

Introduction

This document was prepared by a task force assigned by the Shelter Working Group (SWG) in Jordan for the Syrian refugee response. These guidelines have been developed to ensure SOK interventions are consistent in selecting beneficiaries and the assistance received. The guidelines are dynamic and responsive to the changing contexts and circumstances, and thus will be periodically reviewed to reflect these changes.

As per the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) there are 646,700 Syrian refugees residing in Jordan at the turn of 2015, with 85% living outside of camps in host communities and informal tented settlements. Of these, approximately 70% of dwellings occupied by Syrians are not suitable as habitable accommodation (drawing on Country Operation Planning Meeting March 2014; National Resilience Plan). As families' savings are depleted, they compromise on their choice of shelter whilst their remaining money is stretched between rental costs, and other urgent basic needs.

UN Agencies and NGOs have been assisting Syrians by improving their shelters, especially to mitigate harsh winter conditions. SOKs provide a quick impact measure. Their intention is not to provide the same level of assistance as a full-scale housing repairs project but to enable households to quickly carry out key improvements, while reaching a larger population due to their cost effective nature. SOKs are also appropriate for vulnerable Jordanians so they are not neglected from humanitarian aid and to fulfil the government's requirement that 30% of beneficiaries should be Jordanian.

Definition

Sealing off Kits are designed to improve substandard living conditions for the most vulnerable households. They improve living conditions by:

- Providing protection from damp or mould conditions in properties by reducing airborne moisture and condensation on cold walls/ceiling
- Temporarily seal off / fill small holes/gaps 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 clear tape
- To fill any missing window/door openings with simple timber frames and with plastic sheeting
- Help to fix broken ironmongery and locks on doors and windows
- Enhance thermal insulation of doors, windows, and floors with insulation layers of straw mats, carpets, 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 for protection

Scope of Intervention

The scope of this activity relates to all households living outside of camps. Given the Jordanian government's request for 30% of beneficiaries to be Jordanian, this activity is appropriate not just for Syrian refugees but also for vulnerable Jordanians.

Methodology of Screening:

Beneficiaries can be identified either by household assessments or referrals from other agencies. If it is done through referrals, a household verification visit should still be carried out to ensure the household has been appropriately represented. Questions asked should be specific to shelter conditions and are used for the vulnerability criteria below.

Vulnerability Criteria:

Not every household can receive assistance due to the scale of need; therefore criteria are used to identify those in most need. A common vulnerability criterion for the Shelter Working Group is being finalized which will enable organizations to establish the profile of vulnerability at household level and target assistance in a more efficient and equitable manner. Aside from using the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) to establish the level of vulnerability, it will still be important to assess the specific shelter needs of a household and see which type of kit is most suitable to meet their needs.

Implementation:

NGOs use various methods of distribution for SOKs. Some have distributed to each household while others have distributed at a central location like a Community Based Organization (CBO) or a sports club. Regardless of which distribution methodology is used, it is important to also provide beneficiaries with some knowledge on how to use some of the tools, in order to enable them to carry out their own repairs. Additionally, households who will be unable to carry out their own repairs (e.g. elderly or disabled) should be identified and provided with additional support, best achieved through a home visit by the NGO to assist with simple repairs.

NGOs distributing SOKs should provide beneficiaries with a phone number to call if they need any further explanation, advice, or assistance.

Value for Money

The recommended guideline is that kits per household should be within the range of 150 USD and 250 USD. It is encouraged that NGOs define a set of different kits that are then distributed according to the needs of the households visited; this will help to tailor the assistance to their needs and minimize wastage by not providing items that the household does not need. For example, Kit A, B, C, etc. can be

designed for different purposes such as simple repairs or insulation materials for a household. Based on household visits, houses will only receive what is relevant to them. However, the total cost of items that a household receives should remain within the aforementioned price range.

Regarding the contents of 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 that must be included or set a standard kit; however, an example of contents has been included below.

While some of these items can be purchased by Syrians themselves in the markets, experience says they don't prioritize these items, even though the improved living conditions do result in reduced heating costs and medical expenses through an improved living environment.

Example of the contents of a Sealing off Kit:

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

According to a Post-Distribution Monitoring exercise conducted by PU-AMI in 2014, the most useful items were fitted-carpet, polyethylene insulation, mesh screening, tools and fabric.

It is possible that landlords will raise the cost of rent as a result of the assistance that the tenants are receiving. However, this is much less likely compared with larger scale housing repairs projects and therefore it would not be practical for the NGO to intervene in contracts between the landlord and the tenant regarding SOKs.

Dispute Resolution

In order to reduce the likelihood of dispute, prior to beneficiary selection, the NGO should ask the Syrian tenants if they are willing to receive the kit and if the SOK may cause any problems with the landlord.

Depending on the nature of a dispute, the NGO can either look to resolve the dispute between the landlord and tenant or potentially refer the household to Legal Aid for free legal advice, if the situation affects the tenancy rights of the household. If it is a protection issue, UNHCR can be notified.

Aside from disputes, if there is an identified need for urgent assistance of a different form (e.g. cash or healthcare), referrals to other agencies is also possible through an NGO accepting referrals for that sector or through the appropriate Sector Working Group.