



Tool

Capacity strengthening | Community protection structures | COVID-19 | Material support
Monitoring and coaching | Roles and responsibilities | Selection of volunteers

📍 Somalia/Somaliland

Terms of Reference for Community Protection Volunteers

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Background

Oxfam has been working in Somalia/Somaliland for over 40 years with local communities, civil society and local authorities, delivering humanitarian assistance and longer-term development initiatives. Oxfam is currently implementing multi-sector life-saving responses to communities affected by drought and/or COVID-19 in the Sool, Sanaag and Togdheer regions of Somaliland. This work is funded by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and the German Federal Foreign Office. Oxfam supports 28 community protection volunteers (CPVs) in 14 villages. These CPVs support protection and COVID-19 awareness, and are supported by Oxfam's protection team through continuous monitoring and coaching.

Community protection volunteers

CPVs are community members who volunteer to serve their communities. CPVs are recommended by the community following a set of criteria agreed between Oxfam and the community itself. These criteria include qualities such as trustworthiness, respect from the community, volunteerism, gender and cultural sensitivity, and willingness to be trained. For more details, see '[Identification and selection of Community Protection Volunteers \(CPVs\)](#)'.

In order to ensure gender balance, each location must have at least one male and one female CPV, if possible. This amplifies the reach of CPVs, who are then able to better share information among both men and women.

Capacity building

CPVs receive intensive training on protection, basic rights, mass and house-to-house protection awareness raising, service mapping, protection information management/self-referrals, and gender-based violence. They are also provided with equipment and tools to conduct protection activities in their respective villages.

Roles and responsibilities

In simple terms, CPVs are supposed to act as information channels. Their responsibilities are to be decided collectively with community members; however, they may include:

1. Facilitating safe and timely protection awareness-raising sessions through home visits, group discussions and public gatherings.
2. Facilitating referrals, by sharing information in local languages on services available and how to access them.
3. Helping Oxfam staff to facilitate protection and community events in the community, including awareness-raising sessions, protection trainings and community consultation meetings.
4. Working closely with women's forums and community committees on identifying protection risks in the community.
5. Reporting on their activities, including the number of people (gender- and age-disaggregated) reached, on weekly and monthly bases.
6. Reporting protection risks identified to Oxfam protection staff, for referrals and information-sharing purposes.
7. Conducting house-to-house visits (at least 4 days a week), community meetings and group discussions.
8. Disseminating Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in local languages, and ensuring they are easily accessible to women and girls.
9. Collaborating with other community volunteers, such as community health volunteers and village committees, and facilitating distributions when needed.

Key questions for programme planners selecting CPV roles and tasks

When planning new CPV roles or expanding the roles of existing CPVs, programme planners need to think about several key questions, including:

1. How effective and safe will it be for CPVs to perform a specific task?
2. Are CPVs' roles and tasks likely to be regarded as acceptable and appropriate by themselves and their communities?
3. Are CPVs sensitive of gender, diversity and other inclusion issues?
4. How many tasks and activities should each CPV take on?
5. When and where will each task be performed, and how much work will it require?
6. What skills and training will CPVs require when performing specific tasks?
7. How much will it cost to support CPVs to perform a task?

Identification and selection criteria for community protection volunteers

It is best that communities set their own criteria for community protection volunteers (CPVs). Community members have the best knowledge of their own situations, contexts, needs, interests and capacities. However, some general criteria could include:

1. If possible, CPVs should be able to read and write in Somali, so that the learning process will be easier; however, this criterion can be disregarded if believed to disadvantage certain groups, such as women or persons with disabilities.

2. Positive qualities including trustworthiness, the respect of the community, volunteer spirit, gender and cultural sensitivity, and a willingness to be trained.
3. Availability of at least one hour per day with minimum of four days in a week.
4. The capacity to mobilize and work with the community.
5. CPV groups in each location must be gender-balanced.

Remember, the community is already a source of knowledge and they only need guidance and support.

Notes to protection staff

- Discuss and agree with the community what CPVs will do in each location. Make sure all groups in the community participate meaningfully in this discussion; such groups include women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- Agree the selection criteria for CPVs with community representatives, and ask them to nominate volunteers, when they are ready.
- Once CVPs are identified and selected, ensure that they are made aware of their roles and responsibilities through orientation and/or training.
- Ensure that CPVs understand that their roles are not remunerated. Oxfam may support volunteers by providing small incentives and training, as appreciation of their work for their own community. Incentives, in-kind or cash, are based on their performance, and may be especially applicable when volunteers are required to dedicate more time to activities.
- Ensure that CPVs understand that their role only demands a few hours of their time; thus, it will not hamper their daily life.