

Guidance Note 12

Coordination and Management of camps and other collective settings

1. The protection value of coordination and management of collective settings

Collective shelter, especially where accommodating large numbers of people, can pose challenges to the well-being and dignity of displaced persons. Nonetheless, when alternative accommodation is not available, camps or other collective accommodation such as settlements or shelters must be established.

Appropriate coordination and management of camps and collective settings can alleviate many of the difficulties faced by IDPs and provide a link between displaced persons and humanitarian actors – fostering accountability at the camp and inter-camp levels.


Well-managed camps and camp-like settings can strengthen physical, legal and material protection, and security. They also facilitate access to humanitarian assistance, including food, clean water, life-sustaining commodities, medical services and education.¹

If undertaken with a protection perspective and in close partnership with protection actors, camp management and coordination can ensure that displaced individuals enjoy their human rights as well as fair and equal access to the available humanitarian services.

2. Key responsibilities for camp co-ordination, management and administration

Appropriate coordination and management of camps and collective accommodations is primarily a responsibility of national authorities. In practice, states often welcome humanitarian actors who support them, through building capacity to ensure the protection and assistance of displaced populations. International agencies, NGOs and others should fill existing gaps only when a State lacks the capacity or the willingness to do so.

Camp coordination involves overseeing the humanitarian response in or between several camps or settlements; camp management takes place *at the camp level*. Both functions can be performed by the national authorities and humanitarian actors, although in the latter case, national authorities must acknowledge their overall responsibility.

Where country operations have adopted the IASC cluster approach, and if agreed with national authorities, responsibility for camp or site coordination rests with a designated lead agency (see *Part I.3*). At the global level, UNHCR is the lead agency for camp coordination and management in situations of armed conflict and IOM provides the same leadership in natural disasters.

2.1 Camp coordination

Coordination of camps and camp-like settings involves bringing together relevant humanitarian actors to ensure that activities are complementary and to support IDPs in realizing their basic rights. It includes:

¹ This chapter does not deal with accommodation provided by host families.

- Coordinating with national authorities on development and support of national or regional plans for establishment and management of camps and other collective accommodations.
- Ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of each actor are well understood by other humanitarian actors as well as by displaced persons and surrounding populations.
- Negotiating humanitarian access to camps and other settings.
- Monitoring implementation of internationally accepted standards.
- Promoting linkages between humanitarian activities in camps and national public services, such as education, health, public works, etc. with a view to ensure their sustainability and to extend their benefits to the different communities.
- Supporting humanitarian actors through:
 - Designating camp management agencies after consultation;
 - Improving information management by systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of baseline data on displaced populations, humanitarian services and their providers, as well as identification of humanitarian gaps; and
 - Supervising partners through monitoring and evaluating the protection impact of services provided.

2.2 Camp management

Camp management includes those activities in a *single* camp or other setting related to:

- Coordination of humanitarian services and assistance.
- Establishing and supporting IDP governance structures that represent the diversity of the displaced population.
- Promoting community mobilization and participation in all aspects related to living in collective accommodation.
- Monitoring and advocating safe and non-discriminatory access to facilities and services by all camp residents.

This function requires regular presence in the camp to perform the following tasks:

- Creating opportunities for information exchange between humanitarian actors and the displaced community in the camp, the host community and national authorities.
- Establishing mechanisms for regular discussion with internally displaced persons of different ages, gender and backgrounds, to fully understand their needs and concerns as well as existing gender roles, resource sharing, ownership and decision-making practices.
- Establishing regular coordination mechanisms at the camp level including meetings and information sharing channels.
- Ensuring, through ongoing monitoring and reporting, the adequate maintenance of site infrastructure and the agreed delivery of services by all partners.
- Gathering and sharing with relevant humanitarian actors baseline data on the internally displaced persons (using a commonly agreed format).²

2.3 Camp administration

Camp administration involves the functions of governments and national civilian authorities related to supervising activities in camps, including:

² This does not include protection-related information, which should be primarily gathered by the main protection organization working in the camp or setting and treated with the highest degrees of confidentiality.

- Providing security, ensuring maintenance of law and order and the civilian character of displaced persons' camps.
- Designating, opening and closing camps and other settings.
- Securing land and occupancy rights for camps, and resolving disputes arising from the appropriation of land in order to prevent claims against IDPs or agencies working in the camps.
- Issuing civil documentation, permits and licenses (birth certificates, ID cards, travel permits, etc.) to citizens hosted in camps.
- Preventing eviction, relocation or any further displacement of those living in the camp before they can return home or are offered other residence that conforms to international standards.
- Facilitating camp access for humanitarian actors including timely provision of any required documentation.


3. Key considerations for the creation of a protective environment in camps and camp-like settings

All humanitarian actors working in camps and similar settings must promote protection for the camp residents and surrounding communities. Protection concerns must be taken into account in addressing the following issues:

3.1 Site planning and setting up of camps/sites

(see Part V.13)



- Selecting, opening and closing camps and other sites is the responsibility of national authorities. Camp coordination and management agencies should advocate for the selection of areas located at a safe distance from violence and which are sustainable (i.e. accessible to local services, markets, possibilities for sustainable livelihoods, etc.).
- National authorities should secure land and occupancy rights for camps and other sites, resolving any disputes arising from the appropriation of land.
- Families should have individual accommodation, to the extent possible. This helps in mitigating the risk of exploitation and abuse, particularly for single women and unaccompanied and separated children.
- IDP camps and other sites should be designed with the participation of the displaced community, taking into account protection aspects of location, layout and design of services. Considerations should include:
 - Size of the camp/setting;
 - Family plot layout;
 - Safe access to services, including sanitation facilities — in particular for women and girls — schools, camp/site management offices, markets and community centers;
 - Security lighting; and
 - Establishment of child-friendly spaces.
- National authorities should allow freedom of movement outside and beyond the surroundings of camps and other sites. Humanitarian actors should ensure that their interventions do not hamper the freedom of movement of the IDPs (i.e. avoiding construction of closed sites, unsafe locations, etc). Under certain conditions, restrictions on the freedom of movement are permissible if they are provided for by law and are necessary to protect certain other rights (see Part V.8). 



3.2
Coordination
between all
partners

(see Part I.2)



- All humanitarian actors involved in a camp or other setting should work together to ensure that humanitarian programmes fit within the overall national IDP framework or policy (if the state and/or the coordinating agency has developed one).
- All humanitarian actors should have a shared vision and a good understanding of the protection concerns in different camps and camp-like settings. This will avoid interventions that increase protection gaps or pose additional risks.
- Interaction should take place between those responsible for different sectors and protection mandated partners, who often need to intervene on the basis of concrete activities by other sectors (i.e. addressing SGBV issues in relation to distribution of assistance)
- Promoting a general understanding of the role and capacities of protection mandated agencies helps to build confidence between these agencies, IDPs, and national authorities.

3.3
Community
mobilization

(see Part IV.10)



- Using governance structures or community leaders, all humanitarian actors should systematically involve the IDP community in the planning, implementation and delivery of services.
- All humanitarian actors should develop an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the community living in the camp or site. This includes becoming aware of- and using their capacities for the planning and implementation of activities and services in the camp. Camp managers should assess capacity-building needs within the community and ensure that they are adequately tackled with community leaders and all humanitarian actors.
- All different groups of IDPs should be represented in governance structures. Camp managers should provide leadership training and support to camp governance structures. If necessary, camp managers should establish IDP governance structures.
- Camp managers and other humanitarian partners should support women, adolescent girls and boys to strengthen their leadership capacities and facilitate their meaningful participation in decision making instances in the community.






3.4
Information
management

(see Parts IV.6
and IV.8)



- All humanitarian actors should agree on *common standards* for gathering, analyzing and disseminating baseline data, at least in the context of their broader assessment and planning exercises.
- In addition, all actors should agree on a *common referral system* and *procedures* for addressing protection cases.
- Specific *protection* data (i.e. individual reports on human rights violations, cases of abuse, fraud, etc), should be gathered and managed by protection mandated agencies only, preferably one agency who acts as the protection focal point for the camp/site.
 - Gathering of protection data must *only* take place, however, when *response capacity* is in place and when an explanation can be given to camp residents as to how this information will be used (see Part IV.1).
 - The lead protection agency should ensure the confidentiality of such data as well as referral of cases to specialized protection agencies and adequate follow up through case management systems.
 - The main protection organizations should share relevant data with other protection organizations to avoid collection of the same data by other protection actors in the same camps and camp-like settings.
 - Information on the overall protection trends and any data that could have implications on the management of the camps/settings will be shared by the Protection agency under strict confidentiality with the camp/site manager and vice-versa.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The camp/site manager will ensure that information gathered is analysed and shared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – With the camp coordinator/lead agency for consolidation and dissemination to actors at inter-camp / site level – OCHA, Humanitarian Coordinator, local authorities, cluster / sector leads; – With the IDP community governance structures but also with the wider camp population through mass information channels to secure equal access of information by women, men, boys and girls resident in the camp.
<p>3.5 Humanitarian assistance (see Part IV. 7)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration and documentation systems in camps and other sites should ensure smooth assistance distribution using coupons or ration cards, rather than specific IDP personal documents, which could lead to stigmatization of displaced persons. • Planning and implementation of assistance distribution should include protection considerations, including equal access by all IDPs, the IDP situation vis-à-vis surrounding communities and the eventual need of the latter for humanitarian assistance (see Part IV.7).  • All protection mandated agencies, service providers and IDPs should agree on <i>standard operating procedures</i> to manage fair and efficient assistance distribution. • All assistance and services provided should promote self-reliance, in order to avoid longer-term dependency on aid and to the earlier achievement of durable solutions. • Camp managers should monitor the delivery and use of assistance to ensure that camp residents have non-discriminatory access to facilities and services. • Camp managers should establish and publicize a system for complaints regarding access to humanitarian assistance.
<p>3.6 Security (see Part V.3)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National authorities have the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of internally displaced persons. • Authorities may lack the capacity or the willingness to provide safety and security for IDP camps and other sites. In situations of armed conflict, this is aggravated by continuing violence and the collapse of institutions and infrastructure. Particularly in such cases, humanitarian actors should be clear to all camp residents as to their inability to provide security and their lack of mandate to do so. • Camp management agencies can support and negotiate with authorities to increase police security services in camps and to provide police training (including female officers). • Community based initiatives should be encouraged to communicate information through radio, theatre or printed media providing objective security information and advice. • Camp managers should support the development of community policing programmes. Such programmes should ensure participation of women and should include training in basic principles of law enforcement, be adequately supervised, monitored and equipped (see Part V.3). 
<p>3.7 Presence of armed actors/groups in humanitarian settings (see Part V.3)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies' staff should be trained to monitor and report on the presence of armed actors/groups in humanitarian settings. • Camp management should work with security staff to establish early warning and preparedness mechanisms which identify and respond to potential security threats, including armed conflict and the infiltration of armed actors into camps and other sites.



- Camp managers should consult regularly with camp residents, including camp leaders and security committees, on security issues and discuss measures they feel can contribute to improved security; this should contribute to give IDPs a sense of shared responsibility for their own security.
- Preventative security measures can reduce opportunities for attacks on camps or infiltration by armed elements. Such preventive measures may include:
 - Establishment and training of IDP camp security committees;
 - Information and communication campaigns or other activities to sensitize the community of the negative impact of militarization; and
 - Locating camps away from areas of active conflict or continuing instability.
- Camp management, in coordination with protection agencies, should notify authorities immediately should armed elements enter camp locations.

3.8 Preventing forced recruitment

(see Part V.5)



- Camp management agencies play a central role in monitoring and reporting incidents of forced or attempted recruitment, especially of children, from camps. Such information should be shared under strict confidentiality with protection mandated agencies.
- Situational analysis should identify groups or persons at risk of recruitment by armed forces or armed groups, and should assess possible agents of recruitment and tactics used.
- Community awareness and community-based efforts can help to prevent recruitment. Equally important, are provision of adequate levels of assistance and fair distribution mechanisms.
- Programmes which promote family livelihood activities, vocational training, recreational activities, and health care for all children, including girls, can reduce children’s vulnerability to recruitment. Camp management agencies should encourage development of such activities.
- Because schools can be recruiting grounds for armed elements, special measures should be taken to protect and monitor schools. Educational opportunities, including for girls, should be reinforced.
- Individual registration and documentation of children, especially unaccompanied or separated children, are important protection tools and can help to prevent the recruitment of children. Registration data can help to ensure that any recruitment in the camp or in the schools is detected early, allowing for preventative measures to be taken.
- Camp management should pay special attention to children associated with armed groups, as they are at particular risk of re-recruitment.³

3.9 Access to justice


(see also Part V.9)



- All humanitarian actors and camp residents should be aware of the applicability of the national legal system. In some cases, camp/site residents may bring with them traditional or non-formal justice or dispute settlement mechanisms. Such systems may also be developed in camps when there is limited or no access to national justice systems.
 - Serious crimes, such as murder, rape, assault, child abuse or exploitation should *always* be handled through the national justice system.

³ The expression *child associated with armed forces or armed groups* refers to any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes; *The Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, February 2007.

– Alternative or traditional justice systems are often useful to settle petty crimes and juvenile justice issues. Camp management and protection actors working in camps and camp-like settings should develop an understanding of such systems. They should establish a dialogue with the relevant leadership of such systems to ensure that they fully respect human rights standards.

- Camp management agencies and other humanitarian actors do not have authority to deal with crimes committed by or against IDPs. However, they do have a responsibility to advocate for non-discriminatory access by camp residents to the national justice system.
- If access to courts is hampered by the remoteness of camp or site locations, humanitarian actors can support local authorities by providing them with transportation, fuel, or creating mobile national courts to visit the relevant areas on a regular basis.
- The camp or site management and protection mandated agencies should advise residents about law enforcement mechanisms applicable to them and how to access them. Specialised partners (i.e. mobile legal clinics) can be brought in if required (see Part IV.5). 

3.10 Durable Solutions

(see Part VI)



- Camp administrators (local authorities), are responsible for issuing civil documentation, permits and licenses (birth certificates, ID cards, travel permits, etc.) which enable IDPs to enjoy basic rights, and to access a durable solution to their situation of displacement. Humanitarian actors should support the efforts of local authorities in this field.
- All humanitarian activities in camps should promote self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods. This focus should be built into all assessment and planning processes. The ability of potential service providers to orient their interventions in practice towards these goals should be part of the core selection criteria.
- When the majority of IDPs in a site has found a durable solution, closure strategies should be developed jointly with IDPs and national authorities. Such strategies need to ensure that the protection concerns of the remaining camp or site residents are taken into account.
- Camp management should make particular efforts to find durable solutions for persons with specific protection needs.



Key References

- *Guidance Note on the Management of Collective Centres* – CCCM Global Cluster 2007.
- *Inter-Agency Gender Handbook* – CCCM Chapter: <http://www.humanitarianreform.org>
- *Sphere Guidelines – Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*, 2004 Edition: www.unicef.org/emerg/files/sphere_handbook.pdf
- *Needs Analysis Framework, (NAF)* – CCCM Chapter: <http://www.icva.ch/doc00002343.doc>
- *The Camp Management Toolkit* – The Camp Management Project 2008: http://www.flyktninghjelpen.no/arch/_img/9069531.pdf
- *Operational Protection in Camps and Settlements, A Reference Guide of good Practices in the Protection of Refugees and Other Persons of Concern* – UNHCR 2006: <http://www.unhcr.org/publ/PUBL/448d6c122.pdf>
- *Practical Guide to the Systematic Use of Standards and Indicators in UNHCR Operations*, February 2006/Second Edition: <http://www.unhcr.org>



Useful websites

- The Camp Coordination and Camp Management Global Cluster Website: <http://www.humanitarianreform.org>
- Humanitarian Reform: www.humanitarianreform.org
- The Camp Management Project: www.flyktinghjelpen.no
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (UNHCR): www.unhcr.org
- United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF): www.unicef.org
- Reliefweb (OCHA): www.reliefweb.int

