

Policy on Tents Distribution

I. Context

The current conflict in Yemen has led to an increasing number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), which so far reached nearly 4 million people. The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in Yemen agreed on July 2015 to a “no camp” policy and the “tents distribution” policy which guide the humanitarian community to avoid setting up IDP camps in Yemen and limit the provision of tents on a case by case basis with specific criteria. Both policies stressed that the creation of IDP camps should be used only as a measure of last resort after exploring all other feasible options in consultation with IDPs, in particular women, children, people with specific needs, and minorities, who encounter numerous concerns specific to them. The HCT in June 2018 endorsed additional recommendations “Alternative to Camps Guidelines – Ladder of Options” which encourage the humanitarian community to explore all feasible alternative shelter solutions before resorting to the establishment of new camps.

II. Cluster policy summary

As part of a Do No Harm policy, the **Shelter and CCCM Clusters** maintain their position **not to distribute tents** to avoid the creation of formal camps. However, the current situation, i.e. the deteriorating situation and the need to respond in a diversified, adaptable manner, lead to the creation of an exemption regime fulfilling extremely precise conditions and ruled on a case-by-case basis.

Tents may be distributed in exceptional conditions, only after agreement with both Shelter and CCCM national cluster coordinators, complying with specific technical specifications and following all steps outlined below. Tents will not be distributed as a first response or without compliance with pre-requirements outlined below.

III. Shelter and CCCM Clusters position on the distribution of tents

As a last resort, the distribution of tents will address urgent needs in the following cases:

1. preventing congestion in overcrowded and inadequate *existing accommodation* if such conditions could be classified as critical in terms of severity¹.
2. relocation in case of imminent eviction if a new suitable site is identified
3. site or premises are presenting direct life threats to the population of concern (floods, structure damage)
4. replacement of worn-out tents in case ESKs are not available.

IV. Necessary pre-requirements to tent distribution

On CCCM level

- **Prepare a narrative detailing the situation of beneficiaries and why the particular case leads to request tent and not the other type of solution.**
- **Map access to services and facilities for future beneficiaries. Any remoted² location should be avoided.**
- **Liaise with the local authorities and/or community leaders to have a minimum their verbal agreement documented in a minute meeting. A written one would be preferable.**
- **Facilitate the land tenure verification to avoid imminent and/or high risk of eviction³.**
- **Coordinate the presence of a minimum of humanitarian assistance from other sectors (ex: WASH, food, protection, health etc.).**
- **Be sure that drinkable water is accessible in the vicinity. Liaise with WASH actors as necessary. Identify indispensable wash improvement (the type of toilet).**

¹ Equivalent of less than 10m² per person

² An inhabited community with minimum available and functional public services should be identified in the proximity or at a maximum of 1.5km.

³ Identification of owner is compulsory, agreement by the owner highly preferable, for further details please refer to the guidance note on eviction response via

https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/cccm_guidance_note_on_eviction_response.pdf

- Availability of a protection specialized person within the site is essential to provide necessary Psychosocial Support (PSS) and basic protection referral when required.
- Map all risks and hazard in the vicinity.
- Monitoring plan according to the size of the site⁴.

On Shelter level

- Technically verify the nature of the ground, drainage capacity.
- Produce a general layout showing on 1/5,000 or 1/10,000 the general location the site in regard to main roads/cities/towns or settlements. Open-source (ex. earth KMZ) imagery acceptable.
- Produce a minimum of graphic documents including a general layout⁵ indicating plots, wash, drainage, road and facilities. Details for wash and/or drainage⁶. A dedicated plotting layout required⁷.
- Share in advance the technical specification of the tents foreseen. (minimum standards as per global cluster guidance ex. cold weather⁸ and hot weather⁹).
- Foreseen the availability of necessary Non-Food Items.
- Produce a technical note summarizing the actual site density (SQRm/pers), the foreseen and the maximum critical site density (SQRm/pers), minimum need in terms of water (5 or 7 lit/pers), minimum toilet facilities.

V. Other considerations

- Partners should ensure that the tents are distributed equally and fairly for women and men headed households
- Partners should take into consideration the nature and cultural norms of people living in the area and the acceptance of tents for shelter purposes.

VI. Number of tents according to the family composition

This rule defined according to the culture sensitivity in Yemen:

- Each tent should not accommodate more than 5 persons and 7 in case if two infants.
- If family members exceed 10 members with the same spouse then only 2 tents can be provided.
- In the case of several spouses in the same household, one tent per spouse¹⁰
- In the case of two elderly in the household then provide a separate tent.

The distribution of tents should prioritize very vulnerable IDPs families along with the following criteria:

- Based on the capacity of the area, the intent of the IDPs and hosting family
- Families accommodated in overcrowded private or public infrastructure
- Families are staying in destroyed property.
- Families are staying in caves and sewage pipes with no other options.
- Families staying in the open or under trees if consent of the owner of the land is obtained.

Vulnerability criteria are available in the following link: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/yemen/documents/criteria-persons-special-needs>

VII.

⁴ In case of roving CCCM partner teams, these shall monitor implementation and report once per week for the first month, following which once per month. Same applies to static teams.

⁵ Sketch is required, AutoCAD drawing preferable but not compulsory.

⁶ Technical detail compulsory if 5 tents or above are foreseen to be distributed.

⁷ IBID

⁸ <https://www.unhcr.org/admin/sts/53fc7dd99/unhcr-core-relief-items-catalogue-unhcr-family-tent-cold-weather-fire-retardant.html?query=unhcr%20family%20tent>

⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/admin/sts/53fc7df49/unhcr-core-relief-items-catalogue-unhcr-family-tent-hot-climate.html?query=unhcr%20family%20tent>

¹⁰ Particular attention to this case and to be documented.

VIII. Procedures:

- Needs reviewed by Both Shelter and CCCM Cluster Coordinators
- Identification and confirmation of Partners are done by Both Clusters according to the above-defined requirements. The Shelter Cluster confirms resources related to the pre-positioning/stockpile.
- Distribution of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials related to the installation of tents or other technical aspects through Shelter Cluster while materials related to safety and fire preventions are through CCCM Cluster.
- Sharing the monitoring reports with both clusters regularly.¹¹

Annex 1: Site Selection Criteria according to the “Alternative to Camps Guidelines – Ladder of Options” endorsed on June 2018 which is available in the Cluster website¹².

The operational context will determine site selection criteria. In general, however, the following factors need to be considered when selecting sites for IDPs:

Topography, drainage, soil conditions	<p>The topography of the land should permit easy drainage and the site should be located above flood level. Rocky, impermeable soil should be avoided. Land covered with grass will prevent dust. Wherever possible, steep slopes, narrow valleys, and ravines should be avoided.</p> <p>Ideally, a site should have a slope of 2%–4% for good drainage, and not more than 10% to avoid erosion and the need for expensive earth-moving for roads and building construction.</p> <p>Avoid areas likely to become marshy or waterlogged during the rainy season. Consult national meteorological data and host communities before making a decision.</p> <p>Soils that absorb surface water swiftly facilitate the construction and effectiveness of pit latrines.</p> <p>Subsoil should permit good infiltration (permit soil to absorb water and retain solid waste in latrines). Very sandy soils may have good infiltration; but latrine pits may be less stable.</p> <p>Pit latrines should not penetrate into the ground water. The groundwater table should be at least 3m. below the surface of the site. Avoid excessively rocky or impermeable sites as they hamper both shelter and latrine construction.</p> <p>If possible, select a site where the land is suitable for vegetable gardens or small-scale cultivation.</p>
Water resources	<p>Choose locations that are reasonably close to an adequate source of good water, and ideally near high ground that has good surface water run-off and drainage. Once located, water sources should be protected. Ideally, no individual should have to walk for more than a few minutes. There should be at least one water point for every 250 people.</p> <p>Ideally, hydrological surveys will provide information on the presence of water. A site should not be selected on the assumption that water will be found by drilling. Trucking water over long distances should be avoided if possible.</p>
Land Rights	<p>The Humanitarian community neither purchases nor rents land for IDP settlements.</p> <p>IDPs should enjoy exclusive use of the site in which they live, by agreement with national and local authorities.</p> <p>Governments often make public land available. Private or communal land (including unclosed pastoral land) may only be used if the Government has agreed a formal legal arrangement with the owner(s), in accordance with the laws of the country.</p> <p>The status of land occupied for sites should be clarified in writing by the Government.</p> <p>In association with the Government and host community, agree and clarify the entitlement of IDPs to carryout given activities (forage for food, collect firewood, collect timber and other shelter materials such as grass or mud, gather fodder and graze animals).</p>
Accessibility	<p>Ensure the site has an adequate road infrastructure; access to it should be reliable, including during the rainy season.</p> <p>Assess the site's proximity to national services, including health facilities, markets and towns. Access to mainstream services is encouraged wherever possible and avoids the need to develop parallel services for the camp population.</p> <p>Liaise with development agencies, including UNDP and related Government ministries, to secure improvement of access routes.</p> <p>Partners should fund the cost of building short access roads connecting the site to the main road.</p>

¹¹ In case of roving CCCM partner teams, these shall monitor implementation and report once per week for the first month, following which once per month. Same applies to static teams.

¹² https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/alternatives_to_camps_guidelines_-_ladder_of_options_yemen_september_2018.pdf

Security

The site should be located a sufficient distance from international borders (50km), conflict zones, and other potentially sensitive areas (such as military installations). Avoid locations that experience extreme climatic conditions, or present evident health (malaria), environmental or other risks.

High winds can damage temporary shelters and increase fire risks.

Evaluate seasonal variations. Sites that are ideal in the dry season may be uninhabitable in the rainy season.

Avoid locating IDPs in places whose climate differs greatly from that to which they are accustomed

Environment and Vegetation

Ensure the site has sufficient ground cover (grass, bushes and trees). Vegetation provides shade, protects from wind, and reduces erosion and dust.

Avoid sites where dust clouds are common; these cause respiratory disease

Avoid sites within 1 day's walk of an environmentally protected area (such as a wild-life reserve). Take steps to ensure access to a supply of firewood, in collaboration with local forestry authorities, and in negotiation with the host community.