**Integration of protection by presence / safeguarding at aid distribution sites**

**Information for partners**

As part of the ongoing efforts to uphold the safety and dignity of aid delivery during the first 60 days of the ceasefire, the Protection Cluster and AoRs, and the PSEA Network will deploy Emergency Protection Responders (EPRs) and volunteers – hereinafter, Mobile Protection Teams, to distribution points and humanitarian facilities in prior and close coordination with the various humanitarian clusters.

The volunteers will support the clusters (Protection, Shelter/NFI, WASH, Health, Food Security etc.) by identifying protection measures and helping to identify vulnerabilities or gaps in safeguarding. However, these volunteers will not be involved in oversight, they will not interfere with aid distribution, nor will they be interviewing individuals on the visited sites. Their role is to observe, identify, document and provide feedback on the ground on potential concerns related to protection and safeguarding and provide information about SAWA helpline 164 and SANAD Network (distribute SANAD brochure). The EPRs, deployed by Protection Cluster partners will additionally support in safely identifying and referring any critical protection cases to specialized services, as required.

All observations and recommendations will be shared internally through the volunteers’ internal reporting lines. Feedback that can be closed on the spot will be referred to the service delivery supervisors on site –yet still documented-. Protection coordinators will then compile these findings and relay them to the Protection Cluster and the PSEA Network for further engagement with the respective cluster coordinators for their consideration and any necessary action. Decision-making and further actions remain the responsibility of site managers and the respective humanitarian clusters. EPRs will be using the same tools for their observations and recommendations, albeit their supervisory lines will remain to their assigning protection organizations under the umbrella of the Protection Cluster.

*Support requested from non-protection Partners*

To facilitate this process, we kindly ask partners managing sites to welcome and support these EPRs and volunteers in their roles. This includes: (1) allowing them safe access to distribution sites, (2) providing basic guidance on site layouts, (3) ensuring they have the necessary space to observe operations, (4) brief all relevant staff on the role of the EPR Network and volunteers and **(5) VERY IMPORTANT provide information through** [**this link**](https://ee-eu.kobotoolbox.org/x/tChTTo78) **on expected services delivery points and contact information to facilitate the designation of areas to Protection Teams**

EPRs may also inquire, if available, some space with confidentiality to receive a short description of the critical cases, so that they can refer accordingly.

We encourage partners to engage with feedback shared through cluster coordination channels and consider adjustments that enhance the safety, dignity, and accessibility of humanitarian assistance.

Information on relevant contacts for coordination listed below.

The responsibilities of protection volunteers are as follows:

1. Visit distribution sites and collect data on protection measures and complete the KOBO monitoring form to facilitate the identification of gaps in safeguarding and protection during aid distribution. The responses will later be shared with the coordinator of the respective cluster for further actions. Kobo link will be updated every day at 4pm. Data will be relayed to respective partners 10 am the following day.
2. In coordination with the Protection Cluster support protection desks run by Protection partners and/or the EPR Network at distribution points, providing key information about available aid or services.
3. Disseminate safeguarding messages related to PSEA, GBV, CP, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) or other areas of protection following prior training with the respective Protection/AoR.
4. Direct individuals with concerns or complaints to the appropriate reporting mechanisms Interagency channels or PSEA focal points when appropriate.
5. Introduce access to SAWA Helpline 164.
6. Safeguarding volunteers to identify vulnerable individuals (pregnant and breastfeeding women, women heads of HHs, women separated from their families, children, elderly, and PWDs) (already included in the KOBO).
7. EPRs to refer vulnerable individuals (pregnant and breastfeeding women, women heads of HHs, women separated from their families, children, elderly, and PWDs) to available assistance or service providers in coordination with the EPRs Network and/or the last updated service mapping tools.

**Minimum Operating Standards (MOS)**

To ensure safeguarding in aid delivery, all sites are expected to adhere to the following MOS:

1. **Visibility:** All related personnel at the distribution points or humanitarian facilities, including aid workers, volunteers, and supervisors, must wear visible identification (vests or badges) to ensure they and the organization they represent are easily identifiable to beneficiaries. Volunteers acting as protection monitors will also be clearly identified.
2. **Supervision:** Partners to designated supervisors to oversee the aid distribution and ensure that all protection measures are in place and followed. Supervisors visit distribution sites to conduct spot checks and address any potential issues on a regular basis. Volunteer
3. **Recruitment:** Recruit male and female volunteers respected in the community and independent of armed groups; avoid employing children under 18.
4. **Code of Conduct:** Require all staff and volunteers involved in the distribution process to sign and uphold a code of conduct that prioritizes child protection and strictly prohibits Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA).
5. **Information provision:** Beneficiaries have access to clear and consistent information about the available services and how to report concerns, provide feedback or make complaints. Information should be available in simple Arabic and in accessible formats for PwD. Protection volunteers will help disseminate key messages related to safeguarding, including PSEA, GBV, Child Protection, and EORE. **Safe Travel**: Map routes to distribution sites to ensure they are safe and easily traveled by women and children.
6. **Vulnerability considerations:** Special attention to be given to vulnerable groups (pregnant and breastfeeding women, women heads of HHs, women separated from their families, children, elderly, and PWDs) to ensure they receive the necessary support in a safe and dignified manner. This can be ensured with appropriate assistance, for example providing priority access or individualized support to these groups during the distribution process.
7. **Designated volunteer to assist Vulnerable Groups:** Prioritize separated and unaccompanied children, child-headed households, single-headed households with many children, and households with disabled or elderly carers. Connect these specialized volunteers with available protection services in the area.
8. **Equal access and Non-discrimination:** Ensure that the distribution is conducted in a manner that respects the dignity of all beneficiaries. Considerations should be made to minimize risks of harm, including the avoidance of crowding and maintaining safe spaces for PWDs.
9. **Enabling Environment and safety:** Adequate measures should be implemented to avoid overcrowding and minimize the risk of harm or exploitation. Plan distributions to start and end during daytime.
10. **Appropriate Packaging:** Ensure rations are packaged in easily transportable containers and that young children are not carrying heavy loads.
11. **Support and Monitoring:** Inform distribution supervisors that Protection / Safeguarding teams will visit during distributions.

**Information for Volunteers**

As a protection volunteer, your role is to observe and identify safeguarding gaps in humanitarian service delivery points. Your observations will help strengthen protection measures and improve the safety and dignity of the humanitarian response. This work is observational against minimum operating standards, engagement with the communities will be limited. Volunteers will complete the KOBO monitoring form[[1]](#footnote-15057) based on what you see during your visit and collected feedback. Volunteers are expected to provide available information as per reference to the information package that will be provided. Volunteers are expected to listen, collect and refer without making any promise or raising any expectations.

Before going to the field, you will receive an appropriate induction on key protection messages related to PSEA, GBV, CP, and Mine Action (EORE). You will also be provided with materials to distribute at the sites. While your primary role is to observe, you should be prepared to provide basic information if asked about these topics by community members.

During site visits, you will be working in mixed teams of two or three (female and male). It is important to follow the instructions provided by the designated site contact person, who has been assigned by the partner managing the site. You should not interfere with the distribution process, attempt to change any procedures, or share your observations outside the internal reporting lines or directly with the service delivery supervisor. When feedback loop can be closed on the spot, please share with designated official from the organization. Your findings will also be shared through the coordinators who will communicate directly with the relevant site managers or cluster coordinators for follow up.

Your focus will be on identifying whether vulnerable groups, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, women-headed households, children, elderly people, and persons with disabilities, are receiving adequate support. You will also observe whether people have access to information about available services and reporting channels.

Your safety and well-being are a priority. If at any point you feel unsafe or uncomfortable while collecting data, you are encouraged to stop immediately and seek support. You will be provided with the volunteer coordinator’s contact number in case of any emergencies.

Cut off time to upload the feedback for each day is 4pm. Volunteers are expected to visit 3 to 4 service delivery points per day.

**Supervision Structure for Protection Volunteers**

Protection volunteers will be supervised through a structured reporting system. Volunteer teams will have an assigned focal point who will provide them with training and supervision and address any immediate challenges. Volunteers will report their observations through the KOBO monitoring form which will be reviewed by the designated protection coordinators. The coordinators will consolidate findings and communicate them to relevant site managers or cluster leads.

**Referral and closing the feedback loop**

When volunteers identify safeguarding concerns or vulnerabilities at the sites, these observations will be documented in the monitoring tool and shared through established reporting lines. Feedback that can be easily closed on site will be conveyed to site supervisors and documented. Protection coordinators will review the information and escalate relevant findings to the Protection Cluster and PSEA Network for liaising with other cluster coordinators. Partners managing the sites will receive key observations and recommendations to take corrective measures where needed.

Volunteers will not handle individual cases. They can alert the EPRs present on site for any critical protection cases or in their absence facilitate access to referral mechanisms by directing individuals to designated reporting channels. However, if they encounter particularly sensitive situations, including concerns from SEA, gross misconduct, or an increased risk of UASC they will refer these cases to designated focal points as per the guidelines covered in their pre-deployment training.

**Contact and Coordination**

**Overall Coordination (Gaza)**

**PSEA Network Protection Cluster**

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| **Safe Distribution Checklist** |
| No | Requirement  | Yes/No | If no, why?  |
| 1. | Distribution takes place during day-light, ending before dark.  |   |   |
| 2. | Waiting lines are separate, one for women and one for men.  |   |   |
| 3. | Children and people with disabilities can easily access the aid distribution site and are prioritized.  |   |   |
| 4. | Chairs are available for the elderly, pregnant women, children, and people with movement restrictions and disabilities. |   |   |
| 5. | All aid workers are wearing branded vests and uniforms, clearly indicating the organization’s name. |   |   |
| 6.  | Both women and men aid workers are always present on site.  |   |   |
| 7.  | Volunteers and partner staff wearing branded vests and uniforms are present on site, helping maintain order and security. |   |   |
| 8.  | Community volunteers (both men and women) are engaged in distributions (crowd control activities, messaging etc.).  |   |   |
| 9.  | Visibility materials are placed in a visible location, clearly indicating that **all humanitarian aid is free.** |   |   |
| 10.  | There is clear signage with information about the type of aid materials you are distributing. |   |   |
| 11.  | Distribution dates and operational hours were communicated with people at least one day ahead of distribution. |   |   |
| 12.  | Selection and/or prioritization criteria were clearly communicated to all individuals qualified to receive this humanitarian aid. |   |   |
| 13. | Communication materials informing people of the available community-based complaint and reporting mechanisms and toll-free hotlines are available on site. Anonymity is respected in the process.  |   |   |
| 14. | The distribution has a purely civilian character, and the individuals are protected from any visible hazards.  |   |   |
| 15.  | There is a registration system in place for all individuals respecting data protection clauses.  |   |   |
| 16.   | There is a pre-agreed evacuation plan, and it has previously been communicated to all staff and volunteers.  |   |   |
| 17.  | Drinking water, sanitation facilities and a first aid kit are accessible to all staff and volunteers. |   |   |
| 18.   | Any filming or photo of the distribution used for public purposes has written consent of all individuals clearly appearing in the photos.  |   |   |
| 19. | The partner organization in charge of the distribution has received PSEA/protection training in the last year.  |   |  |

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE:**

For partners organizing service delivery and distribution of supplies please provide information on date, contact and coordinate in this link:

[Service points - Gaza 2025](https://ee-eu.kobotoolbox.org/x/tChTTo78)

Other useful links:

* PSEA Toolkit: [00PSEA Palestine Toolkit - Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1s4gk7VXTWN5ATb3BqDSL5MPu_6IqBsDF)
* Sanad/PSEA signage and communication Tools: [Sanad RCCE Materials - Google Drive](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vDoy1dJjnOLpMwOo8OO_yefgLvyiH4Ao)
* EORE – CPP: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/65cf896b8b8a43b9a10750a27d8d390a?portalUrl=https://ims.unmas.org/portal>
* EHA: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/67798e9198924e719015bd2e9a548fa2?portalUrl=https://ims.unmas.org/portal>
* IAM: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/c2291644919c4522a45f1775ddd04b0d?portalUrl=https://ims.unmas.org/portal>
* VA reporting: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/eea097ad47df4e029c909b1aef08e114?portalUrl=https://ims.unmas.org/portal>
* EO: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/eea097ad47df4e029c909b1aef08e114?portalUrl=https://ims.unmas.org/portal>
1. Protection Coordinators will facilitate the link to selected volunteers [↑](#footnote-ref-15057)