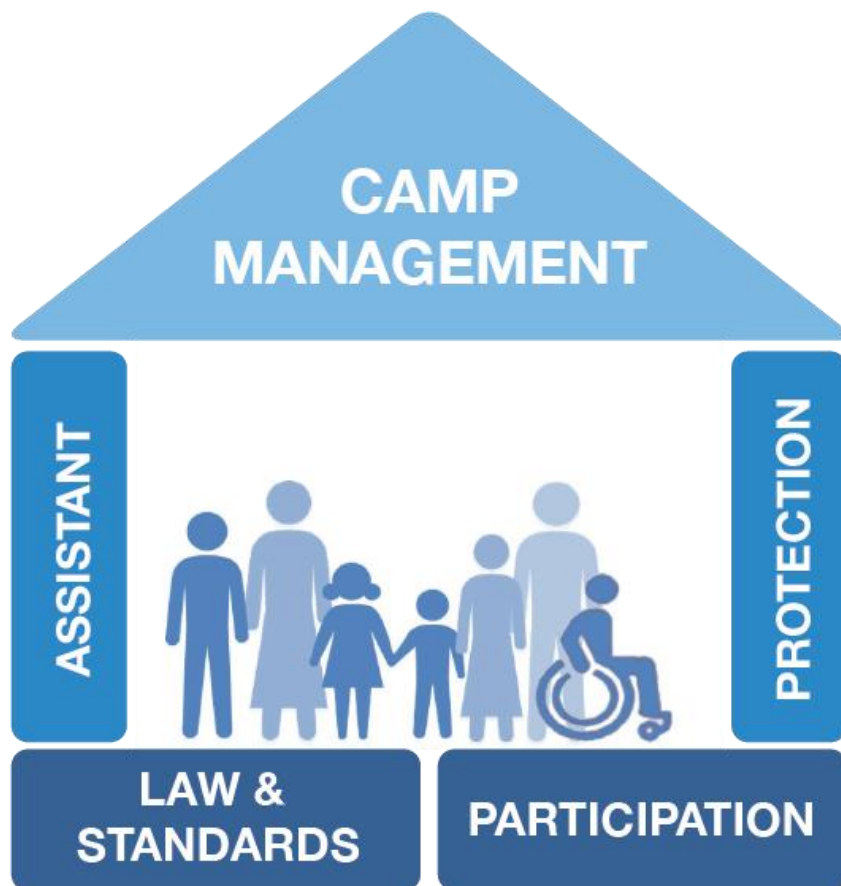# MINIMUM STANDARDS
FOR CAMP MANAGEMENT

FIELD TESTING EDITION

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CAMP MANAGEMENT

Contents

About the Minimum Standards for Camp Management

In a humanitarian crisis, camps and camp-like settings are often the only places where internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees can seek protection and assistance.

These **Minimum Standards for Camp Management** describe the minimum actions needed to support meaningful engagement within a site as well as planning and coordination between sectors and agencies. They aim to clarify the role of any site management agency working on a daily basis in humanitarian settings and to set out minimum levels of quality of that work. Although called the Minimum Standards for Camp Management, the standards apply to all contexts where displaced people seek shelter, protection and other support, and the term "site" is used unless a specific camp context is meant.

> The standards are based on the fundamental belief that **the rights of all displaced persons must be respected and their needs met in a way that supports their dignity.**

The need for a set of standards to measure the quality of work done by an SMA is long overdue. In 2002, key SMAs and field practitioners acknowledged the lack of agreement on common standards and policies and the proven inadequate levels of assistance and protection. They recognised the need for shared guidelines and tools in camp management, resulting in the 2004 *Camp Management Toolkit.* Today, the toolkit is a well-recognised reference of comprehensive knowledge and lessons learned related to site management. Other guides and handbooks followed, notably the 2010 UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*. More recent demand from field practitioners, together with the main aims of global clusters to develop effective common policy frameworks, led to the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster starting a project in 2016 to establish minimum sectoral standards.

The resulting Minimum Standards for Camp Management are the outcome of wide consultation in the field, online surveys, focus group discussions, desk reviews and expert advice. Displaced people, leading operational partners and government counterparts were all actively consulted to input to the standards. Recognising that camps and other displacement settings are part of a larger ecosystem of humanitarian response, the Standards refer to existing guidance documents both in the CCCM technical sector, like the *Camp Management Toolkit* and the *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons* and core Humanitarian Standards Partnership resources, including *The Sphere Handbook*. In doing so, they guide people working in displacement settings in what to expect from CCCM professionals and support site managers who may be new to the sector.

Who are the Minimum Standards for Camp Management aimed at?

The primary target audience for these standards is **site managers and their teams**, that is, staff who work in displacement sites on a daily basis.

They are also intended for use by others working with displaced people in the places where they live. This includes those working directly and daily with displaced people, planners and policymakers, technical specialists, coordinators, donors, academics and those working on advocacy, media or communications.

Different organisational approaches to site management may be needed to realise these minimum standards, depending on context. Recognising this, these standards use the generic term "site management agency" (SMA) to refer to the full range of different site team structures. These include:

- the traditional camp management agency, which organises the governance structures of displaced communities and coordinates the assistance and services provided by humanitarian or other organisations (such as private entities and local authorities);
- the mobile camp management agency, which relies on adapting CCCM responses to scattered, numerous and less structured sites where the permanent presence of a camp management agency is not feasible or desirable. The agency works closely with the displaced persons living in these sites to organise a multi-sectoral response to their needs. It focuses mainly on managing and coordinating communal sites of different sizes and dispersed locations, making sure site residents participate in managing the response. If needed, it can also target broader populations living in any given area to ensure an area-based coordinated response; and
- site management support, which is provided to a national, state or designated government counterpart or appointed local organisation, where additional support is needed. The site management support team provides support to strengthen the capacities of the appointed site management so they can deliver on their roles and responsibilities. This can include supporting, for example, in day-to-day coordination and monitoring of assistance and service provision; training and skills building, including by providing appropriate tools; and with relevant equipment.

The structure of the standards

The Minimum Standards for Camp Management share a common structure, similar to other humanitarian standards, to support the reader in understanding the universal statement (the minimum standard), followed by a series of key actions, key indicators and guidance notes to achieve them.

- **The minimum standards** are derived from the principle of the rights of displaced people. These are general and qualitative in nature, stating the minimum to be achieved in any crisis.
- **Key actions** outline practical steps to achieve the minimum standard. These are suggestions and may not apply in all contexts. The practitioner should select the most relevant for the situation.
- **Key indicators** serve as signals to measure whether the standard is being reached. They provide a way to capture process and programme results against the standard and over the life of the response. Minimum quantitative requirements are the lowest acceptable level of achievement for indicators and are only included where there is sectoral consensus.
- **Guidance notes** provide additional information to support the key actions, with cross-references to other standards, guidance and tools.

Working with the key indicators

The key indicators are a way to measure whether a standard is being achieved and should not be confused with the standard itself. The standard is universal, but the key indicators, like the key actions, should be developed further depending on the context and phase of the response.

There are three types of indicators:

- **process indicators** check whether a minimum requirement has been achieved;
- **progress indicators** provide the unit of measurement to monitor achieving the standard. They should be used to set baselines, set targets with partners and stakeholders, and monitor changes towards that target; and
- **target indicators** are targets which represent the quantifiable minimum below which the standard is not being met. These should be reached as soon as possible, as falling short will compromise the overall programme.

The standards use both quantitative and qualitative indicators across all domains. Indicators measuring qualitative information, such as satisfaction or perception indicators, are included to strengthen accountability especially to site populations, and to help drive and develop programmatic changes that SMAs need to make to meet the standards.

Sex and age disaggregated data, at a minimum, allows programme managers and decision-makers to examine service delivery, treatment and service outcomes in-depth. Further disaggregation may be needed depending on the context.

What is meant by "minimum" and what happens if that cannot be met?

The Minimum Standards for Camp Management are based on the fundamental belief that **the rights of all displaced persons must be respected and their needs met in a way that supports their dignity.** In doing this, these standards are **minimum standards** and remain constant. However, the key actions and indicators need to be adapted to be meaningful in the operational setting, and with the input of the site population, whether displaced or host communities. The context will also change throughout the site lifecycle, so their appropriateness should be reviewed over time.

SMAs should always strive to exceed these minimums, and to address as many groups and their particular needs as possible. It cannot be assumed that assistance is a neutral activity which affects everyone equally. The context and manner in which assistance is delivered impacts on whether the human rights and needs of affected persons are being respected and fulfilled. A human rights-based approach, therefore, provides the framework and necessary standards for humanitarian assistance activities.

In cases where the standards are not met, any proposal to reduce the minimum requirements should be evaluated carefully. SMAs should lead a process to collectively agree to any reductions and to report the shortfall in actual progress against the minimums. These should be agreed by displaced people, host communities, organisations working in the site and other key stakeholders. Humanitarian organisations must also assess the negative impact on the population when not meeting a standard and take steps to minimise any harm. SMAs should use this response gap for advocacy and strive to reach the indicators as soon as possible.

Using the standards in context

Humanitarian responses take place in many different contexts. Several factors will influence how the standards can be applied in the operating environment to support the right to life with dignity. These include:

- the setting in which humanitarian response is being delivered;

- the differences across populations and diversity among people;
- the operational and logistical realities that will affect how and what kind of humanitarian response is delivered; and
- the baselines and indicators that are appropriate to the context – with key terms defined and targets set.

Culture, language, the capacity of responders, security, access, environmental conditions and resources will influence the response. It is also important to anticipate any potential negative effects of the response and act to limit these. The Minimum Standards for Camp Management are a voluntary code for quality and accountability, designed to encourage the broadest possible use and ownership of the standards. They are not a "how-to" guide but a description of what must be in place as a minimum for people to recover and rebuild from a crisis with dignity. Conforming to the standards does not mean implementing all key actions or meeting all key indicators of all standards. The degree to which an organisation can meet the standards will depend on a range of factors, some of which are beyond their control. Lack of access to the affected population, or political or economic insecurity, may make achieving the standards impossible. In cases where the minimum requirements exceed the living conditions of the host community, SMAs need to assess how to reduce potential tensions, such as by offering community-based services. In some situations, national authorities may establish minimum requirements that are higher than the standards.

Links with other standards

The Minimum Standards for Camp Management do not cover all aspects of humanitarian assistance that support the right to life with dignity. Partner organisations have developed complementary standards in several sectors, based on the same philosophy and commitments as this set of standards. These are available through Sphere, the Humanitarian Standards Partnership and its partner organisations' own websites.

Complementary standards to the Minimum Standards for Camp Management

Source: Wan Sophonpanich / IOM 2020

• *The Sphere Handbook; Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response*: Sphere Association

• *Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards*: LEGS Project

• *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS)*: Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

• *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*: Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

• *Minimum Economic Recovery Standards (MERS)*: Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network

• *Minimum Standard for Market Analysis (MISMA)*: Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP)

• *Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for Older People and People with Disabilities*: Age and Disability Consortium

Introduction

What is site management?

Site management is the coordination and monitoring of service provision, protection and assistance in locations where people displace to. Applying the legal protection framework and minimum humanitarian standards through community governance and participatory systems, site management is both technical and social. It aims to make sure services and protection provided in communal settings are in line with national and international laws, guidelines and agreed standards, to improve quality of life and dignity during displacement and to advocate for lasting ("durable") solutions.

The term "site" is increasingly used in the sector to apply to camps and camp-like settings including planned camps, self-settled camps, collective centres, reception and transit centres, and evacuation centres – and it is used throughout this document. Where differences in site characteristics impact daily management activities and the standards, these are explained in the guidance notes. Sites are locations where services, infrastructures and resources are shared and managed collectively. To achieve this, effective site-level coordination between all stakeholders is a central task of every SMA.

Camps (of every temporary shelter category) should remain the option of last resort and a temporary solution. Where they are established, agencies and authorities should seek to provide protection and deliver the required range of life-saving services across humanitarian sectors to a minimum standard.

Why is site management needed?

Where a dedicated SMA and its staff are present, more predictable and coordinated delivery of services is ensured. **Site managers and their teams enhance participation, foster accountability for affected people, and facilitate information updates on affected populations' needs, humanitarian aid providers' programmes and government services while improving the protective environment.** The structures developed by site managers are often key in empowering affected people to organise and mobilise their communities, contribute to the delivery of assistance and make informed decisions for themselves and their families.

Local authorities are often the first responders to a crisis. In some settings, they will be in charge of all three roles in the CCCM framework (administration, coordination and management). In other settings, national governments may ask external agencies or the CCCM Cluster to jointly lead the emergency response.
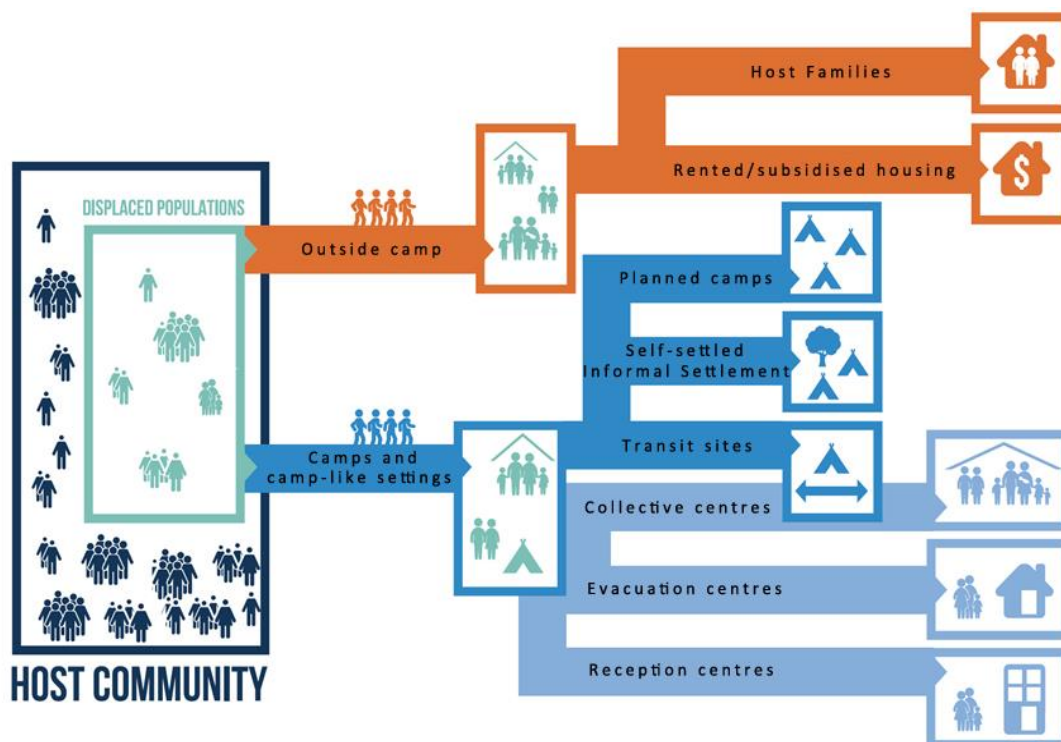
In recent years, the CCCM sector has marked other trends in providing services to displaced persons. As well as general urbanisation trends, other factors are leading to displaced people finding refuge in alternative collective sites or preferring non-formal camp environments. These include the limited availability of land to legally occupy and use for generating livelihoods, restrictive access to markets, security concerns and coping strategies. (Host governments are often reluctant to set up formal camps for political reasons, wishing to avoid the visible acknowledgement of a displaced population under their responsibility, or anticipating that local people will be drawn to camps in search of assistance and services

not available to them elsewhere. Formal, planned camps need intricate preparation, as well as adequate land rights, budget and permission from authorities – all of which are often lacking. Moreover, many displaced people prefer not to live in planned camps due to concerns such as poor access to markets and livelihoods opportunities, as well as their association with a lack of freedom of movement.)

Where do these standards apply?

The standards apply across the full range of displacement site types, from planned or spontaneous (unplanned) camps to collective centres, reception and transit centres, evacuation centres and – in certain settings – to out-of-camp and area-based approaches. There is a common view that populations living in camps are clearly separated from surrounding areas. However, in reality borders are less rigid, and movement between sites can be very fluid. CCCM organisations are actively involved in providing site management assistance for displaced communities living in host communities and outside camp contexts. The **Error! Reference source not found.** table below describe the range of sites covered by these standards.

Settlement types

Planned camps	Planned camps can be located in urban or rural locations. They are places where displaced populations live in purposely constructed sites and have a dedicated management team. Services in planned camps can include water supply, food distribution, non-food item distribution, education and health care, from humanitarian agencies or existing municipal infrastructure. These services are typically only for the people living on the site.
Self-settled camps	Displaced groups, often family or related groups, may self-settle in urban or rural sites on their own. These types of camp-like settings are typically independent of assistance for some time and may exist without receiving any external or formal humanitarian support. Self-settled camps are often situated on privately owned land. They are characterised by limited or no negotiations with the local population or private

	owners over use or access. In some cases, a camp management agency may operate nearby and learn about the displaced persons' needs and try to bring them into the management structure so they can receive assistance.
Collective centres	Displaced people may find accommodation in existing public buildings and community facilities, for example schools, factories, barracks, community centres, town halls, gymnasiums, hotels, warehouses, disused factories and unfinished buildings. These were likely not constructed as accommodation. They are often used when displacement occurs in or to an urban setting. Similar to a camp, a collective centre is meant only as temporary or transit accommodation. Levels of assistance vary from full to differing levels of self-reliance, and collective centre management can play a strong role in coordinating services.
Reception and transit centres	Reception and transit centres may be needed at the start of an emergency as temporary accommodation before people are transferred to a suitable, safe, longer-term location, or at the end of an operation as a staging point of return. They are, therefore, usually either intermediate or short term and may also host returnees. Transit centres typically also provide more services to the population and only indirectly engage their communities in participation activities or decision-making.
Emergency evacuation centres	Emergency evacuation centres are set up to provide appropriate temporary shelter for persons fleeing a specific and immediate threat, such as natural hazards like cyclones, fires and flooding. Schools, sports arenas and religious or civic buildings are often used. They should be prepared and planned for in advance of disaster events where and when possible. Central authorities need to plan for the number of people per night, along with the estimated population flow.
Outside camp or area-based approaches	Outside camp or area (sometime called neighbourhood) approaches apply to designated geographical areas and can take place in urban, peri-urban or rural settings. Activities are delivered by a mobile team with adaptable skills and profiles. Their work focuses on setting up a centre to deliver site management services to people living in the entire community, both host and displaced. Accommodation can include rented premises and spontaneous settlements. They are most frequently used in dispersed and hard-to-reach displacement settings. They have short lifespans as they are used for evolving emergency situations and should be closely aligned with national structures.

Urban settings

Since 2008, 50 per cent of the world's population has lived in cities, and urban populations are expected to double in the next 40 years. Most population growth will be concentrated in cities and towns in the least developed countries, particularly in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

The presence of IDPs and refugees in urban areas is directly linked to the global trend of increasing urbanisation. At least 59 per cent of all refugees are now living in urban settings, and this percentage is on the rise. As displacement is increasingly an urban and dispersed phenomenon, settled camps are becoming the exception. Most IDPs (around 80 per cent) are choosing to remain outside identifiable camps or settlements and are instead dispersed in urban, rural or remote settings, hosted by local families, living in subsidised or rented housing, dispersed in urban environments, and often mixed with migrants and local poor people, or gathered in small spontaneous settlements of three to five households.

An urban setting can be characterised by one or more of the following: administrative criteria or political boundaries, population density and size, economic function, and the presence of urban characteristics. Displaced people often settle in urban informal areas or marginalised neighbourhoods where resources like availability of services, access to sanitation, and adequate shelter are already strained by the host population. It makes targeted assistance more challenging and requires close collaboration with local authorities and host communities by using a multi-sectoral, multi-cohort approach (area-based approach) to reach the intended recipients and enhance the response.

Humanitarian Charter, humanitarian principles and Protection Principles

The Humanitarian Charter, humanitarian principles and Protection Principles are all foundational to humanitarian action and apply to all crises.

The **Humanitarian Charter** provides the ethical and legal backdrop to the Protection Principles, the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) and these standards. It is partly a statement of established legal rights and obligations and partly a statement of shared belief. In terms of legal rights and obligations, the Humanitarian Charter summarises the core legal principles that have the most bearing on the welfare of people affected by disaster or conflict. In terms of shared belief, it tries to capture a consensus among humanitarian agencies on the principles which should govern the response to disaster or conflict, including the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders. The Humanitarian Charter forms the basis of a commitment by humanitarian agencies that endorse Sphere and an invitation to all those who engage in humanitarian action to adopt the same principles.

Regardless of whether it is a national or international NGO or national authority who takes responsibility for the site management, the **humanitarian principles** of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence create the ethical foundation for stakeholders carrying out humanitarian work in emergencies. The four principles are defined as follows:

The humanitarian principles

Humanitarian principles			
Humanity	**Neutrality**	**Impartiality**	**Operational independence**
Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings	Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.	Humanitarian action must. Be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinction on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.	Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented

SMAs, like all humanitarian organisations, must abide by the **Protection Principles** which support the rights set out in the Humanitarian Charter and are based on the principle to do no harm. (Protection as defined by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is concerned with the safety, dignity and rights of the people affected by disaster or armed conflict. It is defined as "... all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of individuals in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (that is, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international refugee law).") The principles articulate that the roles of humanitarian actors are separate from those of the state, which holds legal responsibility for the welfare of people within its territory or control. ⊗ *See The Sphere Handbook 2018, pages 33–48 for guidance notes and further reading.*

Site managers contribute to protection by daily taking steps to avoid or minimise any adverse effects of their intervention, in particular the risk of exposing people to increased danger or abuse of their rights.

They do this when they talk with the different groups of the site population to assess the positive and possible negative consequences of the response in general (⊗ *See Standard 2*) and adapt the ways in which services and assistance are provided, to minimise the risk of looting and violence (⊗ *See Standard 3*). As part of a site planning committee, SMAs ensure that sites are built or improved in areas away from conflict (⊗ *See Standard 4*) and make sure there is safe and equal access to assistance and services for all groups in the site for as long as necessary (⊗ *See Standard 5*). The UNHCR *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons* (2010) states the protection value of the coordination and management of collective sites: "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 their fair and unhindered access to available humanitarian services."
⊗ Read more in the UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons (2010) version 6 (page 385).

Camps as a last resort

Residence in a camp or any temporary collective site is not a durable solution. Rather, it is always a temporary response to a situation of displacement. For all displaced people, achieving a durable solution is the key to ending displacement and must be taken into account from the start of the response. There are three types of durable solutions: repatriation and return, local integration and resettlement.

Durable solutions to situations of displacement

Durable solutions	
Refugees	**IDPs**
Repatriation to the country of origin	Sustainable reintegration at the place of origin (also referred to as return)
Integration in the country of asylum	Sustainable local integration in areas where IDPs take refuge (also referred to as local integration)
Resettlement in a third country	Sustainable integration in another part of the country (also referred to as settlement)

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' 2004 *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* further outline the rights of IDPs relating to return, resettlement and integration. Status as a refugee ends once a person re-establishes a protective state–citizen bond through one of the three durable solutions. There is no legal consensus as to when the condition of being an IDP ceases because identification as an IDP does not confer special status under international law. However, a person can be considered no longer displaced when she or he no longer has protection and assistance needs directly related to her/his experience of displacement.

Because residence in a camp is only a temporary solution to displacement, the SMA plays an active role in helping to decide whether a durable solution has been achieved – this is intrinsically linked to site closure. In certain circumstances, the closure of a site does not mean a durable solution is attained. It is the role of the SMA to coordinate with all stakeholders, including donors and national authorities, to advocate for the

conditions for an appropriate voluntary return, integration or resettlement process, and to inform members of the site population of their rights.
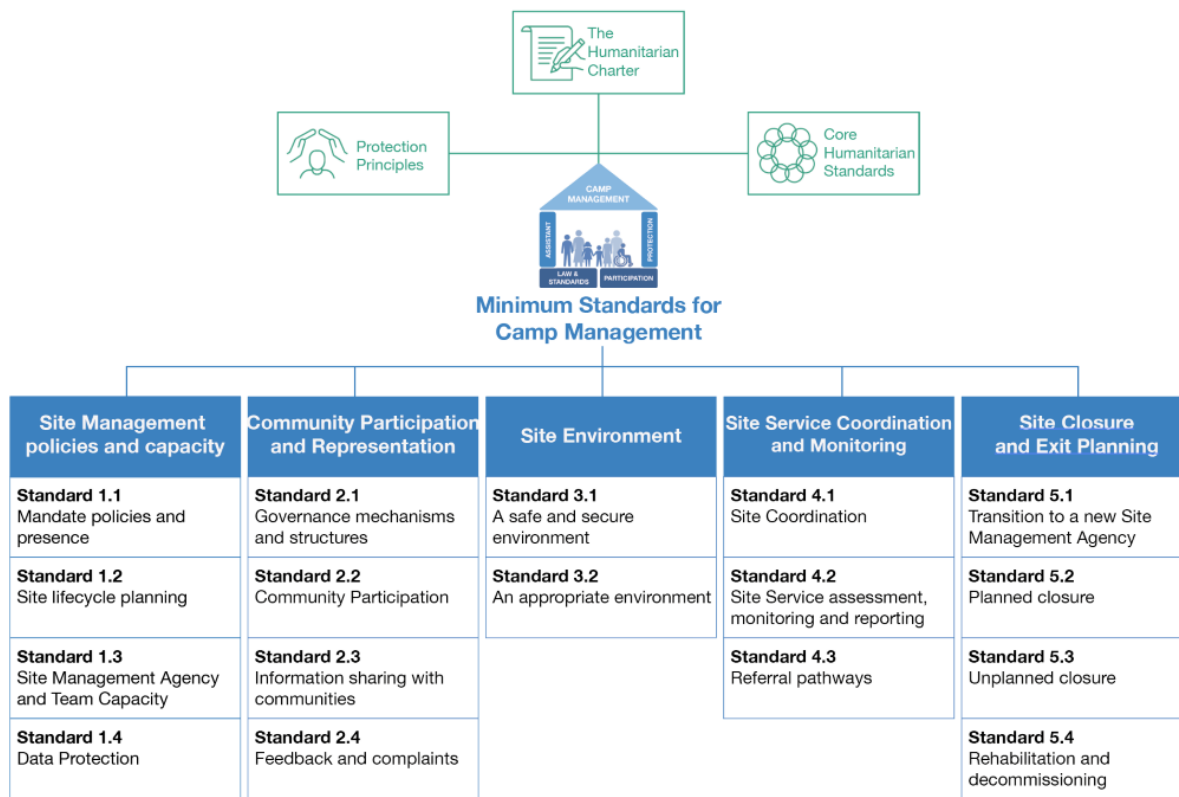
Provider of last resort

In IDP settings where the cluster approach is initiated, the cluster lead agencies are charged with being the "provider of last resort" (POLR) to ensure predictability of response.

Where necessary and depending on access, security and availability of funding, the cluster lead, as POLR, must be ready to ensure the services are provided as needed to fulfil crucial gaps identified by the cluster and reflected in the humanitarian response plan of the humanitarian country team, led by the humanitarian coordinator.

Access, security and availability of funding

If the cluster lead has no funding to fill the gap or implement the required activities as POLR, the cluster lead agency cannot be expected to implement these activities **but should continue to work with the humanitarian coordinator and donors to mobilise the necessary resources.**

Minimum Standards for Camp Management

Site Management policies and capacity	Community Participation and Representation	Site Environment	Site Service Coordination and Monitoring	Site Closure and Exit Planning
Standard 1.1 Mandate policies and presence	**Standard 2.1** Governance mechanisms and structures	**Standard 3.1** A safe and secure environment	**Standard 4.1** Site Coordination	**Standard 5.1** Transition to a new Site Management Agency
Standard 1.2 Site lifecycle planning	**Standard 2.2** Community Participation	**Standard 3.2** An appropriate environment	**Standard 4.2** Site Service assessment, monitoring and reporting	**Standard 5.2** Planned closure
Standard 1.3 Site Management Agency and Team Capacity	**Standard 2.3** Information sharing with communities		**Standard 4.3** Referral pathways	**Standard 5.3** Unplanned closure
Standard 1.4 Data Protection	**Standard 2.4** Feedback and complaints			**Standard 5.4** Rehabilitation and decommissioning

1. Site management policies and capacities

Site managers have an essential role in enhancing participation, fostering accountability for affected people, and sharing data and information on the site population with sectoral aid providers and governments while improving the protective environment. For managers and other staff at sites to be able to do this, the organisations for whom they work need to have mandates, policies, strategies and action plans grounded in humanitarian and protection principles. Site managers and staff also need to be equipped to carry out their work by being provided with supervision, training (both on-the-job and targeted training), mentoring (working in pairs or with experienced staff), regular team meetings, regular feedback sessions, periodic performance appraisals, written reports and equipment or logistics support.

Site management may be carried out by humanitarian organisations (national, international or voluntary) or led by local or national government authorities. In spontaneous settlements, or at the start of an emergency the community may lead the management of the site. National authorities are responsible for providing security, maintaining law and order and guaranteeing the civilian character of a camp or temporary site.

The site management team serves not only the site population and surrounding host community but also service providers through its coordination, information management and representation role. While these responsibilities are covered in subsequent standards, their central role is noted here as the site management team establishes the entry point for accountability that enables other agencies to ensure a participatory approach in their work (⊗ *See in particular Standards 2.1, 2.2 and 4.1*). Establishing inclusive and transparent partnerships will help to build legitimacy inside and outside the site.

While sites are often set up with the expectation that they will be short term, planning should always anticipate the need for longer-term assistance, expansion and unexpected eventualities. The needs and capacities of the host community should be also be assessed in relation to the services, infrastructure and assets established. Services and infrastructure such as schools, community halls, roads, electricity cables or water points may also benefit local communities.

States are fully responsible for the protection of everyone in their territories no matter their legal status, whether displaced or members of host communities, and for ensuring public order and security from threats. Humanitarian organisations must advocate that the national authorities assume their responsibilities to help reduce exposure to threats and mitigate any devastating effects of the initial cause of displacement.

> The key actions and indicators described against these four standards may apply not just at the site level, but to organisations, coordination platforms and the overall humanitarian response.

⊗ **Links to CHS Commitment 2.**

Standard 1.1: Mandate, policies and presence	
Affected populations have equitable access to protection and assistance through a mandated site management agency for as long as necessary.	

Key actions	• An SMA is appointed by an overall response authority (government, cluster or other) to be present to carry out management activities when an influx of

	displacement requires specialised site management services (see guidance notes).
	• The SMA must have humanitarian policies (including preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)) and strategies as well as leadership and organisational systems that guide and encourage site management teams to work in principled ways.
	• The SMA sets up a site management team, comprising people with the required capacities and adequate resources.
	○ The site management team may cover more than one physical location, depending on the context.
	○ Site management teams may be stationary or mobile or a combination of the two.
Key indicators	• 1 site management team per 15,000 displaced persons (see guidance notes)
	• % of site population who are satisfied with overall levels of service
	• % of SMA staff who know the process for complaints against the SMA, including PSEA

Guidance notes

The need for a site management team to be present at a location will be **triggered** by a significant number of displaced people and the likely duration of displacement. The need for an external site management team will depend on the capacity of local authorities or organisations to meet people's needs according to humanitarian principles.

The ratio of one site management team per 15,000 displaced persons needs to be **contextualised** taking into account community capacities, the relationships between displaced and host communities, the capacities of service-providing organisations, and the type of sites, especially in evacuation centres and transit sites.

For informal sites scattered in urban, peri-urban or rural areas, the SMA could cluster sites based on the number of individual locations, the distance between them, the needs at the sites and the number of displaced people living in them, to assess and plan support needed from one mobile team. Site visits by mobile site management teams should be regular and predictable to the population in specific geographical areas. ⊗ For more information on out-of-camp site management, see the CCCM Cluster's 2019 working paper, *Management and Coordination of Collective Settings through Mobile / Area Based Approach*.

The site management team may have a base at site-level offices, centralised or municipal offices or community resource centres.

While adhering to the humanitarian principles (⊗ *See Introduction*) is the cornerstone of humanitarian response, the SMA must also show accountability in its activities which, by definition, exercise influence and power over the lives of affected persons and communities.

Pressure from media, donors and governments can be overwhelming at the start of a response. This can push SMAs and teams into making promises and commitments they may not be able to keep. These standards aim to support site management teams to avoid this through appropriate prioritisation and sequencing of activities.

Standard 1.2: Site lifecycle planning

Appropriate and inclusive planning ensures adequate protection and assistance are provided throughout the site lifecycle, from set-up to closure.

Key actions	• Develop a site management action plan.
	o Engage with key members of the site population and other stakeholders including the host community and local authorities.
	o Include both men and women in the project team and as key informants from the population and host community.
	o Ensure community consultation is in appropriate language(s) and format(s) for the stakeholders engaged.
	o Consider financial, material and HR resources, including the technical needs and safety of the population.
	• Assess and include targeted actions for vulnerable persons and people with specific needs.
	o Ensure protection assessment findings are reflected in site management action plans.
	• Share a summary of the action plan with the host community and representatives of local authorities.
	• Develop contingency plans for spontaneous arrivals, unplanned (forced returns) closure and possible events that will affect the site, such as floods, fire and other hazards.
	o Include HR, financial and equipment contingency needs in contingency plans, at a minimum.
	o Engage service providers to feedback on contingency plans during development.
	o Account for the needs of vulnerable people, making sure they are not at increased risk in contingency plans.
	• Regularly review and update contingency plans as the situation and planning scenarios evolve.

	o Monitor the situation in and around the site by carrying out observation and physical risk assessments to identify threats.
	
	    o Ensure new service providers are incorporated into contingency plans and evacuation procedures.
	
	    o Practise emergency procedures.
	
	    o Inform the population of their role in contingency planning.
	
	• Develop an agreement with host communities and local authorities detailing the conditions needed to return land and infrastructure.

Key indicators	• Community workshops are used to develop and share contingency plans. • Site management action plans and contingency plans are updated.

Guidance notes

From day one, **the site management team's job** is one of constant motion and needs a high degree of flexibility, quick thinking and prioritisation, innovation and careful planning. Informing, consulting, involving and reporting to the key stakeholders (authorities, host community members, services providers and people affected by the emergency) will include transparently sharing the intentions of the site management team and consultation aimed at building effective partnerships. Is it critical to set clear benchmarks and develop criteria to monitor implementation of the site management action plan based on the profile of the population.

Consider the **timing of consultations** with displaced people about sensitive issues, including hazards and closure, as early as is feasible but without causing additional stress.

While sites are often set up with the expectation that they will be short term, planning should always aim for **longer-term needs, expansion and unexpected eventualities**. The needs and capacities of the host community should also be assessed in relation to the services, infrastructure and assets established. Services and infrastructure such as schools, community halls, roads, electricity cables or water points may also benefit local communities. Conversely, buildings which have been degraded due to their temporary use as collective centres can have a negative impact on the local community. The eventual handover of such assets during site closure should be defined and agreed with involved stakeholders from the start. The planning of site set-up/improvement and site closure are interrelated from the start.

⊗ *Site lifecycle planning should be done alongside Standards 3.2 An appropriate environment, 4.1 Site coordination and 5.4 Planned closure.*

⊗ *Read more about contingency planning in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 1,** environmental planning in **Chapter 6**, and safety and security in **Chapter 12.***

Standard 1.3: SMA and site management team capacity

Site management teams have the operational and technical capacity to manage the site.

Key actions	• Coordinate with HR departments to ensure the site management team is staffed in a similar representation to the site population.
	   o Balance the proportion of female and male personnel to reflect communities and their needs.
	   o Ensure the presence of staff from key minority groups in the displaced population, including religious or ethnic minority groups.
	• Train site management team staff in CCCM principles and practices.
	• Coach and train site management team staff in humanitarian principles and the Code of Conduct.
	   o Ensure they understand the reporting significance and have signed a Code of Conduct in an appropriate language.
	   o Include PSEA.
	• Ensure the site management team has enough appropriate equipment for the context and the job.

Key indicators	• Ratio of staff (female:male) is proportional to that of the site population. • % of site management staff who have signed a Code of Conduct • % of site management staff who have completed adequate training related to their role

Guidance notes

The **size and make-up** of a site management team is highly contextual and depends on a range of factors including local government and community capacities, language and other communication needs, site characteristics, site landscape features, service provision needs and service provider capacity, and security conditions.

The site management team needs to have a **balance of skills and capacities**, whether in leadership, protection, assistance, technical sectors, administration, IT, conflict management, information management and/or community mobilisation. In some contexts, it might be favourable for female staff to be over-represented, since generally female staff are more able to speak with men in the population than male staff are with women.

A dedicated site management team needs to be **present in the site from the start** and equipped with the resources needed to carry out the tasks of representing the people affected by the crisis. Adjustments to the core team should be made over time according to the planned activities and conditions at the site.

Site management teams need to be supported by organisations with **humanitarian policies and strategies** in place as well as leadership and organisational systems, such as finance and HR, that guide and encourage them to work in principled ways.

Local NGOs have proved to be successful site managers. Where country operations have adopted the IASC cluster approach, cluster lead agencies are increasingly finding that where access to the site population is granted, and its overall acceptance is achieved, this is a favourable option.

In cluster settings, the SMA will be **allocated sites** by the cluster coordinator or cluster lead agency. In refugee settings, this allocation process will be coordinated by UNHCR. In other settings, the government will play a key role. This should happen in close cooperation with local authorities while verifying their capacities and resources.

In circumstances where field staff are not trained on the CHS nor on-site management roles and responsibilities, it will be the duty of the cluster or sector lead to appoint an NGO/UN agency to support them in implementing the Minimum Standards for Camp Management. This support could also be used for **remote site management capacity building**.

Core **CCCM training** for all site management staff includes at a minimum the following topics:

- roles and responsibilities;
- participation;
- providing information and listening back (accountability);
- humanitarian principles and Protection Principles;
- coordination;
- site improvement and planning; and
- site closure (with reference to technical standards including Sphere or local building codes where appropriate).

Beyond training in CCCM, staff should also be trained in the SMA's **Code of Conduct and PSEA**. For almost all agencies, the reporting of sexual exploitation or abuse (SEA) is mandatory and aimed at ensuring standards for accountability for all. PSEA is a shared and mandated responsibility by the entire humanitarian community, including local, national, regional and international partners. To combat it, the UN has taken measures to prevent, report, investigate and impose sanctions against perpetrators of SEA. One such measure was the development of in-country networks. These act as the primary body for coordination and oversight on prevention and response to SEA in the country in which it occurs. Gender equality training is increasingly recognised as complementary to PSEA training.

⊗ *Read more about potential staff profiles and proficiencies in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2** and the **Collective Centre Guidelines, UNHCR/IOM 2011**. See the **Recruiting, Training and Supervising Staff checklist** in the Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.*

⊗ For more information on available training resources see the **Global CCCM Cluster Learning** site at *www.cccmlearning.org/login/index.php*.

PSEA resources

⊗ *Stop sexual exploitation and abuse by our own staff, **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.***

⊗ See the *IASC PSEA **Six Core Principles***.

⊗ See the IASC and Global Protection Cluster's 2015 *Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery.*

⊗ See the 2018 *Report of the UN Secretary-General: Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*.

⊗ For plain language versions of the IASC's six core principles in more than 100 languages, see Translators Without Borders: *https://translatorswithoutborders.org/psea-translated.*

Standard 1.4: Site resident database and data protection

All personal information collected from site populations is appropriately gathered, stored and used.

Key actions	• Establish and maintain a site resident database.
	• Know, understand and apply applicable data protection policies to data collected by the SMA.
	o Ensure that proper procedures are in place to secure the data, including safe and locked rooms, electronic backups, passwords and access restrictions to sensitive data. Confidential documents should be clearly marked.
	o Where necessary, personal information should be removed or replaced with a code to protect anonymity.
	o Clear procedures should be in place for information to be protected or destroyed in the event of evacuation or withdrawal.
	• Coordinate all site organisations to develop a site-level agreed data sharing and protection protocol, including defining consent and information sharing. Agree:
	o what data needs to be collected and entered into a storage system, by whom and how;
	o how dissemination of information or reports prepared from data minimises risk to the site population; and
	o what information must remain restricted.
	• Coordinate with stakeholder agencies to train all enumerators in the agreed sharing and protection rules.
	• Monitor and oversee the way data is used and shared.

Key indicators	• A specific consent and confidentiality protocol is agreed and in place for all stakeholders operating at the site.
	• Information-sharing practices are agreed and in place for all stakeholders operating at the site.

Guidance notes

Increased interest and demand among both humanitarian organisations and governments to apply more advanced methods of data science in humanitarian work highlights the need for SMAs and their site management teams to better understand the challenges of introducing new technology or data retention methods in the CCCM sector.

If biometrics and other systems are used, site populations must understand what their biometric information will be used for and who the data will be shared with, how long it will be kept and whether they have an alternative to biometrics collection.

Site management teams need to gather information on individuals to better target protection and assistance responses. However, irresponsible processing of information can put people at serious risk as well as invade their privacy. Finding the right balance between collecting and sharing information for the benefit of site residents while protecting people against misuse of information should include the following principles:

- o In determining what data needs to be collected, carefully assess why the information is needed. Only information that serves a protection purpose, and that neither harms the informant nor others, should be collected.
- o Identify data that can be especially sensitive to make sure the collection and sharing are subject to protection measures.
- o Collect data in a way that is sensitive to protection concerns, to avoid jeopardising anyone's security and privacy.
- o Agree with all humanitarian stakeholders how the information is shared and define why it needs to be shared. Only information relevant to a determined protection purpose should be shared.
- o Only share individual information with the informed consent of the person concerned. Explain this to the person during data collection.
- o Do a risk analysis: the level of risk associated with different kinds of information will vary, and the site management team should work with other operational agencies to assess the risk levels and design information management systems accordingly.

⊗ *Read more about data protection and information management as well as the **Information Management checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 5**. See also the **Managing Information checklist** in the Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.*

⊗ See also the ICRC's 2020 *Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Standards.*

2. Community participation and representation

Making sure that all groups of the population participate meaningfully in decision-making and site governance structures is an essential part of good site management. Participation is central to upholding the basic rights of displaced populations in all types of temporary settlements during humanitarian crises, and to their health, psychosocial well-being and safety. It is a key step towards making sure that different needs, capacities and expectations of all groups in the displaced community are represented and addressed, thus contributing to improving humanitarian response and accountability towards affected populations. Well-functioning sites depend on the site population participating in an active and meaningful way. Supporting this will require training, coaching and encouraging community representatives to be responsive leaders.

Degrees of participation

Source: Camp Management Toolkit
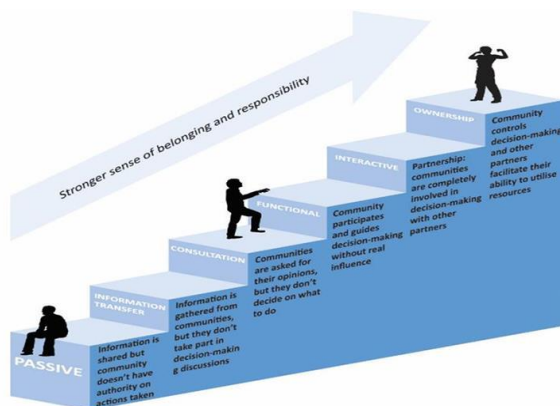
Participation in a long-term process, which requires an in-depth understanding of the local context. Its aim is not just to give a voice to the different groups among the displaced communities, but to go further and ensure that residents are heard and take part in decisions affecting their lives. Often, at the start of a rapid-onset emergency, site management teams and site populations may not have the time or energy to prioritise meaningful participation. Information transfer methods, consultation processes, feedback mechanisms, and site governance structures need to be established with this in mind – and they need to be set up early.

Barriers to participation depend on the context and will be different for distinct groups in the site population and will vary over time. They can also be social or related to the physical environment. There may be existing barriers from rules or policies that disadvantage certain population groups.

Communication activities in a site are essential in promoting meaningful community participation and stakeholder accountability. Site residents' views on life in the site should be considered and included in most decision-making processes. The role of site managers is to create a means for two-way information flow between the different stakeholders. It is from this transparent and constant dialogue around daily site challenges that community participation becomes effective. As well as direct contacts with the site population, it is increasingly common to use media and technologies such as text messaging and websites to promote dialogue across a site.

⊗ **Links to CHS Commitments 3, 4, 5 and 8.**

Standard 2.1: Governance structures

Inclusive and representative governance structures are accountable to and have the capacity to meet the needs of the site population.

Key actions	• Assess and understand existing participation structures and power dynamics.
	• Consult with key informants in the community and other stakeholders about the structure of and selection to site governance groups or committees.
	• Integrate with, adapt or support existing governance structures or community leadership.
	• Assess the role of host communities and ensure they have a voice in governance structures, especially in resolving disputes.
	• Develop terms of reference, including a code of conduct, for different site management groups or committees.
	• Use an agreed participatory selection process for groups or committees.
	• Advocate for these participatory structures to play a significant role in decision-making processes related to providing assistance and protection in the site.
	• Communicate the roles and responsibilities of groups or committees to the entire site population, including the host community.
	• Systematically assess ethical ways of engaging with women, youth and often under-represented people to respect dignity and avoid any increased stigma. Support these people and groups to ensure they are included in decision-making processes and have a meaningful role.
	• Communicate with all external stakeholders (service providers, local government and the host community) so they are aware of the agreed governance structure, the role and responsibilities of the groups or committees, and how to work with them.
	• Build the capacity of site governance committees or groups.
	• Monitor the performance of site governance committees and groups against their terms of reference, and work with the committees and groups to make sure they are accountable to the site population.
Key indicators	• % of the site population who feel they are represented by and through the site governance structure
	• % of site population who report that the site governance structures are inclusive, effective and reaching all of the displaced population
	• Governance structures are representative of the make-up of the population.

Guidance notes

Generating a **representative site governance** structure that includes women, children and minority groups will be different in each operational context. **Community mapping exercises** can be a useful tool for SMAs. Over time and in every context (not just in long-term protracted situations) this tool can make the views of key stakeholders on critical issues clearer, as well as the needs of people and their preferred way of communicating.

The **barriers (cultural, physical or socio-economic)** that could impede certain groups from participating meaningfully in governance structures need to be recognised, and measures taken to mitigate these. Understanding the power dynamics already in play in the community, both displaced and host, as well as the barriers that different groups face to participating in decision-making, are crucial steps to define the best way to work towards increasing the participation of all groups.

In some contexts – particularly outside camps – community representation, governance structures or leadership **may already exist**. As such, it is crucially important to do a thorough analysis to understand how these groups work, their role and the extent to which they are adequately able to represent the entire community. Depending on the outcome of this analysis, new structures may need to be created. Still, it may be more appropriate to widen existing structures, or simply to increase their support and capacity building to enable them to play a role in coordinating and managing humanitarian assistance and protection.

Participatory models for **short-term collective centres** (including transit sites and evacuation centres) typically focus on improving data collection or distribution, designing appropriate humanitarian services, and providing forums for information dissemination and conflict resolution. Models for these frequently take the form of steering committees, community notice boards or sub-sector technical groups. Long-term collective centres can have similar aims but take different forms (such as national associations), link up with civil society or have advocacy goals.

Ensuring that consultations happen with community members to prioritise their specific **cultural practices and traditions** in the immediate aftermath of a hazard can be invaluable to building back social cohesion. At the same time, some cultural practices may harm elements of the community, and site managers need to balance tradition with respect for human rights. Therefore, not only men, women, children and vulnerable groups should be represented in a governance structure, but also cultural leaders and representatives.

Inform or consult with **local market actors** as a stakeholder group, linking livelihoods to early recovery, even in remote sites.

⊗ *Read more about setting up representatives and governance structures in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapters 2 and 3** and in the **CCCM Cluster Collective Centre Guidelines Chapter 4.** See also the **Setting Up Governance and Community Participation Mechanisms checklist** in the Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.*

Standard 2.2: Community participation

The site population is able to participate meaningfully in decision-making related to the management of the site.

Key actions	• Plan and budget for adequate time and resources needed for developing effective participation as part of site management. • Agree with other stakeholders that the site population participates in and is involved with each stage of the project cycle – assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. • Train and support site staff to use participation methodologies. • Encourage the use of participatory approaches and methodologies by service providers. • Monitor and manage the potential abuse of participation and power. • Adjust site management programming to respond to monitoring of needs.
Key indicators	• % of the site population who are satisfied with the opportunities they have to influence site decisions • % of female committee members who feel their views are taken into account during decision-making processes • % of inter-agency coordination meetings involving community representatives

Guidance notes

There is often an assumption that **women's participation** requires a separate mechanism. This may be a useful way to engage with women in restrictive cultural environments and separate groups may also be needed to provide the privacy and space for women to discuss issues that affect them. However, separate groups should be combined with strengthening women's participation in general site governance structures. Women's participation in general committees should be also promoted to avoid men having a sole or majority influence in site decision-making.

Participation in decision-making can be formal or informal, engaging different stakeholders such as service providers. While it will be useful to use different participatory approaches and strategies, employing a mix of differing organisational policies, internal experiences, support (indirectly through staffing or directly through funding) may confuse and create tensions in the site population. The SMA should start a dialogue with all relevant stakeholders to **promote transparency in the approaches used** with the site population and set up forums for sharing best practices and lessons learned. The SMA should establish the right balance between direct community participation and indirect representation by elected representatives through the various stages of response.

Self-selection by participants could be seen as a way of overcoming too narrow or too broad a selection in some situations. Advertising topics of discussion or decision-making in advance allows participants to some extent choose how, where and when they want to contribute.

SMAs will also need to consider **host communities**, how displacement affects them and their access to resources, to avoid creating tensions and incorporate ways they can participate in the decisions that affect them.

In **non-camp settings,** the community structure is trained to identify priorities and solve collective problems in much the same way as traditional planned and informal sites. The contrast of participatory techniques in these two CCCM approaches will be more about who the engagement is targeted towards. In camp settings, this is primarily NGOs, and in area-based CCCM programmes, this is a larger audience including local governments or authorities and service providers.

SMAs should understand that **people with specific needs** includes people who have long-term sensory, physical, psychological, intellectual or other impairments that, in interaction with various barriers, prevent them from participating in or having access to humanitarian programmes, services or protection. Humanitarians should strive to recognise the capacities of people with specific needs to contribute to the humanitarian response as well as the multiple forms of discrimination they face.

⊗ *Read more about modes of participation and challenges to it as well as the **Community Participation checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 3**. See also the **Setting Up Governance and Community Participation Mechanisms checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2**.*

⊗ *Read more about the rights of persons with disabilities at* www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html.

⊗ *Read more about women's participation in the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)'s* Improving Participation and Protection of Displaced Women and Girls Through Camp Management Approaches.

⊗ *Watch how to use the coaching technique to build the participation of camp committees in both traditional sites and out-of-camp approaches on* www.youtube.com/watch?v=cExBGw9g3aM.

⊗ *Read more about non-camp settings in the Global CCCM Cluster's 2019* Management and Coordination of Collective Settings Through Mobile / Area Based Approach Working Paper*.*

Standard 2.3: Information sharing with communities

Regular communication with the displaced community, host community and all other stakeholders is appropriate and relevant.

Key actions	• Develop information dissemination mechanisms in appropriate language(s) and format(s) for the stakeholders engaged.
	
	   o Ensure initial and ongoing assessments include questions on preferred communication languages, formats and channels.
	
	• Create and regularly update agreed standardised key messages or FAQs to be used by all agencies.
	
	   o During disease outbreaks, seek comprehensive guidance about community messaging from health actors, including national ministries of health.
	
	• Develop minimum standards or guidelines for information sharing and encourage all service providers to use these.
	
	• Regularly disseminate to the site population information about services provided, including organisational roles and mandates, details of the service and contact information.
	
	   o Ensure this is updated as services change, for example, changing food rations.
	
	• Follow up with site populations to ensure messages and information has been received and understood.

Key indicators	• % of the site population able to name service providers (an organisation or staff name) • % of the site population who consider recent key messages appropriate • Appropriate modes of dissemination are used to share key messages.

Guidance notes

The key actions for both camp and non-camp settings emphasise creating and sharing **site-level information campaigns** for displaced communities and host communities. The main difference for out-of-camp settings would be the different kinds of modalities needed – as it is much harder to spread information outside planned sites (all types) in out-of-camp neighbourhoods as people are dispersed and isolated. In such settings, there is also a need to build on existing mechanisms for information sharing while considering the wider variety of population needs in the area. Camp settings are more likely to have a relatively more homogeneous site profile with similar levels of vulnerability.

Focus groups could be used in **transit centres and evacuation sites** to share information with site populations.

Site populations are likely to have **varying levels of literacy** (for example, children's literacy is different to adult literacy), and in some locations more than one language. They are also likely to rely on different information sources, for example, youth and older people often rely on quite different sources of information.

⊗ *Read more about disseminating information and see the **Disseminating Information checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2***.

Standard 2.4: Feedback and complaints

Site populations, both displaced and host, have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle feedback and complaints to service providers.

Key actions	• At site set-up and with the site population and service providers, establish harmonised feedback and complaints mechanisms, including response.
	○ As necessary, coordinate or consolidate different mechanisms from service providers.
	○ Use a set of different formats for submission of feedback and complaints, such as verbal, written, electronic, paper-based, comments boxes, help desks and hotlines.
	○ Ensure the mechanism(s) is able to maintain confidentiality.
	○ Make sure the mechanism includes agreed and realistic response timeframes.
	○ Establish a feedback and complaints tracking system.
	○ Update standard operating procedures as required, for example, changed service levels.

	• Ensure that information about feedback and complaints mechanisms is available in appropriate language(s) and format(s) to account for different levels of literacy and technology use and is accessible for people with specific needs.
	
	• Train staff on confidentiality.
	
	    o Work with service providers to make sure all staff across the site have a shared understanding.
	
	• Respond to, track and document feedback and complaints.
	
	• Make sure a PSEA reporting channel(s) and follow-up mechanism is in place.
	
	    o Raise awareness among the site population, both displaced and host, of PSEA and how to report incidents.
	
	• Monitor that the feedback and complaints mechanism(s) is functioning. If necessary, follow up directly with service providers if the site population fails to get a response from an individual agency mechanism.

Key indicators	• % of site population aware of feedback and complaints mechanisms and know how to access them • % of complaints or feedback investigated, resolved and results fed back to the complainant within the agreed time frame. • % of member groups of site governance structure having trained on the Code of Conduct

Guidance notes

Receiving feedback in camp settings often has negative associations. People who have missed out on assistance have a **right to complain**, and while all complaints may not receive a resolution, they do all need to **receive a response**. The language of the displaced community should be the preferred language on site. Standard operating procedures for complaints procedures should be established and accompanied by training for staff and community leaders, and should include aspects of accessibility, effectiveness and confidentiality.

The views and needs of **all members** of the displaced community, including people living in the host community, are heard via feedback and complaints mechanisms in multiple formats.

Examples of **communication tools** used for feedback include complaint committees, grievance committees, suggestion boxes, radio with call-in service, letters addressed to the SMA or humanitarian community, hotlines, and SMS messaging. They also include house-to-house visits with a standardised monitoring form filled in by SMA staff during predefined hours.

It is important to develop procedures that ensure **anonymity and confidentiality**. Follow-up and referral procedures of sensitive issues such as SEA and human rights violations should preferably be the responsibility of one agency that acts as the protection focal point, or the relevant sector agency.

The **approaches** used must address the specific context and will depend on the way feedback is handled. A mixture of informal and formal mechanisms is often used. Ideally, feedback and complaints mechanisms should be designed with methods of communication and tools commonly used, preferred and understood by the people involved. These should all be taken into account when putting in place an appropriate feedback and complaints mechanism: the literacy rate of the site population; the safe access to use the mechanism by all, including vulnerable groups; the confidentiality of communication support and the available resources to roll out the process.

As much as possible, the SMA should **coordinate and harmonise** the different formal and informal feedback mechanisms, avoiding duplications and promoting that they are set up when none exist. Above all, the SMA should advocate for all agencies to be involved.

Gathering of protection data must only take place when response capacity is in place and an explanation can be given to site residents as to how this information will be used. The lead protection agency should build capacity on agencies needing more support to ensure confidentiality, setting up the referral of cases for specialised protection agencies and adequate case management systems.

⊗ *Read more about feedback and complaints mechanisms in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 3***.

⊗ For more resources on designing a complaints mechanism see *The Sphere Handbook* 2018 edition, **pages 66–70,** which are part of the ⊗ **CHS – Commitment 5**.

3. Site environment

The location and planning of a site have a critical impact on the health, well-being and protection of the displaced population, as well as on the SMA's ability to manage daily activities, ensure participation and develop relationships with the host community. Just as important as the physical location and layout of the site is the process by which a site is established, grows, changes, improves and ultimately closes down.

While sites are often set up with the expectation that they will be short term, planning should always aim for longer-term needs, expansion and unexpected eventualities. The needs and capacities of the host community should also be assessed in relation to the services, infrastructure and assets established – such as schools, community halls, roads, electricity cables and water points – which may also benefit local communities.

National authorities are ultimately responsible for allocation of land. The SMA, with the support of the cluster/sector lead agencies if they exist, must ensure all actions taken during the lifecycle of the site are comprehensive, inclusive, well-coordinated and uphold the rights of the displaced population. It is important to note that in some contexts, especially during displacement related to disasters caused by natural hazards, the site management and coordination roles are more and more often being carried out by national authorities.

The local authorities are not only often the first responders to a crisis, but in some settings they will be in charge of managing sites directly. In other settings, national governments may ask external agencies or the CCCM Cluster to jointly lead the emergency response.

⊗ **Links with CHS Commitment 1.**

Standard 3.1: A safe and secure environment
All site residents and service providers live in a dignified environment that is safe and secure from harm or violence.

Key actions	• With governance structures and service providers, develop a site-based safety plan at site set-up. Update this plan regularly.
	○ Ensure the SMA has adequate capacity in safety and security assessment and response.
	○ Use a risk-based approach to evaluate external and internal threats and appropriate measures to respond to them.
	○ Regularly assess the site for risks, and update contingency plans according to emerging risks.
	○ If necessary, develop relocation plans.
	• With service providers, site planners and community governance structures, undertake regular observational and safety audits of the site, evaluating both

	physical infrastructure and community behaviour. Develop a response plan to address "red flags" found during safety audits.
	o With protection colleagues, include gender-based violence (GBV) and other protection risks in safety audits, and make sure measures are in place, based on needs, to mitigate risks and to respond to these risks.
	o Monitor population densities in and across the site.
	o In response to red flags, consider site reorganisation or population resettlement in the site.
	o If necessary, implement relocation plans for households or services located in unsafe areas.
	• Establish safety committees at the relevant levels to address site-specific threats or risks.
	• Establish and maintain information channels to communicate risks to the site population.
	• Train SMA staff adequately in safety and security and put in place appropriate security measures.
	• Follow appropriate referral mechanisms.
Key indicators	• % of recommended mitigation actions from safety audit directly integrated into site maintenance and improvement plans (**or** addressed with site maintenance activities)

Guidance notes

Safety audits are a tool designed to give SMAs and service providers an understanding of how all groups (including those at risk such as adolescents, older people and people with specific needs) feel about their safety and security when using site facilities during both day and night. Depending on the context, safety audits should be done together with a protection specialist or with specially trained focal people. The results of the safety audits, observational monitoring and mapping of the results can then be used to work with site planners and service providers (where available) to develop appropriate interventions to address any concerns. These interventions may include installing additional key facilities where needed, expanding or reducing parts of the site as needed, and redirecting traffic and livelihoods to maintain a balance between overly dense and less used parts of the site.

As a safety intervention, more **lighting** could be installed, but SMAs and service providers should be aware of the potential unintended consequences of this. Community consultation is an essential part of the solution.

Relocating households to different parts of the site is an extremely complex undertaking, with many protection risks which may undermine existing community structures and capacities. Such moves should only be taken if there are no alternatives, and in full consultation with everyone involved.

The problem of **high population densities** in different parts of a site (such as around markets and water points) can be a key factor contributing to a heightened risk of GBV or other forms of protection risk. Observational audits will help to understand and highlight problem areas and potential solutions.

It is not enough to only *consult* women and children about safety and dignity, results of consultations must be acted upon. Be aware of social hierarchies and power dynamics, and actively engage with decision-makers to reinforce the rights of women and children to safely access facilities in the site.

Safety committees is a broad term which could include all forms of security in a site but is usually related to voluntary actions for fire prevention, search and rescue, first aid and so on.

⊗ *Read more about site safety and security as well as the **Safety and Security checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 12***.

Standard 3.2: An appropriate environment

All site residents have an environment that is physically, socially and culturally appropriate.

Key actions	• Set up a site development committee to facilitate community participation.
	• Use community consultations to ensure the site plan meets the needs of all groups in the site.
	o Find out site population expectations of the appropriate use of facilities, noting these may not all be the same.
	o Assess changes in site population needs and capacities from the pre-crisis context.
	o Identify immediate needs and capacities for both the displaced and host communities, and consider any specific needs of at-risk groups.
	o Support the most vulnerable people to voice their needs during planning, and advocate that their needs are taken into account in the design and maintenance of site facilities.
	o Engage with disability groups in the site population. Appoint a focal person for people with specific needs on the site management team. If possible, retrofit modifications to site facilities or negotiate special access to meet their needs.
	o Monitor community participation in site planning to ensure continued engagement and appropriate resource use.

	- Plan and set up a site-wide address system. - Take into account non-literate residents. - For facilities (collective centres, transit sites) this takes the form of room allocation rather than address system. - Throughout the site lifecycle, advocate for adequate and appropriate technical expertise to plan, establish and maintain the site. - Assess and develop the technical capacity of the displaced and host communities. - Engage with community leadership structures, national or local authorities and service providers, to set up the site according to the site plan. - Through advocacy, ensure the affected population has access to essential services and facilities, including education and livelihoods opportunities. - Engage with the community, site planners and service providers to address and resolve problems encountered during site improvement. - Bring together key actors including service providers to establish an acceptable distance and safe travel (or transport) to essential services and facilities. - Coordinate with site planners, technical experts and service providers to prioritise and deliver essential services and livelihoods opportunities where there are none. - Work with site planners to prioritise competing technical requirements and sequence these appropriately. - Ensure that facilities for mourning and burying the deceased reflect cultural norms, noting these may not all be the same. - Consider the environmental impact of the site and make plans to limit environmental damage. - Ensure space and appropriate places for cultural facilities for religious practices and rituals, performing arts, cultural events and festivities and so on. - With community representatives, make sure that any community-managed facilities are maintained, and that decommissioning is considered. - Maintain basic site infrastructure, either through advocacy to service providers or through direct action. - Include a budget line for basic maintenance in project proposals.

Key indicators	• There is an agreed site plan developed with community involvement and appropriate technical expertise that meets the needs of all groups in the displaced population.
	• % of the site population, including host communities, indicating that the site reflects their needs, safety and priorities

Guidance notes

The role of site managers and their teams in **planning sites or site improvements** is to ensure that all stakeholders, including the site population and host communities, participate in developing the site plan. Site managers support site residents and host communities to influence site planning and site improvement decision-making through participatory methods such as assessment, consultative meetings, focus group discussions and go-and-see visits. People with specific needs and marginalised groups should be consulted to make sure the site plan reflects and addresses their needs.

A **site development committee** includes relevant local or national authorities, cluster/sector leads, site planners, service providers, hydrologists, engineers, members of the site population, GIS experts, public health experts, lawyers and experts in land tenure and other relevant technical experts as needed.

In area-based or mobile camp management operations, as well as **places where people have already self-settled**, site improvements will need to be done gradually, as people initially will naturally have feelings of ownership which could make replanning more difficult without extensive consultations.

In **urban displacement contexts**, precarious land tenure agreements and lack of space make it almost impossible to undertake heavy improvements and maintenance works. In these cases, the SMA could opt for low tech site improvement, coupled with housing, land and property due diligence processes and land advocacy with competent local authorities. Likewise, in certain urban contexts, site management could advocate for communal facilities such as schools, community centres and primary health care posts to be built in places that can be accessed by the populations of more than one displacement site and host communities.

Area-based CCCM approaches offer a new way to provide assistance defined by geography, through a mix of social analysis and service delivery, with site management servicing districts, neighbourhoods or targeted communities over individuals or households. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, demolition and rubble removal will need to be done, alongside meeting the immediate needs of providing temporary shelter to people affected. It must be agreed which areas or buildings should be cleared first and which can be used for temporary sheltering options.

Also, due to legal regulations, the need for post-disaster criminal investigations, the need to preserve historical building sites, and the priorities of privately owned and state-owned properties must be taken into account. These can be some of the key delays or barriers to eventual reconstruction and finding temporary sheltering options.

Site planning should also consider **multiple or sequential disasters**: for example, an earthquake, followed by heavy snow, then aftershocks.

Site managers managing evacuation centres in urban environments must **advocate** being connected to the network of reopened/restored roads, to all public services (for example, schools in one direction, the town hall in another) as the effects of aftershocks or other subsequent disaster events may have a significant negative impact on the continued use of mass shelter options like sports halls.

Service providers should be encouraged to develop technical options that respect the rights of all people, including persons with disabilities and of all ages, to safely access facilities. However, **specific or adapted inclusive** design and construction may be needed for children, older persons and people with mobility barriers. In areas where there is overlap, SMAs should coordinate partners to meet. Referral pathways should be regularly updated and tested.

Use spatial planning and the thematic indicators in Sphere to determine the right ratio of the **number of communal facilities** for each section of the site.

Site planning and set-up play a crucial role in making sure that a community can **continue specific practices**, traditions and transmission of knowledge and skills in the immediate aftermath of a hazard. Therefore, not only men, women and vulnerable groups should be represented in a governance structure, but also cultural leaders and representatives, as well as marginalised and stigmatised groups.

How people use the spaces in the site on a daily basis will vary in each context based on the cultural aspects of the inhabitants, the phase of the emergency and time of day or year, and will likely change over time. Understanding the everyday practices of the site residents can become a key factor in meeting their needs and ensuring safety across the site.

Mobile site management teams can still be involved in improving sites. The mobile teams can facilitate essential site maintenance activities wherever people find themselves and coordinate (or directly organise) shelter improvements to support minimum living standards and protection. Mobile teams may:

- provide household-level internal partitions or window and door repairs;
- mitigate site hazards such as debris removal, or simple sanitation network repair; or
- facilitate forms of tenure security for displaced communities living in informal sites (such as rental and right to occupancy agreements).

⊗ *See Sphere's Shelter and settlement standard 2: Location and settlement planning.*

⊗ *Read more about site managers and site planning as well as the **Set-up checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 7**. See also the **Ensuring the Maintenance of Camp Infrastructure checklist** in the Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.*

⊗ *For more information on site improvements in collective centres and other out-of-camp settings, see the CCCM Cluster's Management and Coordination of Collective Settings Through Mobile / Area Based Approach Working Paper.*

4. Site service coordination and monitoring

Site coordination is the process of sharing information and planning to achieve agreed mutual goals. It involves bringing together relevant humanitarian organisations and site populations to ensure activities are complementary and support the populations in realising their basic rights. Coordination aims to ensure assistance and protection are provided to the site population in an efficient and accountable way. Standards of living in the site must be maintained, as must full and equal access to basic human rights for the site population.

Services need to be planned and carried out with care and responsibility towards the site population to ensure acceptability, use and adequate maintenance. Services must be planned, implemented and monitored using technical excellence and a sound understanding of the physical and environmental characteristics of the site, cultural habits and norms, and the specific needs and priorities of vulnerable user groups. The SMA should not underestimate the need for strong technical support. The SMA and service providers need to make sure that enough skilled staff are available for effective programme design, technical supervision and monitoring.

Coordination at and between site, community and country levels
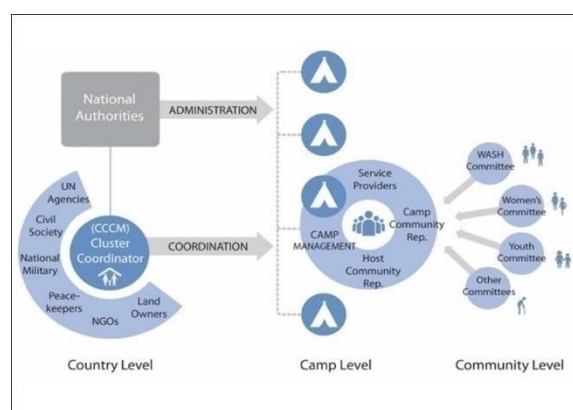
SMAs will operate in a coordination setting beyond the site. Coordination also takes place between sites, at regional and national levels. The primary role of the site management team is coordination within a site rather than between sites, except in area-based contexts where the team may cover multiple sites. The SMA will also need to report to national coordination mechanisms on the condition of the site.

Service providers at site level will likely also be operating in a broader coordination setting, probably at national level and possibly at sub-national level, for example, clusters or a thematic coordination platform. They will need to report their operations to these mechanisms.

The success of the coordination process is underpinned by developing and maintaining transparent and effective partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including national authorities, the CCCM cluster/sector lead, service providers, the site population and the host community.

⊗ **Links to CHS Commitments 1, 4 and 6.**

Standard 4.1: Site coordination	
Services are coordinated to meet the needs of the displaced and host populations.	
Key actions	• Act as a focal point for all activities and issues taking place across the site.
	• Map all stakeholders (who, what, where) and help agree and clearly set out how tasks will be divided between them.

	• Maintain open communication and coordination channels with the relevant national and local authorities.
	
	• Establish and maintain good relations with host populations, supporting them to participate in work and activities across the site.
	
	• Regularly bring together site-level stakeholders to share information, gather concerns, make collective decisions and update organisations.
	
	    o Use different ways of sharing information other than meetings.
	
	• Plan, implement and monitor protection and assistance activities and outcomes throughout the site lifecycle.
	
	    o Understand standards for safety, protection and dignity, noting the role of other sectors in setting those standards.
	
	    o Make sure essential services are placed in settlements in a way that follows those standards.
	
	• Provide regular updates on work plans, the ability to meet minimum standards and responding to changes in the site.
	
	    o Establish sectoral minimum quality standards in consultation with clusters or sectors, service providers and the site population.
	
	• Advocate that the search for durable solutions is included in all actions done with and for the site population.
	
	• Advocate for the inclusion of site representatives and governance structures in overall and sectoral coordination mechanisms.

Key indicators	• Coordination meetings include all stakeholders or stakeholder groups. • Coordination meetings include representatives of the displaced and/or host community. • % of agenda items that are developed jointly with the representatives of the displaced and/or host community • % of meeting action points that are acted on in the agreed time frame

Guidance notes

Coordination does not mean meetings, although they can be a useful venue for decision-making. Decision-makers should go to meetings so that problems are addressed and resolved quickly. Separate level meetings are time-consuming, and the aim of coordination is not to delay decision-making or make assistance ineffective. It is not necessary to duplicate coordination structures at all levels.

For sensitive issues, other forms of coordination may be useful and appropriate, such as bilateral meetings with partners. It is critical to be aware of which issues should be handled with discretion.

In **non-camp settings,** the exchange of information will be between a broader range of stakeholders including local authorities. In these circumstances, the role of the site management team will be to support site/area-level coordination by convening and connecting various stakeholders, including community members (both displaced and host communities), and to strengthen/establish communication and coordination mechanism(s).

⊗ *Read more about coordination tools and challenges as well as the **Coordination checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 4**. See also the **Coordinating and Monitoring Assistance and Service Provision checklist** in the Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.*

⊗ *Read more about coordination in out-of-camp settings and the work of the Global CCCM Cluster's Area-based Approach Working Group on the CCCM website: https://cccmcluster.org/global/Area-based-Approach-Working-Group.*

⊗ *Read more about the role of women in coordination in the NRC's* Improving Participation and Protection of Displaced Women and Girls Through Camp Management Approaches.

⊗ *Watch how a camp manager coordinates on:* www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xlp6vmo_L0&feature=emb_logo.

Standard 4.2: Site service assessment, monitoring and reporting

The site population's needs are monitored and reported through established systems.

Key actions	• **Know who your population is and their needs and capacities.**
	• Ensure service providers are aware of the role of the SMA in monitoring gaps and needs.
	• Establish and maintain communication channels between the site governance structure and service providers.
	• Create or develop an agreed harmonised assessment tool for site profiles.
	o Set up sectoral indicators in consultation with clusters or sectors and service providers.
	• Undertake joint, multi-sector assessments to understand needs and capacities following significant changes in the population or site conditions.
	o Involve the site population in monitoring services.
	• Collect data and manage information on service needs across the site.

	○ Coordinate with service providers to ensure that gaps and duplications in the delivery of assistance and services are identified and responded to.
	
	    ○ Apply confidentiality and data protection policies to individual and family information.
	
	    ○ See sectoral minimum quality standards.
	
	• Support data sharing agreements where possible between service providers in the site to avoid duplication of work.
	
	• Feedback site-based information to national coordination mechanisms.
	
	• Make sure site residents have regular and timely access to accurate information to guide their individual and family decisions to return, integrate or resettle. Ensure the information is in an appropriate language(s) and format(s).
	
	    ○ Share with site populations the results from any assessments in potential areas of return, integration or resettlement to independently determine the safety of the options.
	
	    ○ With service providers, develop key messages for identified vulnerable people to be informed about continuing access to services throughout the process.
	
	    ○ Relate information, at a minimum, to legal (protection), health, education, water supply and energy services, livelihood opportunities, markets and religious and cultural institutions.
	
	    ○ Conduct regular intention surveys and other forms of consultation at the household level to evaluate how households are making decisions and if there are barriers to their preferred options.
	
	    ○ Understand and address rumours quickly.
	
	    ○ Through community participation mechanisms, monitor community-level trends in solution choice, including the timing and conditions of any move.

Key indicators	• Site indicators are agreed with partners. • % site profiles updated within the agreed timeframe • % of site population who are able to express their informed desire for return, integration or resettlement • % of site population aware of where to access information on options for durable solutions
Guidance notes	

SMAs need to have a leading role in what information is being collected in the site to be informed and highlight **the gaps, needs and capacities of the population**. Reporting outputs expected from an SMA will be different in each context. At a minimum, an SMA needs to know who is in their site, the needs of their population and the agencies who are providing it. SMAs also need to know how the differences between the sexes, age groups and populations groups are affected in their settings.

The SMA is also responsible for producing a report to stakeholders on **activities and prioritised gaps**. This is particularly true for informal sites or in mobile approaches which may not be as frequently monitored by service providers.

If information is being collected and documented by another stakeholder, depending on the **sensitivity** of that data, SMA staff should join the data collection team. Prior agreements on what information is being gathered by who are crucial as these protect the site community from data collection fatigue and prevent the duplication of similar information. ⊗ *See Standard 1.4 for more information*.

Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight. When well executed, a focus group creates an accepting environment that puts participants at ease allowing them to thoughtfully answer questions in their own words and add meaning to their answers. A good focus group requires planning.

Care should be taken in sharing information about **returns, integration or resettlement** with site populations not to raise unrealistic expectations. Gathering information on any development programming in those locations will be useful. Understanding the desires for solutions and addressing rumours will be a sensitive task.

If regular service monitoring is conducted, **multi-sectoral assessments** should only be needed following a significant change in the population or site conditions. Site management staff should be involved in the planning for any large assessments run by agencies.

For **non-camp settings**, the above also applies. However, more time will be needed to agree with stakeholders what information to collect, why and how.

⊗ *Read more about site service monitoring in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 4**. See also the **Coordinating and Monitoring Assistance and Service Provision checklist** in the Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 2.*

⊗ *See also Standard 2.2: Community participation.*

Standard 4.3: Referral pathways

Peoplein need are referred to specialised service providers.

Key actions	• Build awareness for the site population and all organisations working in the site of critical referral pathways for health services, GBV, child protection and other protection services.

	• Minimise overlap between service providers and help streamline referral pathways.
	• Train SMA staff in critical referral pathways and ensure staff know how to appropriately and ethically advise people on how to access them.
	• Make sure follow-up procedures on referrals are in place, for example through a referrals database.
	• Share any updated case management protocols (such as child protection and GBV) with all relevant partners.
	• Advocate for specialist services or for an increase in specific services as conditions change.
	o Advocate for quality specialist services.
	• Help community governance structures or representatives to play a key role in referrals as appropriate (subject to relevant training).
	• Promote systems for self-referral.
Key indicators	• Functioning referral pathways are in place to ensure that people with specific or specialised needs receive the assistance and protection required.

Guidance notes

While referral pathways are developed by specialised agencies, an **SMA has a crucial role** through its constant (or regular) presence in the site to disseminate information to communities about specialised services in a timely manner. Referral pathways may be essential for key technical services including health, security, GBV, protection, child protection, child survivors of GBV and missing persons.

A comprehensive understanding of the risk factors faced by vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls, and the causes of these risks is essential for effective prevention interventions. SMAs are responsible and accountable for working at the site level, together with the relevant authorities and protection actors, to protect all people living in the site.

A survivor of GBV should be fully informed of his/her choices, the services available and the potential positive and negative consequences of accessing those services. Awareness of service providers about existing referral pathways is sometimes more challenging where there is limited capacity in field locations. Where agencies have a presence on site (often marked by their agency's sign at the site entrance), they should be encouraged to run organisational and critical services. To ensure services are delivered, agencies should share resources when needed or say when they do not have the capacity to respond.

⊗ *See also Sphere Protection Principle 3.*

5. Exit and transition

As humanitarian situations change, the management of many sites will transfer from one organisation to another at least once over the life of the site. This transfer may be to international or national NGOs or more likely to national or local authorities, who may take on a site management role in addition to their other mandates. The transition may also be more widespread, affecting service providers and other stakeholders. Transition to a new site manager does not usually involve closing the site, but instead requires services to continue being provided to people seeking protection and assistance.

Site closure, like site set-up and planning, changes depending on its context. It can take place for a variety of reasons and in a diverse number of ways or stages. These range from planned and orderly closures influenced by organised, voluntary return movements or dwindling donor support, to abrupt and disorderly closures due to disasters caused by natural hazards, security threats or government coercion. In some cases, while assistance and service provision phase out, the site itself does not close, in terms of the removal of its infrastructure or its function as a community location. It may itself become a viable permanent settlement, town or site of economic or social activity. It may also simply return to its previous function. Partial or total unplanned closures that involve forced return require strategic and proactive management mechanisms to be put in place to guarantee the protection of the affected people.

Whatever the circumstances, careful planning and extensive coordination is crucial and should be carried out by the site management team in collaboration with national authorities and other key stakeholders, including the legal owners of the land. Together they should ensure that site and host populations participate fully in the process. Buildings which have been degraded due to their temporary use as collective centres can have a negative impact on the local community. The eventual decommissioning, or rehabilitation and handover, of such assets during site closure should be defined and agreed with involved stakeholders from the start, or as close as possible to it. The planning of site set-up/improvement and closure are interrelated from the beginning.

SMAs and CCCM cluster coordinators are in a unique position to monitor if secondary displacement is taking place. This may happen when conditions in the areas of return or resettlement are not conducive for a safe and dignified return. Reasons could relate to security, housing and livelihood opportunities, basic services and social retaliation. Where this occurs and an SMA has successfully monitored the situation, advocacy on the challenges faced by the displaced people should be done with local or appropriate authorities.

Standard 5.1: Transition to a new SMA and site management team	
Site populations continue to receive appropriate and timely support and service provision during site management transition periods.	
Key actions	• With the new SMA, develop a transition or handover plan. ○ At a minimum, this plan should ensure service continue to be provided in the site. Include existing service providers in this process.

	o Ensure infrastructure and equipment handover includes details of key resources, tasks and technical requirements.
	
	     o Include rehabilitation and decommissioning needs.
	
	• Include existing site representation structures in the handover process.
	
	• Work with the incoming SMA to establish a caseload action plan to address the needs of vulnerable people, which does not place them at increased risk due to site handover and ensures their uninterrupted access to services.
	
	     o Make sure that vulnerable people and their caregivers are appropriately informed about a new SMA and their ongoing access to services.
	
	• Work with the new SMA to ensure its capacity and expertise is adequate.
	
	     o Capacity building should include all areas but in particular issues of land tenure, infrastructure maintenance and protection and humanitarian principles.
	
	     o Work with the new SMA, for example, through partner or shared roles, mentoring or shadowing.
	
	• Share a summary of the transition or handover plan with the host community and representatives of the local authorities.

Key indicators	• % of site population who are satisfied with services provided during transition periods • Community and partner consultations are used to develop and share transition or handover plans.

Guidance notes

Incoming SMAs may be humanitarian organisations, government authorities (local or national) or community groups. It is critical to build capacity and provide time for technical support and overlap between senior staff and new agency staff coming in to complete activities and consultations. In areas where it is possible, the new SMA should be encouraged to retain original staff, who are rehired to provide both experience and institutional memory to ensure continuity for the population. For planned handovers, capacity and expertise of the incoming SMA can be assured, and capacity plans and activities put in place if needed. For more rapid handovers, the CCCM cluster coordinator and the cluster lead agency may have a role in making sure capacity plans are rolled out in incoming SMAs.

⊗ *See also Standard 1.3: SMA and site management team capacity.*

Standard 5.2: Planned closure

Site closure takes place in a planned and consultative manner, and its impact on any residual site populations is mitigated.

Key actions	• Revisit site closure plans and adapt to the current context.
	o Use results from consultative meetings, focus group discussions or intentions surveys to inform any action.
	• If appropriate and feasible, set up go-and-see visits to return, integration or resettlement locations.
	• Compile a list of site residents who need to relocate, taking note especially of large families, people with specific needs and female-headed households. Advocate for appropriate transport.
	• Involve site governance structures and leadership in the planning and implementation of closure.
	• Seek solutions for vulnerable people to be absorbed into any social safety net should site services suddenly be reduced or withdrawn.
	• Monitor site closure against the plan.
	• Ensure feedback and complaints mechanisms remain available to the affected population.
	• Make sure measures are in place for the residual population, who may need to access special services while residing or remaining on-site, including receiving access to appropriate levels of assistance.
	• Use or adapt existing participatory approaches and tools to find out and document community perceptions on site closure and relocation.
Key indicators	• % of service-providing organisations that adopt and provide input to closure plans (target 100%)
	• Feedback and complaints mechanisms are maintained throughout the closure process.
	• % of protection and security issues related to closure that are reported and referred

Guidance notes

As with site set-up, each site closure will be highly contextual, and engaging the community is a key element in a smooth closure process.

While closing formal camps is a government responsibility, national exit strategies are not the responsibility of a single agency or authority and need multiple stakeholders across different levels of government, community or agency to be engaged.

The closure of sites hosting IDPs must align with any government plans for IDP movement, the restitution of the land and any other administrative issues.

The closure of sites hosting refugees will involve national governments signing legal memorandums of understanding with countries of return or resettlement. These are organised by UNHCR, the government of refuge and intended country of return or resettlement.

⊗ *See also Standards 2.2: Community participation, 2.3: Information sharing with communities and 2.4: Feedback and complaints.*

⊗ *Read more about site closure as well as the* **Closure checklist** *in the* **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 7**.

⊗ *Read more about site closure in the* **CCCM Cluster's Camp Closure Guidelines**.

Standard 5.3: Unplanned closure (partial or whole)

Unplanned (forced returns) and spontaneous closure is anticipated and its impact on site populations managed and mitigated.

Key actions	• Ensure site residents have access to basic services.
	o Coordinate with service providers to relocate or reprovision services.
	o Advocate on behalf of site populations to maintain services.
	• Work with local and national authorities and other stakeholders to find alternative accommodation solutions for site residents affected by the closure.
	o Support movement of belongings and infrastructure.
	o Compile a list of site residents who need to relocate, taking note especially of large families and female-headed households. Advocate for appropriate transport.
	o Make sure accommodation for people with specific needs is adapted to meet those needs.
	• Use or adapt existing information-sharing mechanisms to inform the site population and service providers about what is happening and why.

	• Ensure feedback and complaints mechanisms remain available to the affected population.
	• Use or adapt existing participatory approaches and tools to find out and document community perceptions on site closure and relocation.
Key indicators	• % of the site population who are able to access basic services during site closure or relocation
	• Feedback and complaints mechanisms are maintained throughout the closure process.
	• % of protection and security issues related to closure that are reported and referred

Guidance notes

Situations resulting from conflict and disasters caused by natural hazards are often unpredictable. People remain in sites for far longer than initially planned. Future eventualities and different scenarios need to be anticipated from the very beginning of an operation. Effective management of the site, infrastructure and assets must be based on assessments including the timing of exit. Careful planning should aim to safeguard the site population.

While forced site closure and forced return of displaced people to their area of origin is not acceptable, the SMA should be ready to respond to it. Site closure must be linked to a durable solution framework for all displaced people.

⊗ *See also Standards 2.1: Governance structures, 2.2: Community participation, 2.3: Information sharing with communities and 2.4: Feedback and complaints.*

⊗ *Read more about site closure as well as the **Closure checklist** in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 7**.*

⊗ *Read more about site closure in the **CCCM Cluster's Camp Closure Guidelines**.*

Standard 5.4: Rehabilitation and decommissioning

Rehabilitation of the sitemeets the needs of residual populations and host communities while taking into account local regulations and environmental needs.

Key actions	• Consult with all service providers, community representatives and other stakeholders to develop a rehabilitation and decommissioning plan that details equipment, infrastructure and guidance on land and infrastructure rehabilitation.
	o Consult during site set-up, as infrastructure and land management options evolve, and during site closure periods.

	o Ensure that burial grounds used by the site population are clearly marked and included in rehabilitation and decommissioning plans.
	o Ask for specific decommissioning protocols for any hazardous waste sites, such as health facilities, chemical storage sites and slaughter yards.
	o Request from service providers decommissioning plans for all toilets and sludge management facilities.
	• Assess, mitigate and monitor any negative environmental impacts.
	• Share the rehabilitation and decommissioning plan with the host and residual community and any local government.
	• Review initial and updated site plans and any initial host community agreements and revisit with the community through participatory mechanisms.
	• Revisit the agreement with host communities and local authorities detailing the conditions needed to return the land and infrastructure.
Key indicators	• Environmental concerns are assessed, mitigated and monitored.

Guidance notes

Site closure will produce large amounts of waste of different kinds such as shelter materials, left-behind belongings and damaged items of various kinds. Waste such as chemicals, batteries, expired items and health waste will need to be properly disposed of. Preparing for site closure includes cleaning, whether removal or on-site burial or incineration. Risk of contaminating soil and water sources should be taken seriously.

Environmental rehabilitation does not necessarily mean returning the site to its former status; even if feasible, it will be costly and time-consuming. It may be more appropriate to find out what the host community would like to see happen to the site once it has been closed.

⊗ *Read more about environmental considerations in the **Camp Management Toolkit Chapter 6**. See also the **Closure checklist** in Chapter 7.*

⊗ *Site lifecycle planning should be done alongside Standards 3.2 An appropriate environment, 4.1 Site coordination and 5.2 Planned closure.*

⊗ *See also the technical chapters of the Sphere Handbook for more detail on decommissioning and rehabilitation of water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and settlements and health infrastructure.*

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Annex 1 – Inclusivity checklist

How should the inclusiveness of a site be monitored? This checklist is not meant to replace the participatory approaches described in the guidance notes but can be used as a complementary tool by site managers who are willing to assess the overall inclusiveness of a site, or as a tool to support the development of an inclusive strategy for persons with disabilities.

The questions have been developed based on the Minimum Standards for Camp Management.

Site management capacities and identification

Site lifecycle planning

- At site set-up, have measures been taken to adopt universal design principles and ensure access to the site and infrastructures for the greatest number of people? Consider, for example, pathways, access to shelters, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), distribution sites, communal areas, schools and health care facilities. Consider the range of existing disabilities (such as physical, psychosocial and intellectual, and sensory impairments).
- Have persons with disabilities been consulted during the site planning phase?
- Have persons with disabilities been included in contingency and evacuation plans?

Site management team capacity

- Is someone in the site management team appointed as disability inclusion focal point?
- Are there persons with disabilities working for the site management agency as staff, volunteers, community mobilisers and so on?
- Has the site management team received training on disability inclusion?
- Are the organisation's premises accessible to persons with a range of disabilities?
- Is inclusion a regular item on the agenda of site management meetings?
- When activated in-country, is the site management team attending disability working groups' meetings?

Identification and data protection

- Have persons with disabilities been identified during registration or through other data collection mechanisms?
- Is data disaggregated by sex, age and disability available to the site management agency?
- Is data related to persons with disabilities adequately protected throughout the information management cycle?
- Is informed consent collected, in a meaningful way, from persons with disabilities whenever relevant?
- Are there active organisations of persons with disabilities in the site or surrounding communities? If so, have they been mapped and assessed in terms of capacity and representativity of the population (sex, age, ethnicity, disabilities)?
- Are there disability-focused organisations working in the site/region/country?

- Are there other professionals and humanitarian responders who could support the inclusion efforts at site level, for example, mental health and psychosocial support, trained protection, child protection, GBV staff and national/local authorities?

Participation and representation

Information sharing and communication

- Have persons with a range of disabilities been consulted on their communication needs and preferences?
- Is key information, education and communication material provided in multiple formats in the site (such as large print, easy read and jargon free, pictograms, sign language, oral, radio, videos and text messages)?
- Is information disseminated in multiple locations (such as at information desks, distribution sites, safe spaces and health facilities; during site committee meetings and focus groups; via door-to-door visits and community mobilisers)?
- Is monitoring organised to ensure that persons with a range of disabilities have access to key information about the site's life, overall services and assistance available, as well as on specific services that concern them?

Governance mechanisms and structures

- Have barriers and enablers to participation of persons with disabilities been identified? Have persons with disabilities been involved in their identification?
- Has a vulnerability risk assessment been conducted, keeping in mind the "do no harm" principle, on the participation of persons with disabilities and the potential impact on their life and the way they are perceived?
- Are persons with disabilities and their representative organisations involved in site governance structures or groups? Do they play a meaningful role?
- Are the persons/entities involved representative of the population in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and disability?
- Are families or caregivers also represented?
- Have persons with disabilities, their families and organisations of persons with disabilities been trained and supported to ensure meaningful inclusion and participation?

Participation

- Is there a community disability committee in the site, or actively involved organisations of persons with disabilities?
- Are these structures representative of the site population in its diversity (gender, age, ethnicity and disability)?
- Are persons with disabilities represented in other site committees?
- Are there other existing channels for persons with disabilities to reach out to the site management team and report on their views and concerns?

- Do persons with disabilities report to be satisfied with the opportunities they have to influence site decisions?
- Do women with disabilities, feel their views are considered during decision-making processes?

Accountability mechanisms

- Can feedback and complaints be collected through a variety of channels, in accessible ways and in accessible locations?
- Are feedback and complaints mechanisms accessible to people who stay in their shelters?
- When taking actions and reporting back, is accessibility also considered?
- Is there a way to monitor the use of feedback and complaints mechanisms by persons with disabilities?
- Are sexual exploitation and abuse mechanisms accessible to persons with disabilities?

Site environment

A safe and secure environment

- Are safety audits regularly conducted in the site, evaluating both physical infrastructures and community behaviour, keeping in mind the risks women and girls with disabilities, , may face?
- Are persons with disabilities represented in safety committees?
- Are information channels to communicate risks to the site population accessible to persons with disabilities?

An appropriate environment

- Have the needs of persons with disabilities and their families been considered from the start, for example, in terms of the overall set-up, infrastructures, shelters, access to WASH facilities, distribution sites, health care facilities, schools and communal areas?
- Are universal design principles used by contractors when building new infrastructures or maintaining existing ones?
- Are national laws, norms and standards on accessibility and inclusion considered and respected?
- Are persons with disabilities consulted in this process to ensure improvements meet their actual needs?
- Are accessibility audits conducted regularly to assess part or all of the site's environment, including meeting spaces?
- Are acceptable distance and transport to essential services and facilities considered for persons with disabilities?
- Is reasonable accommodation provided to persons with disabilities and their families, in terms of access to services and assistance?
- Do persons with disabilities and their families have access to education and livelihoods opportunities?

Site service coordination and monitoring

Site coordination

- Are persons with disabilities considered in strategic planning, implementing and monitoring of protection and assistance, throughout the site lifecycle?
- Are the needs of persons with disabilities considered when searching for durable solutions?
- Are persons with disabilities consulted and involved in basic maintenance of site infrastructure? Are their concerns budgeted for or is funding flexible enough to make needed improvements?
- Are persons with disabilities included in coordination mechanisms? Are their needs considered during coordination meetings?

Site service assessment, monitoring and reporting

- Are persons with disabilities involved when deciding on sectoral minimum quality standards?
- Are site profiles and assessment tools inclusive (for example, identifying persons with disabilities, with data disaggregated by sex, age and disability; identifying risks and requirements)?
- Are persons with disabilities included in services monitoring and multi-sectoral assessments?
- Do persons with disabilities have meaningful access to information to guide their decisions to return, integrate or resettle? Is service continuity accessible throughout the process? Are barriers for making decisions identified?

Referral pathways

- Are persons with disabilities aware of critical referral pathways for health services, gender-based violence, child protection and other protection and specialised services? Has information been communicated in multiple formats and through multiple channels?
- Are site management staff aware of critical referral pathways and know how to appropriately and ethically advise people, including persons with disabilities, on how to access them?
- Are follow-up procedures on referrals in place?
- Are case management protocols shared with partners as needed?
- Is advocacy conducted for specialised services for persons with disabilities?
- Do disability committees play a key role in referrals?

Exit and transition

Transition to a new site management agency

- Have persons with disabilities been informed meaningfully of the transition plans?
- Have the needs of persons with disabilities been identified so that they are not placed at increased risk due to site handover? Has their access to services been secured?

Closure

- Have persons with disabilities been consulted through meetings, focus groups or other means for site closure plans?
- Have appropriate go-and-see visits been set up for persons with disabilities?
- Has transport been appropriately arranged?
- Have contingency plans considered persons with disabilities in terms of social safety nets should services suddenly be reduced or withdrawn?
- Are feedback and complaints mechanisms still available and accessible to persons with disabilities?
- Are supportive measures still in place for persons with disabilities who are part of the residual population?
- When site closures are unplanned, have persons with disabilities been informed about what is happening and why, have their minimum requirements been considered (for example, service, transport and accommodation)?

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CHS   Core Humanitarian Standards

GBV   Gender-based violence

IASC   Inter-Agency Standing Committee

IOM   International Organization for Migration

NGO   Non-government organisation

POLR   Provider of last resort (cluster)

PSEA   Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse

SEA   Sexual exploitation and abuse

SMA   Site management agency

UNHCR   UN Refugee Agency

WASH   Water, sanitation and hygiene (sector)