

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADJUSTING COLLECTIVE SHELTER REHABILITATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

*As of 30 March 2020<sup>1</sup>*

As the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread in an unpredictable manner it presents a growing risk to partners, staff and beneficiaries during shelter repair and rehabilitation.

This document aims to provide guidance for collective shelters repair and rehabilitation to minimize the risk of exposure of personnel, partners and beneficiaries. Adjustments should be in line with instructions provided by the Ministry of Health and World Health Organization.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

#### **1. Consider the needs of collective shelters**

- Many collective shelters are overcrowded, which can expose residents to the risk of COVID19. The main target is to reduce overcrowding, improve hygiene facilities and address sanitation needs as a way to mitigate the risk of COVID-19
- Coordinate with authorities in the Governorate, if possible to allocate more sites/buildings as collective shelters and distribute current residents over more shelters to reduce overcrowding.
- Take into account that sanitation facilities will need to be expanded or improved while hygiene items will need to be provided for Households as well as the collective shelter – in coordination with the WASH sector.

#### **2. Plan and organize collective shelter interventions in advance**

- Coordinate with local/national authorities on their plans for: assigning new collective shelters, expanding the current collective shelters, granting approvals, prioritizing projects, monitoring and supervision of shelter activities in order to adjust project timelines.
- Organize awareness sessions for the contractors and laborers on the preventive measures as indicated by the Ministry of Health and WHO; including handwashing, hygiene and sanitation.
- Coordinate with the WASH Sector on expansion and/or availability of water, hygiene and handwashing facilities to ensure adequate services.
- Coordinate with other actors in the area to provide information on COVID-19 prevention as well as referrals for more information.

#### **3. Communicate with beneficiaries in advance of work**

- Close coordination with shelter management to ensure they make beneficiaries aware of the work ahead of it starting. If possible, use alternative modalities e.g. phone calls, SMS or online means to avoid unnecessary social contact and gathering.
- When contacting shelter management and beneficiaries, provide the necessary awareness on the current situation, prevention measures, and preventative steps laborers will take.
- Make sure to guide beneficiaries on the precautionary measures they can take to ensure safety of laborers.
- For activities that demand direct interaction with beneficiaries e.g. interviews for post-intervention monitoring, consider using alternate modalities such as phone interviews.

---

<sup>1</sup> These guidelines were developed based on guidance from the Syria Health Sector lead by WHO and WASH sector lead by UNICEF.

#### **4. Do not allow crowding at the project site**

- Collective shelters can be crowded; ensure the works are organized to avoid beneficiaries from having to gather in smaller areas.
- When conducting the technical assessment, follow the recommended sanitation and hygiene practices; check with shelter management if they already have a list of needed repairs.
- Encourage both beneficiaries and laborers to follow social distancing guidelines; if possible, conduct work when there are less people in the shelter.
- If the implementation is done directly by the partner, try to rely on local laborers and supplies as much as possible to minimize length movements across different communities.
- If the implementation is done through contractors, try to find a local contractor in order to minimize movements across different communities.

#### **5. Consider hygiene and sanitation measures**

- Make sure that infection prevention and control measures are in place for laborers, including that they have the right personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc.), have access to handwashing facilities with adequate soap, water and/or gel, and practice appropriate hygiene practices.
- As much as possible, have the monitoring done through online communication means.

#### **KEY LINKS TO INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/infection-prevention-and-control>

[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7\\_6](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7_6)