

Technical Guidance For Non-Food Items (NFIs)



Distribution of Non-Food Items by Al-Aman Organization for Blind Women Care in Dhi Sufal district, Ibb Governorate. © AOBWC.

Overview

This document guides humanitarian agencies involved in delivering Non-Food Items (NFIs) assistance in Yemen to support vulnerable families with individual and general household items to preserve their health, safety, dignity, and well-being. The kits used within this guide are **based on an average family of 7 members**. Nevertheless, family composition with the ratio/children/infant varying significantly from case to case, this document aim to offer flexibility respecting a commonly agreed rule for calculation. Partners should tailor packages (both in terms of type and quantity of items) based on cluster specifications stated below to ensure compliance to cluster guidelines.

A principal focus is to ensure that the quality of items distributed meets the needs of recipients adequately, long-lasting, fit for the purpose, and does not pose any risk to the beneficiaries. To ensure the NFIs meets the standards and specifications, the Shelter Cluster team carried out a rapid market assessment in the different governorates of Yemen facilitated by the Sub-National Cluster Coordinators (SNCCs). They compiled the price list and the availability of the items in relation to the specifications in the local market, and they subsequently reported their findings. From these assessments, the team categorized the items as internationally procured items or locally available items.

The recommended kits cost envelopes are included in this guide to encourage the equitability of assistance between agencies and across different geographic locations. They are based on estimated market costs¹ (as of August 2020) to meet basic household needs. The price indicated are an average amount calculated according the type of sourcing for a large quantity, for the local sourced items we have conducted the estimate cost from seven different hubs that the cluster has focal persons and for the International procurement we have considered UNHCR international frame work agreement price list, The price indications does NOT include any sorts of operational cost like warehousing, transport, distribution cost and/or custom clearance. Guidance on specifications has been provided as a pointer to quality and standards for items. The content of kits should meet the minimum requirements set out below and aligned with the results of the needs assessments.

NFI TWiG Objectives

- a) Redefining kits composition and specifications.
- b) To move from a standards one-fit-all kits to a model using a core kit with 2 or 3 options to be adapted according to needs, geographical location, and family composition.
- c) To produce a revised NFI kit composition that is tailored with the above needs (i.e. *new list of items, distribution protocol, cost of the items, specification of the items, and recommendations on procurement of the items, whether it is sourced in the local or international markets*).

¹ Market costs are approximate prices based on averages provided by Sub-national cluster coordinators, and do not include warehousing, storage and distribution.

Activation of NFI Technical Working Group (TWiG)

The NFI Technical Working Group was activated in February 2020 by the National Shelter Cluster in Yemen endorsed by its Strategic Advisory Group (SAG). Soon after activation, an expression of Interest (EoI) was sent out by the Shelter Cluster to its partners. A total of 32 agencies expressed their interest in being part of the Shelter and NFI TWiGs. The TWiG did a short listing of the agencies which had shown interest, and a total of 14 members were selected, including the Shelter Cluster technical lead. The TWiG members were selected based on their experiences and geographical areas of operation in Yemen. The first NFI TWiG meeting took place in April 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings were not possible, and therefore, subsequent meetings were held virtually through the Zoom platform.

Composition Of NFI TWiG Membership

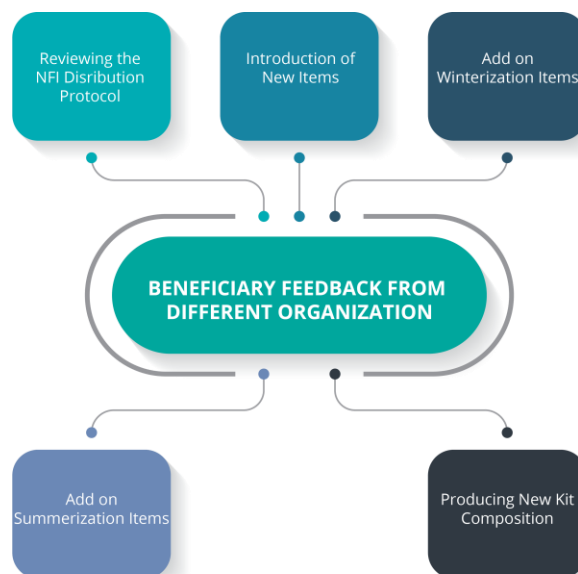
The membership composed of 14 agencies: 3 UN agencies, 3 INGOs, 4 NNGOs, 3 Red Crescent, and Red Cross societies in addition to the Shelter Cluster technical lead.

CHAIR: Shelter Cluster

Co-CHAIR: Pure Hand Organization (*Selected by the TWiG members*)

Members: A list of members is available [herein](#).

Strategic Criteria for the Review Process



Summary of the Achievements

The members reviewed the current NFI package, its quality, distribution protocol, and the availability of items in the local market. The group agreed to review the standard NFI package and introduce a new NFI kit composition that responds better to the needs of the vulnerable families in Yemen. The group also agreed to subdivide the package into four categories:

1. Core/Basic NFI kit
2. Winterization items
3. Summarization Items
4. Bedding

Recommendations by the NFI TWiG

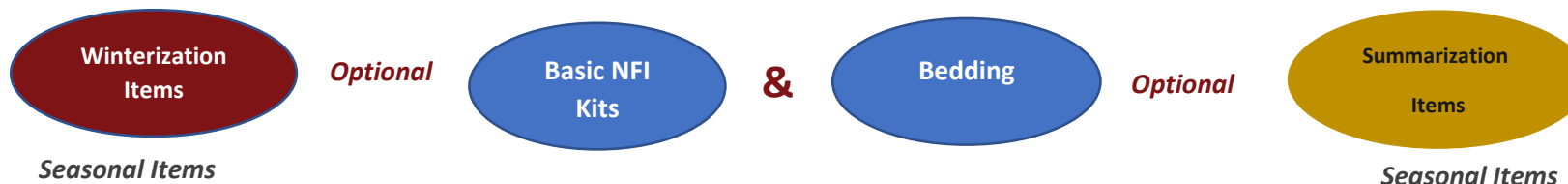
Blankets and Mattresses

Blanket and Mattresses should be distributed based on the number of family members during actual distributions. For programming purposes, the number of blankets and mattresses were based on an average of 7 but after great deliberations and putting into consideration the additional new items in the kit, cost implications of the total NFI kit, logistical concerns (storing and transportation), previous incidences of some beneficiaries selling them on the spot, and the funding constraints, the team agreed to revise the number from seven to five. Also, the members introduced new rules and age segregation. The Mattresses and Blankets to be distributed according to the family members as follow:

- Children of 1yr to 8yrs (Only 1 Mattress and 1 Blanket to be considered for every two children).
- Persons more than 8 Years old (1 Mattress and 1 Blanket to be considered for every person).

It has been observed through the post-distribution monitoring that people use the medium thermal blanket more than the high thermal blanket, therefore the group agreed to the distribution of the high thermal blankets only in the winter season.

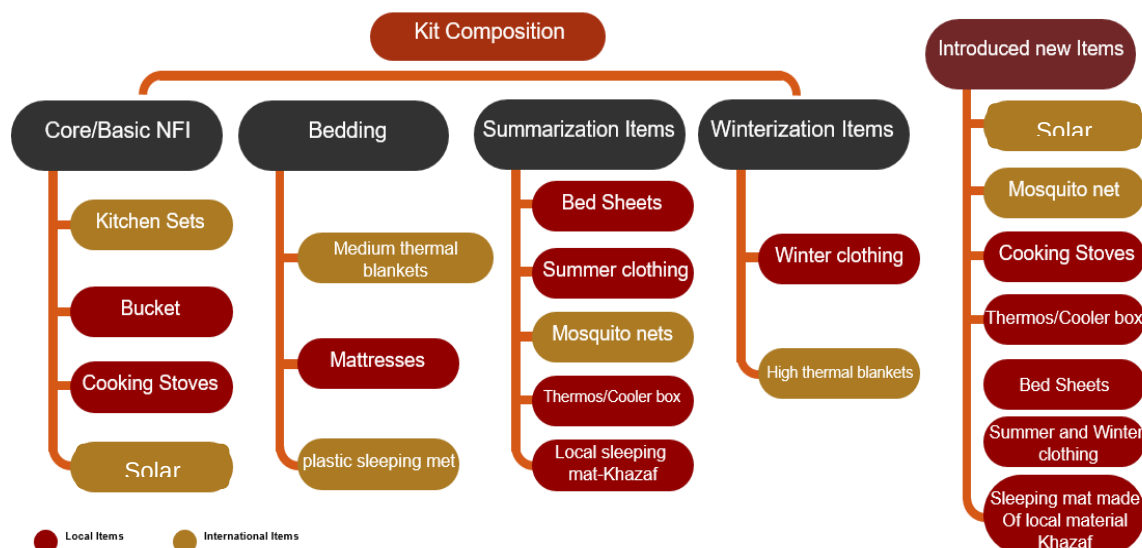
The New NFI Kit Composition



- **Core/Basic NFI:** Kitchen Sets+ Bucket+ Cooking Stoves+ Solar Lamps.
- **Bedding:** Medium thermal blankets +Mattresses+ plastic sleeping met.
- **Summarization Items:** Bed Sheets+ Summer clothing+ Mosquito nets+ Thermos/Cooler box+ Local sleeping mat-Khazaf.
- **Winterization Items:** Winter clothing+ High thermal blankets.
- **New Items introduced:** Solar lamp + Mosquito net + Cooking Stoves + Thermos/Cooler box + Bed Sheets + Summer and Winter clothing + Sleeping mat made of local material- Khazaf.

Rapid Market Assessment

The Sub National Cluster Coordinators (SNCCs) in the different hubs carried out rapid market assessments² for the available NFIs in the respective local markets. The market assessments sought to determine the specifications of locally available items, and most importantly, the cost of the items. Therefore, based on the outcome of the market assessments and reviewing the quality of available local items, compared with available International UNHCR framework agreements for the same items, the team arrived at the below conclusions for the International and local market procurement lists:



Summary of NFI Kits

- 1) Kit reporting
- 2) Procurement Value Envelope
- 3) Anticipated use

- What are the minimum content of “one kit”?
- How much should one kit cost?
- Which kit should be provided where? See the table [annexed herein](#).

Modality of Implementation

Given the prevailing emergency in Yemen, members agreed to prioritize the in-kind distribution of the NFI kits. However, cash-based modalities should be encouraged in situations where it would increase NFI outputs and allow beneficiaries to meet their needs.

² Market costs are approximate prices based on averages provided by SNCCs, and do not include warehousing, storage and distribution

NFI Market Assessment Template

The TWiG lead presented the NFI market assessment form. Several discussions took place, and the final template has been endorsed by the members. The template is [annexed herein](#).

NFI Distributions During Covid-19 Period

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the group discussed the distribution modalities used by partners, challenges, lessons learned and best practices. Below are the main highlights of issues discussed and best practices agreed on:

- Staff/enumerators/volunteers involved in the distribution should always wear full PPEs, including masks and gloves while using recommended hand sanitizers. Social distancing should be maintained.
- Beneficiaries are always encouraged to wear PPEs. Implementing partners may assist them with PPEs if they have the necessary means to do so, Beneficiaries should always maintain the social distancing at 1.5m.
- It might be necessary to divide the beneficiaries into groups to avoid overcrowding at the distribution sites. It has been recognized that having a single distribution site would increase the number of days required for the distribution, especially if the number of the target beneficiaries is quite large.
- It was highlighted that in some of the remote areas, the beneficiaries don not like using the PPEs like masks. This is attributed to misconceptions that the masks carry viruses or poison on them. Therefore, the partners use social distancing as the primary mean for avoiding the spread of COVID19.

Finally, the TWiG lead shared the COVID-19 distribution guideline that was developed by the Shelter Cluster [Annexed herein](#).

Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) for NFIs

The PDM exercise conducted independently after the NFI distribution. The exercise is undertaken by the partners, but the timing was not harmonized. It was agreed to conduct the PDM exercise from **10 to 15 days** after the distribution. The PDM exercise is implemented with/or through an NGO partner or independent consultant.

PDM results are largely quantitative and highlight broad trends in order to inform programming. The results should inform future planning to improve the way assistance is designed and delivered, the effectiveness of the aid meeting the preferences of beneficiaries, and consider potential protection risks [NFI PDM guide Annexed herein](#).

Cooking

The IDP in hosting sites often does not have access to cooking facilities. Thus, consideration should be given to provide adequate cooking space and stoves in order to support families with the preparation of their food.

There is a general preference for using gas stoves for cooking because kerosene puts unpleasant smell and taste on food. Gas cooking stoves may require beneficiary families to purchase a gas cylinder. There are [varieties](#) of locally made cooking stoves that do not consume much gas. The TWiG

agreed to distribute such stoves for the vulnerable families. This will also provide a source of income for the IDPs and poor host communities who are making these stoves. Cooking with gas is known to be cheaper than kerosene in the long run. Refilling a gas cylinder may be possible if access to the market exists. Currently most of the IDPs rely on firewood for cooking on the open fire (“three-stone fire”) instead of gas due to the lack of financial resources, heightening the risk of the community to rely on unstable, hazardous methods for their everyday cooking. The TWIG is currently focusing to identify alternative cooking and heating stoves as an important room for improvement and therefore plan in a near future to conduct further exploration leading to additional recommendations. The alternative solution aims to dovetail the preexisting, community-based knowledge, resources and the needs for a sustainable energy solution for the IDPs as well as to mitigate and reduce risks of fire incidents in IDP hosting sites.

NFI Content, Specifications, and Quantity of Items per family

The TWG worked on the standardization of the kits composition and provided specification to ensure that standards of quality are observed across partners. The members produced 13 Non-Food Items subdivided into four categories (basic core CRIs, bedding, winterization and summarization kits, for details please see the [annexed herein](#)).

Fire Safety

The fire-retardant element should be considered in sourcing and testing samples. An understanding of how and where the items will be used, in relation to other aspects of the shelter or building (for example, specific risks such as water ingress, electrical circuits, or fuel storage areas) will help to develop guidance and awareness that can be targeted towards particular households or settlements, identify potential hazards, and allow mitigation of these risks. Availability of and training in the use of fire-fighting equipment should comprise part of the overall fire risk analysis of shelter programs.

The selection of items for NFI distributions should ideally be undertaken in coordination with shelter activities/actors in order to meet needs consistently and comprehensively. This also includes the design or upgrading of shelters to take into consideration the need for adequate ventilation of cooking or heating areas in addition to other features i.e. partitioning (and the associated use of appropriate materials to limit fire spread), and fire evacuation routes.

The TWIG set up for each item a set of minimum technical specification. Nevertheless, stakeholders operating in the NFI sector recognized the need to set up common rules on how to conduct simple test related to items quality. Therefore, the TWIG might in a near future collect and examine testing procedures adapted to Yemen context and practical enough to be conducted with basic materials and in field operation environment.

Conclusion

The members of the TWiG used existing synergies and strength to develop a very comprehensive guideline. The inclusion of new NFIs and revisions made is likely to create a flexible approach to alleviate the suffering of the beneficiaries as well as provide value for money for the stakeholders.