION

The sectorial objective for the provision of adequate shelter and settlement of Syrian refugees in host communities as defined in the UNHCR Shelter and Settlement Strategy for Jordan is: to increase number of people that have access to shelter solutions that provide privacy and emotional support, protection from elements, space to live and store belongings, facilitate access to utilize essential household services / infrastructures, enhance security of tenure, minimize risk of eviction and reduce the competition between refugees and vulnerable Jordanian households thus benefitting from peaceful coexistence with host communities.

Sealing off kits are designed to improve sub-standard shelters for the most vulnerable households.

The kits should be designed to achieve the following:

- ✓ Provide protection from damp by reducing condensation on cold walls / ceilings;
- ✓ Temporarily seal-off / fill small holes / cracks with foam sealant, crack-filler material, or silicon dispenser;

- ✓ Close gaps in doors and window frames with self-adhesive foam strips or plastic sheeting and tape;
- ✓ Fix broken locks on doors and windows;
- ✓ Enhance thermal insulation of doors, windows and floors with insulation layers of carpet or plastic sheeting;
- ✓ Basic electrical wiring and removal of hazards (using electrical insulation tape);
- ✓ Repair any bathroom fixtures using the silicon dispenser;
- ✓ Installation of insect screens.

SCOPE OF INTERVENTION

The scope of this intervention relates to all households living in sub-standards shelters in host communities. In order to reach the most vulnerable families with shelter assistance, organizations are encouraged to use the inter-agency vulnerability assessment framework (VAF) and a vulnerability assessment tool that uses the highest scores for those households that have no written lease, are at risk of eviction, and/or are living in overcrowded accommodation. Female headed households, individuals with physical disabilities, the elderly, families with school-aged boys and girls, and other highly vulnerable individuals and groups should be prioritized as they are more likely to resort to negative coping strategies and less likely to have secure tenancies.

Beneficiaries can also be identified through referrals from other actors and assistance should be recorded on UNHCR's RAIS to avoid duplication.

Shelter organizations use various methods of distribution for SOKs. Some distribute to each household while others distribute at a central location, e.g. through a community-based organization (CBO). Regardless of which distribution methodology is used, it is important to also provide beneficiaries with some basic training on how to use the materials included in the kits, to enable them to carry out the necessary repairs themselves. Households who will be unable to carry out the repairs themselves (e.g. elderly or disabled) should be identified and provided with additional support, best achieved through a home visit to assist with simple repairs.

LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE

The recommended guideline is that household kits should be within the range of US \$150 and US \$250. Keeping with this range ensures that the level of assistance provided is standardized between organizations. In cases where the works needed are greater than simple repairs, organizations should consider the shelter renovation modality and refer to shelter partners undertaking that intervention. If a shelter is structurally unsound, the household should be referred for other shelter assistance, such as relocation to a completed shelter (ref. Completion of Housing units in unfinished housing).

It is encouraged that organizations define a set of different kits depending on the needs of the households; this will help to tailor the assistance to the specific needs and minimize wastage by not providing items that the household does not need. Regarding the contents of the kits, it is important to continue assessing which items are used and most beneficial and which may be sold by the beneficiary. Given the regular improvement of the kits, these guidelines do not define which items must be included or a set standard kit. According to the post-distribution monitoring exercise conducted by PU-AMI in 2014, the most useful items were carpets, polyethylene insulation, mesh screening, tools and fabric.

Example: Contents of a Sealing –off Kit

Mesh screening	Silicon dispenser	Screwdriver
Wooden timber	Clear tape	Tape measure
Concrete nails	Door bolt	Polyester rope
Timber nails	Carpentry hammer	Electrical tape
Insect repellent	Cutting knife	Combination plier
Plastic sheeting	large scissors	Galvanized wire
Carpet	Polyethylene isolation	Fabric

While some of these items can be purchased by the beneficiaries themselves in the marketplace, experience shows that vulnerable families are unable to prioritize these items, despite the tangible improvements to the living conditions as a result.

To avoid an eventuality whereby landlords will attempt to raise the rent as a result of this intervention, organizations should consult with the beneficiaries to ensure they are willing to accept the kit and use the materials provided to make repairs to their shelter, and that they have consulted with their landlord for his agreement. A signed lease agreement should be in place specifying the rent amount.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In the event of a dispute between the beneficiary and the landlord, organizations should try to intervene to resolve the dispute or refer the beneficiary to legal aid partners for legal advice if the dispute affects the tenancy rights of the household. Protection issues should be referred to UNHCR.

The shelter WG has developed post-activity monitoring guidelines to monitor the work and outcomes of the projects. Organizations are encouraged to use these endorsed guidelines and are encouraged to share the findings of any post-distribution monitoring with the Shelter WG. Lessons learned should feed into future revisions and modifications of these technical guidelines.