



Sexual and Reproductive Health Working Group Gaza

POSTPARTUM KIT GUIDANCE NOTE

September 2024





Background

The postpartum period is a critical time for **mothers and newborns**, who require essential hygiene and personal items, such as menstrual pads, clothes, and diapers, to ensure their well-being and health. Although these items are simple, they can significantly enhance well-being. Conversely, lacking these essentials can increase the risk of infections for mothers and newborns.

In Gaza, the current emergency situation has meant women face **significant limitations in accessing these essential items** due to market unavailability, financial constraints, high security risks, and border closures.

In response, organizations working in sexual and reproductive health in Gaza have united to provide **postpartum kits (PPKs)** to mothers and newborns effectively.

With approximately **4,000 live births** occurring in Gaza each month, it is crucial for partners to collaborate in advocating for resources and ensuring timely procurement and distribution of these kits.

Moreover, to **ensure equitable access and consistent quality** of the kits for all women, partners have agreed on a unified set of criteria for their composition and distribution.

This guidance note, developed through consultations with the community and partners, outlines the **key considerations and quality standards** for designing, procuring, and distributing postpartum kits in Gaza, as well as for monitoring and reporting.

1 Proposed Standardized Composition of the Postpartum Kit (PPK)

The PPK is designed to support mothers and newborns in the first month after delivery. It aims to:

- Assist mothers in managing bodily changes, restoring pre-childbirth physiological functions, maintaining hygiene, and supporting breastfeeding.
- Provide essential newborn care for the first 0-3 months, including clothes, diapers, and hygiene products.
- Periodic revisions and regular consultations with communities are essential to customize and enhance the PPK based on the needs and feedback.

Recommended PPK Items: Refer to Annex 1 for a detailed list of recommended items including items to ensure basic hygiene, comfort, and support, as well as advanced items that provide additional convenience and specialized care for both mother and newborn, enhancing postpartum recovery and well-being.

When procuring PPKs, it is crucial to ensure quality and appropriateness of the items included, and to provide detailed descriptions and requirements.

2 Quality and Quantity Standards

When designing and procuring PPKs, consider the following characteristics:

Packaging and Handling:

- **Easy of Use:** PPKs should be easy to carry and use while ensuring hygiene.
- **Durability:** Water resistant, washable bags that do not exceed 10 kg in weight.

Material Safety:

- **Non-toxic:** Select non-toxic materials and detergents. Ensure all items are clearly labeled and have a minimum shelf life of 2 years.
- **Avoid Harmful Items:** Refer to Table 1 for a list of items to avoid.

Contextual Suitability:

- **Local Needs:** For areas without electricity, include hand-washing powder or solutions for laundry and hand washing.
- **Cultural Appropriateness:** Provide culturally sensitive items, such as headscarves for mothers and breastfeeding covers. Ensure a variety of clothing sizes to accommodate all recipients.

Seasonal Appropriateness:

- **Climate Considerations:** Select clothing suitable for the expected climate and season in Gaza.

Modular Composition:

- Organization: Design the kits to separate items for mothers and newborns. Consider using high-quality bags to keep items distinct, and allow for additional items if multiple babies are involved.

Duration:

Sufficient Supply: Ensure the kit contains enough items to last for at least **1 month** for both the mother and the newborn.



ATTENTION!

The following items are **NOT recommended** in postpartum kits due to potentially harm:

- Medications (without prior consultation)
- Pins and small accessories
- Clothes with dangling threads, loose buttons, rough textures, or lace
- Strong detergents and baby wipes with alcohol
- Pacifiers
- Tight or restrictive clothing
- Newborn milk formulas and preparation items (e.g., hot water bottles) which may interfere with breastfeeding.

Considerations for Special Cases: Maternal or Newborn/Fetal Deaths



Empathy Be empathetic and compassionate



Care

Provide Kit A for the mother and Kit B for the newborn. Be alert to special cases (e.g., in cases of stillbirth, offer newborn clothes if the mother wishes to dress her baby.)



Referral

Refer to appropriate services, such as protection, mental health and psychosocial support, and child protection.

3 Allocation and Distribution

Distribution Locations:

Based on consultations with women, health professionals, and SRH partners, it is recommended that kits be distributed primarily in hospitals where deliveries and post abortion care are provided.

Allocate approximately 3% to 5% of PPK for use in cases of deliveries and miscarriages occurring outside hospitals. Ensure follow-up with partners to avoid duplication of distribution.

If you intend to procure and distribute PPKs, please contact the SRHTWG in Gaza for advice, support, and coordination with other ongoing interventions. Reach out to rosmini@unfpa.org or eabbas@unfpa.org for further assistance.

Criteria for Allocation per Hospital:

- Allocation should be based on the number of deliveries per month at each hospital.
- For deliveries occurring outside hospitals, allocation should depend on the number of deliveries and post abortion care.
- Minimize the time from arrival to distribution to reduce the risk of looting.
- Provide additional support for mothers delivering twins, triplets, or those experiencing stillbirths or miscarriages.
- SRHTWG partners are encouraged to develop an action plan for distribution and share it with other partners for effective coordination.

4 Monitoring & Reporting

- Mandate monitoring and reporting on PPKs distribution and needs at health care facilities level, and in accordance with the implementing partner's supply organization guidelines.
- Ensure that distribution is coordinated to avoid duplication.
- Use the Distribution Tracking Sheet and the Monitoring and Reporting Template, which are available upon request.
- Ensure all items in the kit meet the specified quality standards.
- Document and share challenges encountered by health facilities and implementing partners in distribution, monitoring, and reporting, as well as success stories, beneficiary feedback, statements, and quotes.

Quality Assurance Measures Throughout the PPK Process:

- Provide orientation for staff on the importance, content and use of the postpartum kit.
- Avoid delays in the distribution process to ensure timely availability.
- Encourage feedback and assess satisfaction.
- Distribute PPK guidance notes to all relevant healthcare facilities.
- Communicate with the Nutrition Cluster and IYCF Working Group to provide support for multivitamins, iron, and breastfeeding support items.
- Coordinate with the WASH Cluster to provide additional items for mothers, such as baby wash basins and plastic buckets.
- Consider providing extra items not included in the kit, such as additional baby clothes and diapers (up to 6 months).
- Use the feedback system to continuously improve the kit and its distribution.

Additional tools available on demand:



Monitoring and reporting template



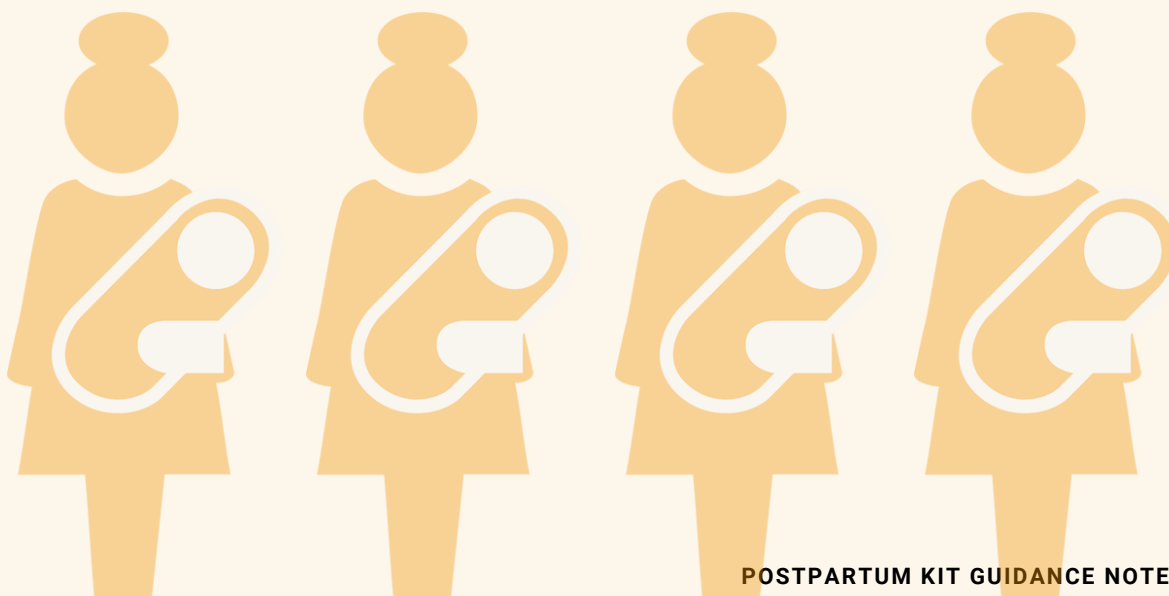
Focus Group Discussion (FGD) template



Distribution template



Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) key messages for all sectors (Arabic leaflet)



Annex (1) PPK Table of Composition:

A:1 Basic Items for Mother

No.	Item	Key Features	Quantity
1.	Soap	Unscented, antibacterial, hypoallergenic, 100/110 g	4
2.	Maternity Pads and Sanitary Pads	High absorbency, soft, breathable, leak-proof, free of chemicals and plastics	4 boxes
3.	Absorbent Cloth Towel	100% cotton, 90x50 cm, very absorbent, dark colours	2
4.	Toothbrush	Medium hardness nylon bristles, safe for use, individually wrapped	2
5.	Toothpaste	Fluoride 1000-1500 ppm, pH 7.0-9.5, 100 ml	2
6.	Shampoo	Hypoallergenic, pH 5.5, suitable for all hair types, approximately 400 ml	1
7.	Hairbrush	Paddle plastic, large size, soft bristles	1
8.	Wipes	pH 5.5, alcohol-free, 70-100 pieces per box	2 boxes
9.	Bath Sponge/ Loofah	Round-shaped, good quality	1
10.	Toilet Paper	Two layers, pack of 3 rolls, 300 gm/roll	2 packs
11.	Prayer Dress	100% jersey, soft, stretchy, includes head cover	1
12.	Women's Underwear (Panties and Sleeveless Undershirt)	100% cotton, high quality, dark colours, 4 pcs set (L&XL)	1 set
13.	Breastfeeding Bras	100% cotton, high quality, dark colours, 2 pcs set (L&XL)	1 set
14.	Lady Slippers	Open-heel, memory foam or rubber, different size 39-40*	1 pair
15.	Socks	Cotton, dark colour, medium length, size 39-40	2 pairs
16.	Hand Cream	Good quality, 100 ml	1 tube
17.	Detergent Washing Powder	Safe for machine and hand washing, 2 kg bag	1 bag
18.	Garbage Disposable Bags	Black, 75x90cm	1 roll

Annex (1) PPK Table of Composition:

No.	Item	Key Features	Quantity
19.	Small Plastic Disposable Bags for Sanitary Pads	Suitable for discreet disposal, 100 bags/set, 20x30 cm	1 set
20.	Bag	Collect all mother's items in good quality waterproof bag, easy to carry	1 pack

A:2 Advanced Items for Mother

No.	Item	Key Features	Quantity
1.	Breastfeeding Nursing Pads	Cotton, soft, circular pads designed to absorb milk leakage, protect sensitive nipples, and keep clothing dry. Requires regular changing and proper care to avoid irritation and infection	1 pack
2.	Female Dress (Jalabia)	Breathable fabric, loose-fitting, culturally appropriate, suitable for home and public	1
3.	Head Cover (Head Shella)	Comfortable, breathable fabric, suitable for full hair and neck coverage	1
4.	Breastfeeding Blanket	Soft, stretchable fabric for easy access, discreet openings for breastfeeding, provides privacy and comfort, adjustable for different nursing positions	1
5.	Antiseptic Gel	Contains 70% isopropyl alcohol, includes glycerin (1-2%) for moisturizing, carbomer (0.5-1%) for gel consistency, neutral pH of 6-7, is clear, non-sticky, fragrance-free, packaged in 500 ml bottles with dispenser pumps	1
6.	Masks	Three non-woven layers, adjustable fit, low breathing resistance, packaged 50 per box, one-size-fits-all adult format	1 box
7.	Female Razors or Hair Removal Cream	Razors: multiple blades, ergonomic handle, moisturizing strip with aloe and vitamin E, flexible head for smooth, irritation-free shaving. Hair Removal Cream: Gentle formula, suitable for sensitive skin, effective in 5-10 minutes on legs, arms, underarms, and bikini line.	1
8.	Brochure about Postpartum Danger Signs	One-page Arabic guide on postpartum danger signs for mother and newborn	1

Annex (1) PPK table of composition:

B:1 Basic Items for Newborn

No.	Item	Key Features	Quantity
1.	Newborn Cotton Head Hat	100% cotton, light colours, fits 0-3 months	3
2.	Baby Bodysuit	100% cotton, 0-3 months, sleeveless or long sleeves (seasonal), with buttons for easy dressing	3
3.	Disposables Baby Diapers	Suitable for 3-5 kg, up to 100% leak proof	3 packs
4.	Baby Wrap Sheet	Cotton, 1x1 meter, light colours preferred	2
5.	Baby Shampoo	200 ml, gentle, suitable for newborns and sensitive skin	1
6.	Baby Vaseline	Triple-purified, hypoallergenic, 200 grams jar	1 jar
7.	Baby Nail Clipper	Safe design with curved blade, well-packed	1
8.	Baby Wipes	Unscented, 99% water, soft and gentle, 70 wipes per pack	2 packs

B:2 Advanced Items for Newborn

No.	Item	Key Features	Quantity
1.	Baby Cot	Washable crib for newborns, easy to carry and comfortable, size: 98x50x15cm, pure cotton made	1
2.	Baby Cotton Trouser with Socks	100% cotton, 0-3 months, sleeveless or long sleeves (seasonal), with buttons for easy dressing	3
3.	Mosquito Net	Offers 360-degree insect protection with fine mesh, easy attachment, adjustable mattress height, and portability with wheels and foldable design	1
4.	Baby Diaper Changing Plastic Sheet	PVC sheet for diaper changing, waterproof, 116 cm X 86 cm, pink	1
5.	Wool Baby Wrap	100% natural merino wool, soft and breathable, measures approximately 70x100 cm, hypoallergenic	1
6.	Newborn Baby Carry Bag	Breathable, strong fabric, padded straps, comfortable seat, suitable for 3-10 kg, supports multiple carrying positions	1
7.	Breastfeeding Key Messages	Printed Arabic key messages about breastfeeding	1
8.	Bag	Collect all newborn items in high quality waterproof bag, easy to carry	1