

**Waste Avoidance and Management in Emergency Food Distributions**  
Key Messages for Partners

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**Context**

Solid waste is an inevitable by-product of food distributions; however, food distributions should adhere to waste management principles to responsibly avoid, reduce, reuse, compost and recycle waste. Existing waste systems are designed to facilitate daily pre-calculated quantities, that in times of impact may have reduced efficiency or be completely destroyed. Efficient and effective waste management practices will support in minimizing the impact of emergency food operations on solid waste management infrastructure and capacity, thus reducing pressure on solid waste management systems.

This Guidance Note is intended to support FSS partners in reducing the introduction of waste into the camps during an emergency context and to ensure coordination with appropriate operational actors on the removal of waste that is inevitably introduced while addressing emergency needs.

This Guidance Note is in line with Site Management and Site Development (SMSD) Sector and Energy and Environment Technical Working Group (EETWG) operational structures and recommendations.

**General Overview**

Response actors are encouraged to follow the below principles:

1. **Packaging:** FSS partners will, where possible, avoid or reduce waste generation by using recyclable or biodegradable materials.
2. **Solid Waste Management infrastructure in emergency:** WASH Sector partners will, where possible, reinstate existing Solid Waste Infrastructure and Management Systems. Additional waste recovery support may be required through additional storage facilities and containers. These will be emptied as required, depending on the type of waste, in line with WASH Sector Guidelines, to the appropriate waste handling location as designated.

3. **Cross sectoral waste coordination:** WASH sector in collaboration with Site Management and Site Development (SMSD) sector camp focal points and FSS will, where possible, identify locations for collection of waste originated from food distribution that is at a safe distance from food storage, food preparation, shelters and other services (e.g. clinics, community centres);
4. **Messaging:** FSS and WASH sector to coordinate on community messaging related to waste disposal during emergency food distributions.

## Waste Related to Emergency Food Distributions

### Food Packaging

- In preparation for emergency responses (i.e., monsoon/cyclone seasons, fires, etc.) connect with local vendors to identify sustainable packaging options. For agencies routinely responding to food needs, preposition an emergency stockpile.
- More work is still needed to identify the ideal packaging container for emergency response in the Cox's Bazar Context (i.e., assess which packaging gets reused by the households and at what quantity, eliminating the use of one-use packaging that has little/no resale value). However, the below is some initial guidance:
  - **First 72hrs response:** While households have no access to non-food items such as plates, ensure that all have a vessel to eat from,
  - **After 72hrs – 2 weeks:** Further field work is required to identify best option – at the moment, the following are advised to reduce the volume of packaging or transition to reusable products, i.e. paper boxes, aluminium tins, reusable hard plastics,
  - **After Emergency phase/once LPG and kitchen sets distributed:** Phase back into regular food distributions and discontinue emergency food distributions,
  - **General:** Partners are requested to avoid single-use packaging and non-compostable materials/food packaging (Styrofoam, low grade plastic bags) and promote usage of biodegradable materials (e.g. wood, plant fibres, bioplastics).

### Waste Segregation

To comply with existing SWM approaches, waste segregation must be implemented to prevent organic contamination of non-organic waste. Coordinate with [WASH camp focals](#) to ensure as much as possible, the collection and processing of waste generated as a result of emergency food distributions (i.e., composting of biodegradable materials, sale of recyclables, safe disposal of remaining waste in sanitary landfills etc.).

There are generally two main categories for segregation:

- **Organic material** – transformed into compost at MRF
- **Inorganic material** – further segregated and processed at MRF: recyclable material where possible will enter the existing recycling process / non-recyclables are safely disposed in sanitary landfills

If possible, segregate inorganic non-recyclable waste at source and send it directly to sanitary landfill (after approval of landfill operating organization, see [“Standard Operating Procedure \(SOPs\) for external use of the Temporary Solid Waste Facility TSWF”](#)).

Where possible, implement waste segregation at identified waste collection points:

- **Hot food kitchens:** Ensure bins are available to segregate waste between ‘inorganic material’ and ‘organic material.’ Ideally, inorganic materials can be further separated into items with value (i.e. plastics, metals, etc.) and those without value (i.e. non-recyclables) see Annex I and II. Non-used cooked food can be linked with local farmers to be used as animal feed should a surplus exist.

- **Food Distributions:** Include bins for segregation of un-used cooked food items. FSS partners to coordinate with WASH sector to ensure daily pick up of this waste.
- **Drain cleaning:** SMSD to coordinate with response actors (WFP-DRR and SMEP, and WASH teams) to support in operational coordination of drain cleaning and identification of temporary waste dumping / segregation / pick up points within the camps. This is the normal structure in place, however in the event of a disaster that wipes out SWM infrastructure (i.e. large fire, cyclone) drains are primarily used to dispose of mixed organic and inorganic waste (such as non-used food items) – in these cases, extra support is needed in impacted camps. As waste segregation at this point is challenging, dedicated focus on two above points can mitigate the amount of organic waste that is put into drains.
- **In the camp:** Reach out to the [WASH camp focals](#) to coordinate waste collection from food distribution sites to temporary collection and further disposal of waste segregation points.
- **Outside the camp:** Connect with the local government authorities to identify the municipal dumping zone. Further details on municipal dumping zones are forthcoming.

### **Distribution**

During food distributions ensure coordination with WASH sector on clear messaging on the disposal of non-used food items. Further, ensure that food not distributed at the end of the day is connected with a MRF or local farmer to be converted into compost or livestock feed.

### **Compost**

Organic waste has value given its high nutrient and carbon content – if properly processed, it can be converted into compost for improved nutrient and carbon cycling. Therefore, organic waste should be separated from inorganic waste. The disposal of organic material in sanitary landfills is not permitted according to the [“Standard Operating Procedure \(SOPs\) for external use of the Temporary Solid Waste Facility TSWF”](#).

More work is needed to identify and expand composting locations throughout the camps. Additional guidance on both composting and solid waste management in emergency situations is forthcoming from the WASH sector.

### **Resources**

Food Security Sector

- [http://fscluster.org/rohingya\\_crisis](http://fscluster.org/rohingya_crisis)
- [FSS CXB Google Drive](#)

WASH Sector

- WASH Sector Cox’s Bazar Webpage
- [SWM Operational Plan](#)
- [Standard Operating Procedure \(SOPs\) for external use of the Temporary Solid Waste Facility \(TSWF\)](#)
- SWM Strategy of WASH Sector (forthcoming)
- WASH Sector CXB technical note on composting (forthcoming)
- WASH Sector CXB technical note on waste disposal from drain cleaning (forthcoming)



Practical  
ACTION



## বালতিতে ময়লা আবর্জনা ফেলার ব্যবহারবিধি

### সবুজ বালতিতে ফেলুন

শাক সবজির আবর্জনা, ফলমূলের  
খোসা, বাড়ির ঘাস, লতা, পাতা



### পলি ব্যাগে ফেলুন

প্লাস্টিক, লোহা জাতীয়, কাগজ, শক্ত  
কাগজের বোর্ড



### লাল বালতিতে ফেলুন

মাছ, মুরগির আবর্জনা, কাচের  
জিনিসপত্র, ঘরের ধুলোবাড়ি



নির্দিষ্ট স্থানে আবর্জনা ফেলুন  
সুন্দর পরিবেশে সুস্থ থাকুন





# মূল্যবান বর্জ্যের তালিকা



নরম প্লাস্টিক  
(এলডিপিই)



লো গ্রেড প্লাস্টিক  
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পানি/কোমল  
পানীয় বোতল  
(সিইটি)



লিচি বোতল



ছৈড়া স্যান্ডেল



শক্ত প্লাস্টিক/জসের  
বোতল/শ্যাম্পুর বোতল  
(এইচডিপিই, পিভিসি, পিপি)



কালো ও সাদা ব্যাটারি



কার্ডবোর্ড



রড স্টিল/লোহা



সিআই শিট/টিন



ক্যান বোতল



কপার



অ্যালুমিনিয়াম



সিলভার



গ্লাস

