



Fire Risk Reduction and Prevention Measures for Temporary Displacement Sites

Shelter, Land & Site Coordination Sector

In the event that new displacement sites or temporary camps are established, there is a significant risk of fire incidents, particularly in contexts where shelters are constructed using light and combustible materials and where households rely on open fires or improvised cooking practices. These risks are further exacerbated by strong seasonal winds, which can cause fires to spread rapidly across sites. In such settings, the absence of formal site management structures, combined with high exposure to environmental factors, can increase vulnerability to fire hazards. Fire incidents in temporary settlements can escalate quickly and have serious consequences for affected populations, including loss of shelters, injuries, and secondary displacement. Therefore, the integration of basic fire risk reduction and prevention measures from the earliest stages of site identification, planning, and site management is critical to ensure the safety and well-being of residents.

While acknowledging that humanitarian actors may have limited control over the pace, layout, and evolution of newly established or spontaneous sites, it remains essential to consistently promote and communicate practical, context-appropriate fire safety measures. Not all recommended measures will be feasible or achievable in every site. Partners are therefore encouraged to apply as many measures as possible, within operational constraints, with the understanding that even partial implementation can significantly reduce fire risks and mitigate their impact should incidents occur.

Site Planning layout

- Ensure and encourage adequate spacing between tents/shelters (at least 2 meters, ideally 3-4 meters).
- Create firebreaks: clear areas or paths at least 30 meters wide every 300 meters.
- Arrange tents in a grid pattern to facilitate easy evacuation.

Flammable Materials Management

- Distribute only tents or shelter materials that are non-combustible or combustible with very limited contribution to fire.
- Encourage residents to keep areas around tents/shelters **clear of dry vegetation, solid waste and debris**.
- Promote proper disposal/storage of waste in designated areas to prevent buildup of flammable trash next to the shelters.
- Encourage storage of fuel for cooking/heating in **designated areas** away from living spaces.

Cooking and Heating Safety

- Support residents to cook in designated communal cooking areas or outside the shelter and keep away from shelter walls. Ensure cooking stoves are equipped with flame protection mechanisms to prevent accidental fires.
- Encourage residents to avoid cooking inside tents and makeshift shelters or near flammable materials.
- Provide safe heating options with clear usage guidelines (EIC materials).

Lighting and Electrical Safety

- Households should avoid using candles or open flames for lighting (partners should consider providing solar lamps as alternatives if possible, and/or EIC materials for the correct protection of candles flames).
- Pay attention to electrical setups (connections exposed to water, cables damaged or exposed to breakage, unprotected connections, excessive electrical load, etc.).

Firefighting and Emergency Response

- Distribute sand buckets.
- Establish community alarm systems (bells, whistles). Identify fire wardens
- Encourage communities to establish escape routes and to share routes with residents

Education and Awareness

- Community engagement is very important in fire safety to assess and identify the risks and to disseminate the best practices.
- Distribute EIC materials adapted to the context and the items to be distributed.