



Guidelines for use of Community and Humanitarian Facilities as Emergency Community Shelters

Use of community and humanitarian facilities to provide temporary shelter to families who are displaced internally within the camps, whose shelters are damaged due to, or who may be at risk from, landslides and/or flooding is anticipated as part of the emergency response preparedness for monsoon season. In addition to the monsoon season, Emergency Community Shelters were used in cases of group displacements from within or in between camps fleeing violence.

Temporary use of community facilities to provide shelter is recognized as a joint humanitarian responsibility to enhance safety and protection of refugees.

Experience in the monsoon season to date demonstrates that most persons displaced from their own shelters prefer to stay with host families such as family members, relatives and friends, with some resorting to staying in community facilities only if no alternative options are available. It is expected that a portion community will continue to use available community facilities as emergency shelter under their own initiative, if and when needed. Planning by the humanitarian agencies and CiCs with the community will ensure as far as possible that the spaces utilized are not dangerous, are reinforced where possible, with minimal disruption to service provision in the camps. Majority of the Emergency Community Shelters (ECSs) identified in the camps are mosques considering they are built across the camps in different locations and their size which can accommodate several families. In addition to space and location, mosques are usually empty and can host families without disruption. The main concern of using mosques as ECS is access for women and girls during emergencies. In order for reinforcements to mosques and facilities that have been identified as possible emergency shelters, humanitarian agencies & Imam's have to sign a document stating they will allow women and children to use these facilities. These SOPs cover both pre-emptive and reactive temporary relocations into communal shelters during the monsoon season.

The **pre-emptive** measures are taken during a community-based approach to sensitize HHs living in high risk areas of landslides or flooding and aiming at conducting organized temporary relocations when weather predictions indicate that they may be at higher risk, **Reactive** measures are less organized and rather take place when HHs are affected and can't remain in their shelters as a result of a landslide, severe shelter damages or flash floods. In this case Disaster Management and SMS volunteers would be available to assist those already affected seek shelter. **Selection of the Emergency Community Shelters should be made in advance of monsoon seasons, in consultation with the CiC and be based on the following criteria**

- In consultation with:
 - Humanitarian agencies when facilities are managed by humanitarian actors;
 - Representatives of the community (women as well as men) to ensure that families feel safe in the designated locations.



Safe & accessible

- Exclude facilities in dangerous locations (flood and landslide risk areas) and those not deemed structurally sound (signed as dangerous and communicated as such to the community).
- Structurally upgraded facilities should be preferred where possible.
- Have suitable WASH facilities nearby (excluding children's latrines near TLC not suited for adults) & access to roads / main footpaths 24/7, including at night.
- Humanitarian agencies recognize the need to provide lifesaving shelter and protection to refugees, and do not block the use of their facilities

Localized & well-communicated

- Multiple facilities should be identified by SMS agencies and the CiC for potential use across a camp, to provide shelter options for families within their immediate communities.
- Families should know which facilities are unsafe / preferable for use as temporary shelter in their immediate community, so they can self-relocate in an emergency hence previous sensitization is strongly advised. Lists of the shelters should be prepared and available with the camp-based volunteers and communicated in advance during the pre-emptive relocation process. If possible, mock evacuations should be included in camp level drills

Gender-sensitive – as required by the community

- Mosques, depending on decisions of individual imams, may not be allowed to host women or female-headed households (hence discussions are conducted with imams prior).
- Spaces designated for use exclusively by women (e.g. Safe Spaces for Women and Girls) should be maintained as such, and not used to shelter adult men (and include a separated breast-feeding space if possible).
- Different facilities may be needed for female- and male-headed households. - Minimize protection risks. Use of larger spaces, hosting more families, reduces privacy and may increase protection risks.
- Sub-division of spaces into family areas where possible, or by gender if not.
- Family separation must be avoided (i.e. prioritize keeping families together over gender disaggregation). - Minimize disruption to services
- No one type of facility run as a humanitarian service should be preferred over another for use as temporary shelter (with exclusions for specific facility types as below).
- Selection of facilities across a camp should, where possible, aim to spread use as temporary shelter between facility types to ensure access across the camp and to avoid particular services being disrupted across an area.

Planning for use as emergency shelter

- Humanitarian assistance, including bedding items, must be prepositioned as soon as possible to families temporarily sheltered in community facilities, as needed. Responsible partners should be identified in advance.



- Use of a community facility as temporary shelter does not confer liability on the humanitarian agency for the safety of the family members temporarily sheltered there.
- Cooking inside or adjacent to community facilities should be strongly discouraged to avoid damages. Refer to emergency Food distribution SOP.
- Any cleaning or rehabilitation needed, including replacement of materials, is the responsibility of the agency running the facility unless it has been agreed prior with IOM through the Upgrade Programme.
- If support is required for this, e.g. materials or technical expertise for structural repair, this should be raised at site level with the SMS agency, for either the SMS agency to provide support or another partner, as possible, as well as with the respective sector for possible resource mobilization.

During use as temporary shelter

- When the humanitarian agency running the facility identifies families who moved in, they should immediately inform the SMS agencies /CiC. When SMS agencies identify/are informed of families who sought shelter in a facility, they should in their turn also inform the agency running the facility.
- The SMS agency should make an assessment of the needs of the population staying the space as soon as possible and mobilize response from partners at camp level as required, including from mobile response teams.
- Regular monitoring of the families staying in the facility should be conducted by the SMS agency and a designated Protection agency. This should include monitoring of the individuals' safety as well as material needs. For example: "do you feel safe here?" / "what would make you feel safer?"
- Agencies responsible for the space may wish to consider hiring a guard for the facility if not already in place, to reduce risk of families being harassed or targeted.
- General, Child Protection and GBV partners should be available to monitor and support families as needed. - Sub-divisions for privacy should be installed as possible – for example by using tarpaulin and rope to section off family spaces, changing spaces, and/or separation for men and women as deemed appropriate by the families.

Length of stay and relocation

Use of facilities as temporary shelter should ideally be kept to the shortest time possible (maximum 72 hours), to minimize:

- Protection risks for families and individuals staying in the facilities;
- Disruption to normal community and family life;
- Disruption to access to humanitarian services

Relocation of families should take place as soon as a preferable shelter option is available, including:



- Reconstruction of shelters if location assessed as safe, or staying with host families;
- Availability of plot space in the camp, or approval to move to another camp;
- A more suitable, local, hosting facility being available.

Relocation must adhere to the principles set out in the Relocation Standard Operating Procedures:

- Relocation of families hosted in a community facility may only be undertaken by the CiC or Site Management Support agency and the trained volunteers, with appropriate presence and support from Protection actors.
- Under no circumstances may forced eviction of families hosted in a community facility take place. This includes threats, intimidation, and coercion.
- Priority for relocation may be requested by agencies running the facilities in the event that weather conditions rapidly reduce the safety of the temporary collective shelter.