



نعم لنقلّي الخدمات والمساعدات
الإنسانية بكرامة بلا إساءة أو استغلال



مجموعة الحماية
الأراضي الفلسطينية المحتلة

Minimum Operating Standards for Safe and Dignified Aid Delivery in the Gaza Strip

The Minimum Operating Standards (MOS) for safe and dignified aid delivery have been jointly developed by the Protection Cluster and the inter-agency PSEA Network in the State of Palestine. These standards aim to strengthen safeguards against sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), uphold humanitarian principles, and ensure that all individuals, especially those most at risk, can access assistance in a safe, respectful, and accountable manner.

The MOS outline practical steps that all partners must implement at distribution sites and humanitarian facilities. These include clear visibility and supervision of personnel, inclusive recruitment, mandatory codes of conduct, and accessible information and reporting mechanisms. Special emphasis is placed on supporting women, children, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.

To support monitoring and adherence, the Safe Distribution Checklist has been included to help partners assess compliance with core protection measures. These tools are designed to be practical, adaptable, and aligned with global safeguarding commitments. They form part of our collective responsibility to deliver aid safely, equitably, and with dignity.



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

- 1. Visibility:** All personnel at distribution sites must wear visible identification (vests or badges) to ensure they and their organizations are easily recognizable to beneficiaries.
- 2. Supervision:** Partners should assign gender-balanced supervisors, including women, to oversee distributions. Supervisors must conduct regular spot checks and ensure protection standards are upheld.
- 3. Code of Conduct:** All staff and volunteers must sign and follow a code of conduct that prohibits SEA and upholds safeguarding standards (see Annex A).
- 4. Information Provision:** Distribution location should have on display clear, simple Arabic information on available services, complaints, and feedback. Whenever possible, PSEA/Protection volunteers should be allowed to share safeguarding messages.
- 5. Safe Travel:** Ensure distribution routes are safe and accessible for women and children.
- 6. Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Provide priority support for vulnerable individuals including pregnant and breastfeeding women, female-headed households, unaccompanied or separated children, child-headed households, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. If possible, assign volunteers to assist those with additional needs.
- 7. Equal Access and Non-Discrimination:** Ensure all beneficiaries are treated equally and safely, avoiding crowding and ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- 8. Safe Environment:** Prevent overcrowding and exploitation risks. Schedule distributions during daylight hours and whenever possible communicate distribution dates, times, and locations to beneficiaries at least one day in advance to ensure safe, fair, and informed access.
- 9. Appropriate Packaging:** Package items in a way that is easy to carry, avoiding heavy loads for young children.
- 10. Monitoring:** Inform supervisors that Protection and Safeguarding teams will conduct monitoring visits during distributions.
- 11. Consent for Photography:** Photographs or videos of beneficiaries must only be taken with informed, voluntary consent. No one should be pressured or incentivized to appear in documentation. Written consent must be obtained and privacy always respected.
- 12. Respectful Conduct:** All staff and volunteers must always treat beneficiaries with respect and dignity, regardless of complaints, stress, or tensions during distribution. Mistreatment, shouting, or intimidation is strictly prohibited. Staff must be trained in calm and professional communication and how to de-escalate situations.

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.		

Safe Distribution Checklist

No	Requirement	Yes/No	If no, why?
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.		



Safety Checklist for Humanitarian Aid Distribution Sites in Gaza

Everyone's safety is important.

Follow these steps to ensure the safety of aid workers and the Palestinian communities we serve, including children, women, men, the elderly, children and people with disabilities:

Organization

- » Distribution takes place during day light, ending before dark.
- » Waiting lines are separate, one for women and one for men.
- » Children and people with disabilities can easily access the aid distribution site.
- » Chairs are available for the elderly, pregnant women, children, and people with movement restrictions and disabilities.
- » All aid workers are wearing branded vests and uniforms, clearly indicating the organization's name.
- » Both women and men aid workers are always present on site.
- » Volunteers wearing branded vests and uniforms are present on site, helping maintain order and security.

Behaviors

- » Maintain everyone's respect, refraining from initiating any verbal or physical abuse, bullying, or ridicule towards anyone.
- » Refrain from distributing aid to exclusive groups based on your personal relationships. Favoritism and nepotism aren't allowed.
- » Refrain from asking community members for anything in return to receive aid, including money, favors, or any kind of physical or sexual act.

Information and Reporting

- » Place clear signage and distribute communication materials clearly indicating that all humanitarian aid is free.
- » Place clear signage with information about the type of aid materials you are distributing.
- » Communicate distribution dates and operational hours with people at least one day ahead of distribution.
- » Clearly communicate the selection criteria utilized to identify the individuals and households qualified to receive this humanitarian aid.
- » Distribute communication materials informing people of the available community complaint and reporting mechanisms and toll-free hotlines where they may share their feedback and complaints. People have the choice not to share their personal information when submitting a complaint.



To report an unaccompanied child, call the International Committee of the Red Cross: 08 283 2400



women



men



Toll-free hotlines available to community members and aid workers:

To receive remote psychosocial support or report any type of misconduct, abuse, or exploitation call Sawa's toll-free hotline, available around the clock: **164**
For feedback regarding aid distribution:

1800-124-126

Operating hours: 8:00 am till 9:00 pm
Ramadan hours: 8:00 am till 5:30 pm

برنامج الأغذية العالمي



Annex A: Sample code of conduct

Sample: Code of Conduct for Humanitarian Workers: Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

I, _____, work at the _____'s office in _____.

I sign this Code of Conduct to confirm that I understand and commit to maintaining the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. I understand that the Code of Conduct remains effective throughout my employment tenure with the Organization, including when I am off-duty, off-site, or on vacation. I also understand that this Code complements and does not replace the policies, rules, and regulations of the organization I work for.

Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

I acknowledge that sexual exploitation and abuse constitute unacceptable behavior that undermines fundamental human values and principles. They also undermine the credibility and reputation of all organizations involved in the humanitarian or development response. Therefore, to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and all forms of misconduct, I fully commit to respecting and adhering to the following basic principles:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse are serious misconduct requiring disciplinary measures against perpetrators, including dismissal without warning and/or legal prosecution.
- Regardless of the age of majority or the local age of consent for sexual acts, engaging in sexual activity with persons under 18 years old is prohibited. Pretending not to know the person's true age is not a legitimate excuse.
- The exchange of sex for money, work, goods, or services, including any degrading or exploitative behavior, is prohibited.
- Sexual relations involving the abuse of rank or position between persons providing humanitarian, developmental, and protection assistance and persons receiving assistance and similar services are prohibited. This type of relationship undermines the credibility and integrity of humanitarian and development work.
- Persons providing aid to humanitarian beneficiaries are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Managers at all levels have additional responsibility in this regard.

- When an employee or co-worker has concerns or suspicions that a humanitarian worker has committed sexual exploitation or abuse, he or she must report these concerns.
- Additionally, all employees should be reminded to prohibit all forms of sexual harassment or abuse of power by staff members, supervisors, or partner organizations. All organizations must develop internal policies and reporting mechanisms and ensure that complaints of sexual harassment and abuse of power by the organization are independently investigated.
- The highest priority in any intervention should be the safety, protection, and well-being of survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse or harassment.

Reporting Incidents that May Constitute a Breach of the Code of Conduct

I acknowledge that I have the responsibility to report incidents that may violate this Code of Conduct and I am aware that failure to report may result in disciplinary measures. In this regard, I commit myself to:

- Report any incident or concern that relates, or may relate, to a breach of this Code of Conduct, even if it is by a humanitarian worker in another organization.
- Raise any issue that I believe breaches, or could breach, the Code of Conduct through the appropriate channels, in line with the Organization's internal policies and procedures.

The Consequences of Violating the Code of Conduct

I am aware that failing to comply with the standards of conduct established in this Code of Conduct can result in disciplinary measures, such as termination without notice and/or legal action. This may include referral to the relevant national authorities for appropriate action, including criminal prosecution.

I acknowledge that I have understood this Code of Conduct and that it was explained to me, and I agree herein to adhere to its principles.

Name: _____ Job Title: _____
 Organization: _____ Date: _____
 Signature: _____

Human Resources Department/ Supervisor

Name: _____ Job Title: _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____