

Protocols for the prevention and control of infections in the face of the COVID19 pandemic for teams in the field during Cash Distributions

Disclaimer: This document is created by Cash Working Group (CWG) South Sudan to provide guidance/key messages to partners, sectors, inter-sector working group, FSP, communities and beneficiaries on key safety measures in the context of COVID-19. The document compiles recommendations from different sources including, Save the Children Colombia protocol for teams in the field, CDC, WHO, WFP Cash distribution guidance, Mercy Corps Tip Sheet, RCCE-TWG recommendations and other relevant sources. Organizations are encouraged to follow the WHO and South Sudan High Level Taskforce (HLT) for official recommendations or their own organizational guidance to respond to COVID-19.

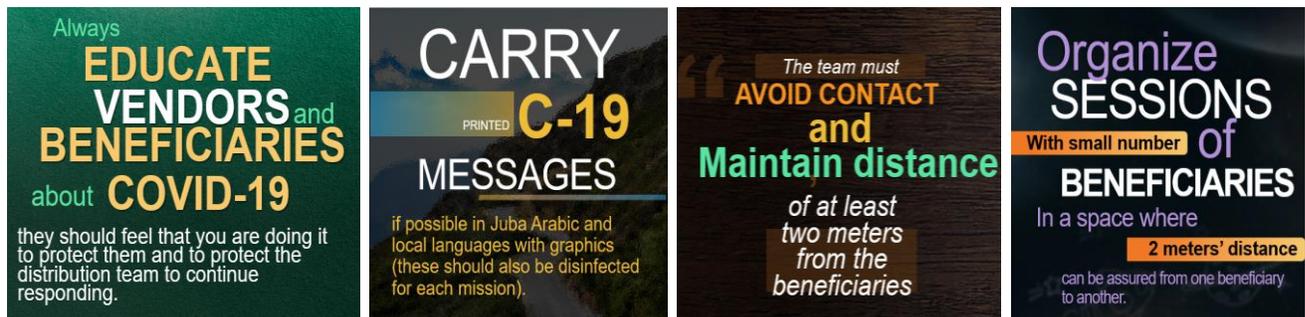
1. General Aspects:

- Provide training and create awareness among your employees including FSPs and vendors on proper [hand washing](#) practices and other routine preventative measures. This will help prevent the spread of preventable diseases, including COVID-19.
- Follow [WHO advice for workplace](#) and Ministry of Health (MoH) South Sudan guidelines on physical and social distancing, comply with guidance even if your organization has setup a temporary workplace and consider providing short brief on basic hygiene. Also, make available the WHO materials on COVID-19 to your employees and vendors. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/advice-for-workplace-clean-19-03-2020.pdf>
- Make sure that appropriate awareness and prevention guidance are available at each distribution location.
- Make available handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer to employees and beneficiaries at these distribution sites and ensure the service providers follow this guidance on prevention of COVID-19 at the distribution sites¹. make sure PPEs (masks and hand gloves) are available for the distribution team;
- Provide disposable disinfectant wipes, cleaner, or spray so that employees can wipe down frequently touched surfaces such as workstations, tables, tablets, mobile phones etc.
- **Organizations, FSPs and Vendors should take [steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if an employee is sick](#).**
 - Ask employees to notify and stay home if they have symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.
 - Sick employees diagnosed with C-19, shouldn't return to work until [the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met](#), in consultation with healthcare providers and MoH SS directives.
 - [Provide employees with accurate information about COVID-19](#), how it spreads, and risk of exposure.
 - Be aware that some employees may be at higher risk for serious illness, such as older adults and those with chronic medical conditions. Implement specific policies to minimize face-to-face contact between these employees or assign work tasks that allow them to maintain a distance of six feet from other workers, customers (for FSPs and vendors) and beneficiaries, or to telework if possible.
- Organizations should consider providing dedicated transport for their employees, seating arrangement should follow the HLT-SS protocols on physical distancing.
- Provide employees, vendors and beneficiaries with access to soap, clean running water, and materials for drying their hands including alcohol-based hand sanitizers at work stations around the distribution sites.
- Communication with communities is also essential before distribution to reduce crowds and inform the community about the distribution targets, criteria, times and regulations.

¹ [WFP GUIDANCE FOR CASH-BASED TRANSFERS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK](#)

2. Steps to be taken in the field during Cash distributions

A focal point should be dedicated to monitor and coordinate the processes and to answer any queries/questions.



In addition, the employees should be distributed in different days since it is not necessary for the whole team to be in the same session or day. And local distribution teams can be hired on daily wages for crowd control and for other general purposes.

2.1. In case of door to door verification for field teams

- **DO NOT COME IN CONTACT** with elements in the participants' homes, such as door knobs, chairs, tables, glasses, etc. Explain to the community and let them know that it is for their protection.
- **LIMIT** close contact with others and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet, when possible.
- **PRACTICE PROPER HAND HYGIENE.** This is an important infection control measure. With appropriate hand hygiene, gloves are not necessary for team members who are not involved in cash handling.
- Use tissues or **COVER** your face with elbow cloth when you cough or sneeze. If using tissues, through them in trash bin.
- Permanently use the face clothing/ masks and disposable gloves during the field activity.
- At the end of the activity, **REMOVE THE GLOVES** (put them in a bag) and wash your hands with soap and water, hand sanitizer or alcohol. **STORE** the bag in which you put them until you arrive at your home or office and put them in a basket (**DO NOT REUSE**).
- **DO NOT REMOVE THE MASK**, only until you arrive at your home or office.

2.2. Crowds Control

- **REDUCE THE NUMBERS** of mobilized populations. If possible, assign limited number of people to specific times;
- **CONSIDER** a site location that will not require participants to travel in crowded conditions (e.g. buses, etc.) to reach the site.
- Set up a **“FAST TRACK”** lane for participants who are elderly, show up ill, or a part of an immunocompromised group.
- **ASSIGN A TEAM MEMBER** to screen/identify people who should use the fast track line when they arrive and direct participants to handwashing stations. This entails asking people if they exhibit any symptoms or check temperature with infra-red thermometers, or if they fall into a vulnerable group. In addition, measures can be implemented for people with symptoms to have an alternate collect the assistance on their behalf, so they can stay home.
- Ensure **ADEQUATE SPACE** is available to keep a 2-meter distance between beneficiaries and employees;



Figure 1: Picture WFP Pakistan

- Organize and **CLEARLY MARK** the allocated spaces at the distribution site so that beneficiaries know well where they have to stand.
- **PLACE POSTERS** that encourage [staying home when sick](#), [cough and sneeze etiquette](#), and good [hand hygiene](#) at the entrance to the field site and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.
- Use every other **LANE TO AID IN DISTANCING** (as shown in figure 2).
- Design **PROPER MESSAGES** during the distribution, use verbal announcements on the loudspeaker and place signage throughout the distribution site, at entrances, in restrooms, and in other places to remind team members and beneficiaries to maintain distances of 6 feet from each other.



Figure 2: Pictures on left are [from Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme Pakistan](#) and picture in the right from [MC TIPSHEET](#)

2.3. Verification of beneficiaries at sites.

- **AVOID COLLECTING BIOMETRIC**, records and signatures. (you can use options like photograph verification or others).
- At this time, **DISINFECT** the tablet or cell phone as often as possible with alcohol wipes not with [pure alcohol as it might damage the phone by pouring excessive liquid on it](#). [Following picture from istockphoto.com can provide more details on how to clean the mobile phones and tablets.](#)

KEEP CORONAVIRUS OFF YOUR PHONE

How to clean your phone the right way



Figure 3: [istock photo: wash your hands after cleaning the computer, tablets, cell phones](#)

WFP has recommended **not to use biometrics**, as participants need to put their fingers in a terminal that scans the fingerprint. If you continue to use biometrics, ensure hand-washing and that the terminal is disinfected after each participant.

Participants can provide their name, and then **recite a PIN, password, ID number, or telephone number** at a distance of 1-2 meters from a MC team member. Consider ramifications on privacy and minimize risk of others overhearing. Another option is for the participant to put down an ID card on the table, step back for the MC team member to look at it from a distance, and then recover the ID afterward. MC can look up the name on the distribution sheet, and match it with the number/password provided.²

² [Mercy Corp’s GROUP DISTRIBUTION TIPSHEET: Cash, Vouchers, & Goods](#)

2.4. Cash Distribution

- Recognize that physical currency can play a role in the chain of virus transmission and assess the risks. Make sure all employees regularly wash their hands with soap and clean water (or with hand-sanitizers) when handling paper money, cards and vouchers.
- If handling cash and vouchers, ensure regular hand-washing (consider setting timer, and wash hands every 20-30 minutes). If feasible, cash can be sorted into envelopes and stored, untouched, for 24 hours prior to the distribution.
- When using electronic vouchers, have the participant to wash their hands, swipe their own cards, and the vendors to disinfect the terminal after each PIN entry.
- Consider a contactless way for vendors to collect vouchers (e.g. drop in a bucket).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as workstations, paper sheets, payment terminals, tables, mobile, [tablets](#), laptop any other accessories use for cash distribution and countertops on a routine basis. Follow the directions on the cleaning product’s label and clean hands afterwards.
- Participants should wash their hands prior to touching the pen, inkpadd, or distribution list.
- Advise participants to not touch their face during this process.
- Participants can wash their hands again after signing to confirm receipt.
- **Sneeze guard to protect cashiers:** For employees in more close contact with beneficiaries, consider a transparent barrier between the persons behind the registration desk. It can be a hard transparent hard plastic or a transparent tarpaulin sheet.



Figure 4: Left photo Japan today: the transparent tarpaulin sheet - Right : Cardboard with sheet to create a moveable Sneeze guard

Key messages 1: Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): For Cash Distribution Teams

Organizations along with their FSPs need to implement immediate steps to reduce Cash distribution team’s exposure to COVID-19. First, organizations or FSPs should expand access to personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves and encourage teams for wearing them. While supplies of protective masks and gloves are extremely limited across the country, organizations and FSPs should prioritize PPEs for field teams as they become available. Organizations or their contracted FSPs should provide adequate cleaning supplies and hand sanitizers, regular opportunities for teams to wash their hands, and frequent equipment cleaning where possible.

For field trips to do Cash distribution, the following points should be taken into consideration:

1. The health care and home care settings follow WHO’s interim guide on Rational use of PPE for COVID-19 and considerations during severe shortages https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331695/WHO-2019-nCov-IPC_PPE_use-2020.3-eng.pdf
2. For the CASH distribution, the following PPE should be used
 - Use of conventional mask (use one mask per day maximum 6 hours), which should be discarded at the end of the day (See below: [WHO recommendations](#)).

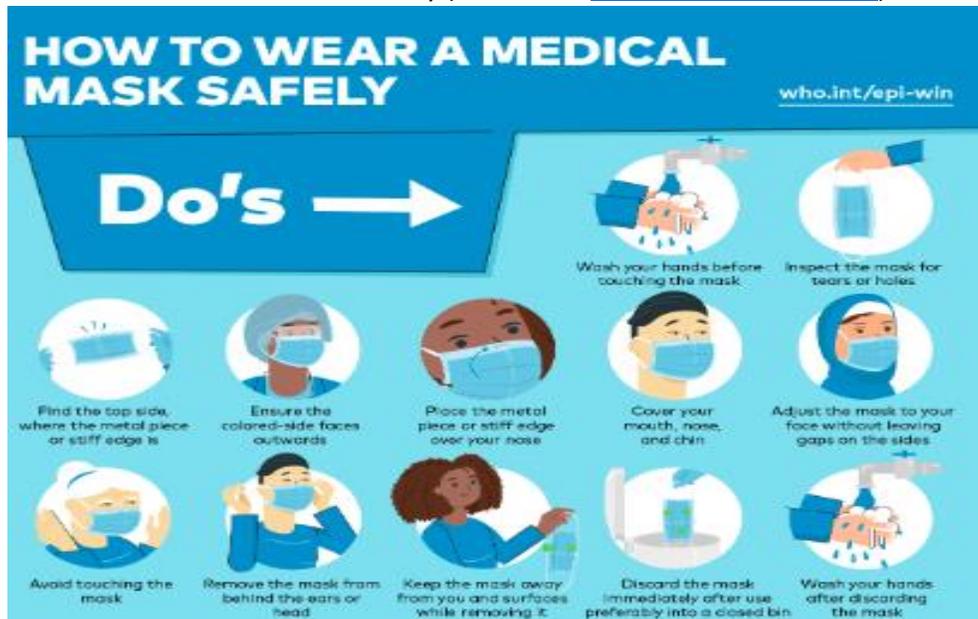


Figure 5: if you do not have medical masks, please use cloth face covering.

- CDC recommends [wearing cloth face coverings](#) in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. Cloth face coverings may prevent people who don’t know they have the virus from transmitting it to others. These face coverings are not surgical masks or respirators and are not appropriate substitutes for them in workplaces where masks or respirators are recommended or required.
- Use of disposable gloves, as days or community activities should have the shortest exposure time, approximately 3 - 4 hours, maximum 6 hours ([WHO recommendations](#))

NOTE: The use of gloves does NOT preclude hygiene recommendations such as NO hand touching or hand washing. The availability of disposable gloves will depend on the availability of the input.

REMEMBER: Having gloves is NOT a substitute for hand washing³.

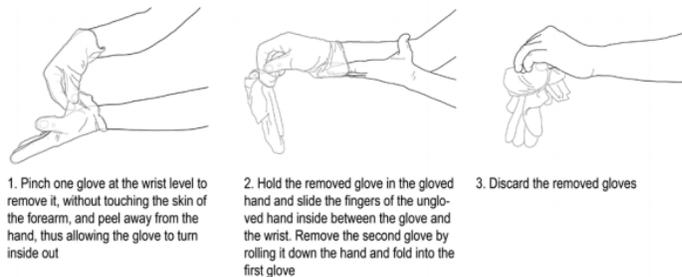
³ [Watch handwashing and use of PPEs posters and videos developed by MoH New Zealand](#)

Key Message 2: Hand Washing

- Wash your hands frequently with water and liquid soap, you can complement the action by applying a little hand sanitizer, when do I wash my hands? (See figure 3):
- additional workplace-specific times to clean hands include:
 - Before and after work shifts, breaks and periodically throughout shift
 - After touching objects that have been handled by beneficiaries, such as tokens or vouchers.
- Always wash your hands with liquid soap and water for 20 seconds under running water and dry them after washing. If you don't have access to handwashing facility, you can apply hand sanitizer. If you do not have disposable towels, shake your hands and allow them to air dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose immediately after using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, as it can cause irritation.
- Hand sanitizers recommended to protect against COVID-19 are alcohol-based and therefore can be flammable.
- When using gloves, you MUST wash your hands with soap and water or antibacterial gel (hand sanitizer) ALWAYS:



- Before putting them on - After taking them off



4. Then, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water

Figure 6: How to remove your gloves

Alternative for hand washing in the field:

If private transport is available, consider carrying a basic field handwashing sink: Container: Bucket with hermetic lid and tap for access to water for the exit of the liquid, table, plastic container for receiving water used in the process, water in bottles, soap and disposable towels **(make your own list)**



Figure 7: Save the Children : Items can be carried in your car to the field

Key Message 3: Protecting yourself and others is the key

- If you have symptoms of acute respiratory infection (ARI), Report it to your superior and **DO NOT GO TO THE GROUND**, we must protect the communities
- **USE OF DISPOSABLE GLOVES AND MASKS** (unique) per activity, reduce activities for 3 -4 hours, maximum 6 hours.
- **TIE YOUR HAIR UP** to avoid bringing your hands to your face.
- Always **CARRY HAND SANITIZER**, if you do not have a sink or cannot wash your hands in the field properly.
- **REDUCE YOUR BELONGINGS** like cell phones and accessories, should only carry what is necessary, avoiding the use of accessories (watch, earrings, bracelets, rings, necklaces) or elements that could be agents of adhesion of the virus.

ALWAYS WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER DISINFECTING THEM.

Avoid the collective use (by the team and the community) of equipment such as computers and cell phones without prior disinfection.

Additional recommendations for use of technology elements:

- Disinfection of cell phones, computers, tablets, suitcases, among other accessories.
- You can cover the cell phone, computers, tablet with film paper and remove it when you arrive at home.
- Remember to wash your hands after doing any of these procedures.

Greeting others

- **Avoid shaking hands**
- **Try to greet others from a distance**
- **Key is to keep social distance**



Figure 8: WHO message on greeting others

Consumption of food and drink during the day

- If possible avoid the consumption of food and beverages during the day; however, if it is necessary to hydrate and/or eat a snack, you should follow the steps indicated to remove and discard gloves and mouthpieces, including washing and disinfecting hands after these processes.
- At the end of the feeding and/or hydration break, put on a new mask and gloves.

Key message 4: Return home or base

1. When you arrive at your home, remove the mask or cloth face cover, always from the rubbers located at the ends of it, put it in the same bag where you put the gloves when you leave the field. **DISCARD IT IN A BASKET.** See figure for instructions on how to remove a mask.



Figure 9: google images: How to remove mask

2. Change your clothes at the entrance, put them in a bag making sure to close it and identify it.
3. When you get home, take off your shoes and apply a disinfectant solution with a spray (it can be 0.5% hypochlorite in a container). Remember to prepare hypochlorite and water beforehand). Be careful with your eyes and hands. Determine a place where you can leave your shoes, so that they can be used in your routine activities in the field.
4. Wash immediately with hot water and soap the clothes you used.
5. **SHOWER IMMEDIATELY.**



Figure 10: RCCE-TWG South Sudan

Key Message 5: Return to Field Office

1. Some field offices have been able to open their facilities, however, the return of those who attend a field day should be discouraged. They should preferably leave the field and go home or base.
2. If you arrive at the office after the field trip, remove your mask, always from the rubber bands located at the ends of the mask and put it in the same bag where you put your gloves when you leave the field. **DISCARD IT IN A BASKET.**
3. **WASH YOUR HANDS IMMEDIATELY AFTER DISPOSING OF THE MASK AND GLOVES.**
4. If it is necessary for you to stay in the office, if possible change your clothes at the entrance, put them in a bag making sure to close it and identify it.
5. Remove your shoes and spray a disinfectant solution (may be 0.5% hypochlorite). Remember to prepare hypochlorite and water beforehand. Be careful with your eyes and hands. Determine a place where you can leave your shoes, so that they can be used in your routine activities in the field
6. If you have been able to change your clothes, put them in a bag and take them home with you.
7. keep the distance of 2 meters from your co-workers.

Financial Service PROVIDERS or Vendors: Service providers contracted by your organization shall be informed about these protocol and follow the recommendations.

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