

Standard Operating Procedures for Tent Removal

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Shelter and Camp Management partners who are dealing with tent replacement and removal in the frame of camp consolidation and decreasing populations should keep in mind the following points and procedures for the removal of installed tents that are not in use.

Empty tents should ideally be taken down immediately upon a household's departure from the camp, to ensure that it can be cleaned and stored for future use if in good condition, or so the parts can be repurposed or disposed of if in poor condition.

Unoccupied tents should never be left standing for longer than a week for the following reasons:

- **Protection risks:** Empty tents present a protection risk, as they constitute hidden spaces within the camp that can be used by ill-intentioned actors. Empty tents have been in the past used as spaces for harassment and violence against women and children, for illicit activities, and unhygienic practices such as open defecation.
- **Fire risks:** Empty tents present a fire risk, as they are not maintained or monitored by a household living in them, and they increase the density of structures unnecessarily.
- **Asset value losses¹:** Tents that are left standing and exposed through harsh weather conditions will continue to deteriorate, and thus not be available for use in the future, whereas properly cleaned and stored tents can be used to meet tent replacement needs and accommodate new arrivals. Furthermore, empty tents are sometimes repurposed by camp residents, who harvest the materials, destroying usable tents and resulting in damage to assets. Additionally, people often use the components to create more fences or shading areas around their tents, eliminating the necessary fire breaks between plots².
- **Uncontrolled expansion of shelter areas:** Empty tents allow camp residents to take over more shelter space, complicating camp management activities and potentially causing conflicts among camp residents. Also, empty tents may be used as storage by camp residents, and storage tents have often been subject to theft, leaving camp residents without necessary items.
- **Hindrance to camp management activities and increased chances of aid diversion:** Empty tents make it challenging to monitor the true population of a camp, preventing humanitarian actors from clearly assessing if camp consolidation or closure is warranted, and preventing camp residents from moving to more desirable locations as they become available.

Tent Removal Process

Shelter and Camp management actors have a joint responsibility to maintain the assets provided to them on behalf and for the benefit of camp residents. As such, when camp residents depart and a tent becomes empty, camp management actors should ensure that the

¹ The average market cost of a tent is 400 USD, but considering additional related costs for procurement, transportation and distribution, the value chain may be considerably higher.

² Camps are designed to host the maximum amount of people possible while respecting fire safety principles. There should be at least 2.5 meters between tents, and 30 meters of space every 300 meters.

steps outlined below are followed to ensure that empty tents are handled in a responsible manner.

- Following the departure of a household from the camp, the camp management actors, supported by shelter actors if possible, should conduct an inspection of the tent and determine if the tent or parts of the tent are in good condition and can be stored for future use, or is in poor condition, and needs to be considered for either repurposing or disposal.
- Should a tent be in good condition, the camp management actor should ensure the tent is promptly cleaned and disinfected, let to dry, and then stored with all necessary pieces in a place where it will not mould.
- Should a tent be in poor condition, the camp management partners should identify if any pieces can be used for maintenance of other tents or other necessary purposes within the camp. Once all useful pieces are saved and used and/or stored, the shelter or camp management partners must dispose of the remaining tent materials respecting the following procedures:
 - Any logos of humanitarian agencies should be covered or marked up.
 - The tent is taken to an official dump site at significant distance from the camp³ and legally dumped with the permission of the landfill site, making sure all relevant environmental rules and regulations are respected.
 - The tent is provided to actors working in livelihoods or recycling private businesses, who will use the materials sustainably in another form. (e.g. sandbag creation, bags, metal reuse, etc.)
 - The tent materials are salvaged and sold in pieces with the agreement of the organization who owns the tents, in a way that they can be used, but not as tents.
 - Note that burning of tents or other ways to dispose them of is strongly discouraged due to the negative impact on the environment.
- Shelter and camp management agencies can, with the authorization of MoDM, UNHCR or relevant agencies as the owners of the tent, consider releasing tents which are could not be reused for new arrivals (e.g. have reached or surpassed their life span of 2 years and will be replaced) to departing families, following the [“Consideration on the use of tents following camp consolidation”](#) guidance note issued by **the Shelter & NFI Cluster** in March 2019. While this can be an appropriate solution for families returning to areas of origin who may reuse parts of the tent materials, this should not be done when camp residents are likely to form a non-formal camp without services.
- Should shelter actors and/or camp management partners want to propose another option, they must get signoff from the SNFI Cluster for the disposition of the tents.

³ This, in order to minimize the risk of camp population and/or host community trying to recover the dumped materials for further use