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ACRONYMS

ANNEX: REFERENCES AND TOOLS
1. INTRODUCTION

Camp closure is a process that gradually leads to withdrawal of humanitarian assistance from a former camp location. The process begins following indications that IDPs are ready to return, relocate or resettle in places of their preference, though it should be planned for in advance. Ultimately, it should be government led and conducted in close participatory consultation with local authorities, IDP populations and host community populations.

Initiation of camp closure is context specific in relation to local and national contexts and can take place for a variety of reasons, involving a complex dynamic between humanitarian actors, governments, other stakeholders and the displaced population. This results in different types of camp closure. In general there are three main forms of camp closure:

- **Spontaneous**: Displaced population voluntarily returns to their home areas or integrate into the local community without assistance or persuasion from external agencies.
- **Assisted**: Logistical and/or financial assistance are provided by government and humanitarian agencies to allow people to return home or resettle in a different region.
- **Forced**: Camp population is dispersed and driven out of the camp by force by one or more of the parties involved in the conflict, landowners, or due to other external forces beyond their control.

**Official closure** is the official removal of the status that recognises a particular area or site as a camp and is often the end phase of the camp closure. The decision to initiate official closure is the responsibility of the government.

Camp closure requires early planning: Although camp closure is the final component of the camp lifecycle, it is important to consider and plan for camp closure at the earliest possible stage. Yet it is often the least planned and managed phase of the camp lifecycle; potentially resulting in unsustainable solutions for displaced populations, aggravation of conflict with host communities, protection concerns for residual populations and environmental hazards. It requires consultation and planning at both the national and camp level, with participation from all clusters, sectors and representatives of the displaced and host communities. Although successful closure is more likely when camp closures are planned, the risks associated with abrupt camp closures can be mitigated if discussions on camp closure take place early in the camp lifecycle, defining potential roles and responsibilities in anticipation of closure. Identification of durable solutions for the displaced population should be a priority consideration in the camp closure process.

**The Camp Lifecycle**

- **Planning and Setup**
- **Care and Maintainence**
- **Closure**
- **Camp Closure Planning**
- **Durable Solutions**

**Purpose and Scope of the Guidelines**

These guidelines have been developed by the Global Camp Coordination Camp and Management (CCCM) Cluster in response to requests from field operations faced with the need to plan, organise, implement and coordinate camp closure as an integral part of the camp management lifecycle. They are based on a collection of existing institutional policies and guidelines as well lessons learnt from field operations, with inputs from many agencies and individual CCCM practitioners.

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1. As camp closure is context specific and across varying timescales, these Guidelines remain broad in scope in order to serve as an introduction and general reference document to issues faced by practitioners during camp closure.
These guidelines are primarily designed for use by practitioners working in camp and camp-like settings. They are a tool to facilitate the process of planning, implementing and coordinating successful closure of camps and camp-like situations. Though the guidelines focus on internal displacement, many of the processes and practices outlined are also useful in refugee camp closure scenarios.

More specifically, the Guidelines will assist Camp Management and Camp Coordination Agencies and other relevant agencies to take the appropriate steps towards operationalising camp closure, and intervene in strategic decisions. The document will also enable donors, as well as planning and implementing partners, to better understand the complexities of camp closure.

These Guidelines complement other tools developed by the Global CCCM Cluster and agency-specific guidance notes as well as inter-agency tools and good practices. In particular research should refer to Chapter 7 on Camp set-up and closure in the Camp Management Toolkit (2008).

2. ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

Key Messages:

- Camp closure is a governmental responsibility that may require the engagement of multiple stakeholders including the Camp Administrator, Camp Management Agency, Camp Coordination Agency and humanitarian/development actors
- Consultations with the displaced community and local populations are essential
- Roles and responsibilities specific to camp closure should be clearly defined in each specific context

Coordination Between Stakeholders:

Camp closure and the creation of a National Exit Strategy are primarily government functions, but often require external support. The process of closing a camp is not the responsibility of a single agency or authority; rather, it normally requires the engagement of multiple stakeholders.

Consultations with host populations and the displaced community are imperative and should be part of the camp closure process from the beginning of the camp lifecycle. They should be led by the Government with the support of the Camp Management Agency.

Coordination of inter-cluster and sectoral processes is crucial to the provision of services and inputs from different actors at the local level. It is the primarily a function of the Camp Management Agency or Camp Coordination Agency.

Accountability of stakeholders is greatly increased by clearly assigning and understanding the roles of responsibilities of each actor.

2.1 Roles and responsibilities in camp closure

This section outlines what the theoretical ideal roles and responsibilities of actors involved in camp closure should be. However, camp closure in practice can take many forms; each situation will determine the most appropriate and feasible management structure, defining which actors are responsible for which activities. Access to sufficient funding and humanitarian resources also plays a role in determining which stakeholders are involved and to what extent camp closure activities can be performed.

2.1.1. Camp Administrator

Role: Camp Administration refers to the functions carried out by governments and national authorities that relate to the oversight and supervision of activities in camps and camp-like situations. Government authorities normally carry out the role of Camp Administrator, as every State has the fundamental responsibility to guarantee basic human rights and protect its citizens.

Camp Closure Specific Functions:

I. Strategy and policy making: The government is responsible for designing the National Exit Strategy, though this is sometimes done with the support of humanitarian actors. It frames operations during camp closure by serving as the basis of policies, procedures and plans of action. See section 3.3 for more details.

II. Direction in action planning: The Camp Administrator

Note: Although these guidelines routinely refer to an Exit Strategy on a national level, the process outlined remains applicable for practitioners working on solutions at the local level.

Note: These guidelines do not provide a definitive blueprint for camp closure as circumstances vary widely from one context to another.
provides strategic direction in prioritising sites for camp closure. It participates in the development of the Camp Closure Action Plan and ensures that it is in line with exit policies and procedures. See section 3.4 for more details.

III. Ensuring operational security: Governmental authorities should take measures to reduce the likelihood of security incidents between the host community, displaced populations and other stakeholders. They must also ensure adequate humanitarian space in camps for the effective delivery of protection and assistance throughout camp closure.

IV. Land and occupancy rights: Government authorities may have existing procedures for securing land and occupancy rights for transitional or permanent relocation, and resolving disputes arising from the appropriation and eventual return of land.

V. Access to durable solutions: It is the role of the government to ensure fair and equitable access to durable solutions (return, local integration or resettlement elsewhere in the country) and the conditions for voluntary, safe and dignified return. This involves improving physical, material and legal security, as well providing an environment that allows for the free movement of people. Often this may include assistance targeted toward host communities to reduce competition for scarce resources and increase acceptance of displaced populations.

VI. Provision of documentation: Issuing and replacing documentation such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, ID cards, licenses and travel permits. These must be carefully managed and secured during camp closure to ensure that the returning displaced population is able to obtain proper identification documents, access to education, healthcare and basic social services upon return. The Camp Administrator must also ensure that the transfer of documentation between authorities maintains confidentiality.

2.1.2. Camp Coordination Agency

Role: The Camp Coordination Agency is responsible for ensuring the timely identification of gaps in assistance and that the needs of the displaced are met in all camps.

Camp Closure Specific Functions:

I. Supporting the development of a Camp Closure Action Plan by the Camp Management Agency to ensure that they meet standards, policies and procedures outlined in the National Exit Strategy. The Camp Coordination Agency should represent the needs of Camp Managers in inter-cluster discussions and request the involvement of the necessary humanitarian actors. The Camp Coordination Agency should support the relevant government authority or Camp Administrator.

II. Coordination and resource mobilisation: At the CCCM cluster level the Camp Coordination Agency ensures coverage by camp managers throughout the camp cycle, including during camp closure. The Camp Coordination Agency should identify in a timely manner the funding requirements for Camp Managers and additional requirements specific to camp closure operations (transportation, adaptations of information management systems, joint initiatives between partners of the CCCM cluster and Government to facilitate movements, etc.) and take measures to mobilise resources.

III. Information Management Systems that allow all partners to access the same data on camps, needs and population need to be set up or adapted if possible; such data is used in devising the National Exit Strategy.

IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs was published with the aim to provide clarity on the concept of durable solutions and to provide general guidance on how to achieve them.

It states that durable solutions are achieved “when IDPs no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and such persons can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement”.

It stresses that resolution of the immediate cause of displacement is usually not sufficient in and by itself to create a durable solution.

The fact that IDPs are no longer registered for the purpose of receiving assistance (i.e. when a camp closes) does not necessarily mean they have found a durable solution.

“From the perspective of international law, internal displacement is a factual state and, unlike in refugee law, there is nothing like a legal "IDP Status."

As part of the process of finding durable solutions, no coercion-including physical force, harassment, intimidation, denial of basic services or – closure of IDP camps or facilities without an acceptable alternative – should be used to induce or to prevent return, local integration or settlement elsewhere.

See the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs for further details.
Levels of acceptance of Identification of special needs
Ensure necessary staffing
Security and land ownership
Legal
Organising dialogue sessions in Return Intentions & Timing
Reporting on closure related
Provision of transport

2.1.3. Camp Management Agency

Role: The Camp Management Agency is responsible for the coordination of the provision of services (including assistance and protection) at the camp level based on the principle of the participation of the displaced population.

Camp Closure Specific Functions:

I. Information Management: If the information management capacity exists, the Camp Management Agency should provide information to the Camp Coordination Agency’s information management system through the regular collection and maintenance of data to identify gaps in the provision of protection, assistance and avoidance of gaps. They should also disseminate information relevant to the implementation of the National Exit Strategy and Camp Closure Action Plan.

II. Transforming the National Exit Strategy into Action Planning by ensuring that camp/local level action plans reflect the National Exit Strategy. In the implementation of the National Exit Strategy, the Camp Management Agency are often responsible for leading the process of forming and suggesting adjustments to the Camp Closure Action Plan for specific camps in collaboration with the Camp Administrator and Camp Coordination Agency.

III. Coordination with on-site authorities and service providers: Liaising with on-site authorities on behalf of humanitarian actors and services providers in specific camps ensures that all relevant stakeholders are represented and included in the planning and implementation of the camp closure process.

IV. Ensuring continuous involvement and consultation: Issues should be discussed and resolved through consultation with the host and displaced populations. Problems that cannot be resolved at the camp level should be referred to the Camp Coordination Agency.

V. Providing defined services including the identification of special needs, provision of transport, organising dialogue in the camp and host communities, ensuring the necessary staffing for closure operations and de-registering the camp population. The Camp Management Agency should also identify solutions for monitoring operations to ensure they meet agreed standards.

VI. Measures for vulnerable persons: The departure of most of a camp’s population may cause security and protection issues for those who remain. Particular attention needs to be paid to vulnerable cases, so the Camp Management Agency should monitor the continued service provision to those remaining in the camp to ensure that their needs are met. Cases requiring special attention should be identified into order to establish adequate referral mechanisms and case management structures within the Camp Closure Action Plan.

VII. Communication with the camp population: Effective communication strategies, such as communication campaigns and referring information gaps to humanitarian service providers, should be put in place so that the displaced population can make informed decisions. These campaigns have included information on available solutions, services and facilities available in the host community, solutions for vulnerable people and means to access assistance.

VIII. Estimating residual populations remaining in the camp after the majority of cases return or are resettled. The most accurate forms of such estimations are through registration and verification exercises. Solutions for the continuity of service provision, including camp management, should be planned with the assistance of the Camp Management Agency.

2.1.4. Camp Residents and Host/Local Population

Role: It is important that the displaced and host populations participate and contribute throughout the camp closure process, so that it is a participatory approach that reflects the needs and concerns of both camp residents and host populations. It should be inclusive of vulnerable groups and reflect the needs and concerns of girls, boys, women and men, with similar or diverse backgrounds. Local dynamics between host community and the camp population should not be disregarded, and any potential support that the host community can give to the process should be explored.

Camp Closure Specific Functions:

I. Definition and acceptance of durable solutions in
the National Exit Plan: The host population should be informed of all viable solutions proposed and actively participate in the discussion and consultation processes.

II. Involvement in devising the Camp Closure Action Plan ensures an increased awareness of the camp closure process and ability to assist during the implementation of the plan.

III. Dissemination and collection of information: Committees within the displaced and host populations have a role in developing information dissemination mechanisms and their implementation. With oversight, such committees can also support the rapid collection of data that is required for the planning process.

IV. Involvement in closure operations by identifying people in need of specific case management and assistance, assisting orderly and organised population movement. The camp and host population should also participate in site rehabilitation and decommissioning, such as demolition of shelter structures and latrine filling.

V. Identification of persons with specific needs: The displaced and local populations play an important role in identifying persons with specific needs and measuring the appropriate responses to cater to those needs. This should include the chronically ill, widows, unaccompanied or separated girls and boys, as well as older people.

2.1.5. Humanitarian and Development Actors

It is important to include inter-cluster partners, other humanitarian actors and development actors in the planning and implementation of the camp closure process.

CCCM SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

I. PARTICIPATION of the displaced community, host community, stakeholders and implementing partners in discussions and consultations should be ensured. Effective communication strategies are therefore required to facilitate participation.

II. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: Collection, maintenance and dissemination of information on provisions and gaps in protection and assistance. Information relevant to the implementation of the National Exit Plan and Camp Closure Action Plan include camp population figures, maps, intentions of the displaced, perceptions, safety/available of camp site, awareness of camp population and availability of resources in return areas.

III. COORDINATION: Dedicated coordination mechanisms such as a Camp Closure Committee need to be set up to plan and implement the National Exit Strategy and Camp Closure Action Plan.

IV. SUPPORT TO NATIONAL AUTHORITIES: Training of government and Camp Management Agency staff on communication skills, national laws and policies on IDPs, protection, participatory assessment, data collection and processing, and general CCCM.

V. INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT: CCCM actors may be responsible for the rehabilitation and decommissioning of infrastructure, however they should be considered as a provider of last resort. All activities should involve discussions and coordination with sectoral partners.

VI. ENVIRONMENT: CCCM actors need to ensure that environmental elements are taken into account throughout the camp lifecycle in order to limit more serious rehabilitation needs during camp closure.
3. PLANNING CAMP CLOSURE

KEY MESSAGES:

- Dedicated coordination mechanisms such as a Camp Closure Committee should be established
- Both the camp and areas of return should be assessed before camp closure
- A National Exit Strategy should be established early to provide the overall framework and principles for camp closure
- A Camp Closure Action Plan should provide localised and camp specific planning; broken down into population, infrastructural and operational components
- The time frame for camp closure should consider push and pull factors

The coordination mechanisms at the national and camp levels are expected to produce two key outputs using a consultative process and guaranteeing participation of relevant stakeholders:

National Exit Strategy: Developed at the national level, this document provides the overall approach, context and principles for the phasing out of camp based assistance.

Camp Closure Action Plan: Developed at the camp level and guided by the National Exit strategy, this plan elaborates on concrete objectives, deliverables, sectoral considerations, tasks and responsibilities, required resources and appropriate timelines. It is normally localised and specific to a camp or set of camps.

3.1 Stakeholder consultations and coordination mechanisms

Dedicated coordination mechanisms: Camp closure and Exit Strategies require dedicated coordination mechanisms at the national and local levels. There is a need to build on existing coordination mechanisms from the initial government and humanitarian response by establishing dedicated committees, commissions, or other stakeholders’ forums specifically to plan and implement an exit strategy.

The coordination bodies will have to define national policy, assist in forming a framework for local planning and assess the coordination needs in the National Exit Strategy.

The stakeholder consultation process should begin as early as possible and include representatives from:

- Host communities
- The displaced population
- Local and National authorities
- Line ministries
- Relevant UN agencies
- Environmental and other specialist NGOs
- Donors and the private sector
Camp Closure Committee: Camp level coordination for closure can be undertaken through a representative consultative body chaired by the Camp Management Agency or Camp Administrator.

The Camp Closure Committee acts as the discussion forum and steering body during the camp closure process, implementing the National Exit Strategy and adapting the Camp Closure Action Plan to the camp specific context.

All the different sectors of the displaced and host community populations should have representation in the camp closure committees. It should include those from vulnerable groups, those with specific needs, potential residual population, as well as both men and women. Land/property owners of the site should be directly consulted, as their acceptance of timelines and activities is often crucial for success.

TALKING POINTS FOR STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS:

- displaced community to return, relocate or reintegrate
- Population profile
- Formulation of a committee to coordinate the Camp Closure process.
- Identification of persons with specific needs and their intentions
- Compensation/ property restitution to land owners
- Prioritisation of camps to be closed
- Rehabilitation process
- Stakeholders' role and responsibilities

3.2 Assessment of camps and return areas

Indicators of the feasibility of an exit plan should form the basis of the decision for a Camp Management Agency to close a camp and must be based on a comprehensive assessment. Indicators include:

- Identification of durable solutions and their acceptance/refusal by the camp population
- Situation in area/country of origin improving to the extent where return is possible
- Camp Management Agency not being able to run the camp for financial or ethical reasons
- Lack of donor support
- Safety and security factors
- The presence of aid workers putting the population more at risk of harm
- Access to the displaced population no longer available or made extremely difficult
- Another transitional settlement solution is required.

Indicators that will affect the camp closure process should be analysed using existing information to identify what kinds of assessments need to be conducted. These assessments should look at anticipated return and relocation areas as well as the camp itself so that feasible durable solutions and returns packages can be considered.

Information Management is a key role of the Camp Management Agency during camp closure assessments. Data that should be considered in the assessment of camps and return areas are:

I. Camp population figures: Camp population statistics disaggregated by age, gender and diversity. Population data should also include the number of the most vulnerable displaced persons and the nature of their vulnerabilities. These data are essential as they influence decisions on durable solutions, likely remaining residual population and the possible need for the continuation of services.

II. Detailed camp layout maps facilitate monitoring of site rehabilitation and decommissioning by informing decisions on the most appropriate phases of a closure plan, for example by block or by zone.

III. Intentions of the displaced: Intention surveys provide information to initiate discussions on durable solutions and may be conducted again at a later stage to include any necessary adjustments. Intention surveys are time-bound and paramount to the development of solutions acceptable to the displaced population.

IV. Perceptions: The political, social and security realities can be perceived differently by different sectors of the displaced population. For example, a certain geographical area may not have the target of violence for a long period of time, yet the perception of security of that area may not necessarily improve. Perceptions and intentions are intertwined and time-bound. Both can change rapidly, therefore intention and perception surveys should be revalidated when necessary.

V. Safety and availability of camp site: The safety of a site location must be assessed early on as it often determines the prioritisation of camp closure. For example, where camps are spontaneously established in riverbeds or unsafe buildings with evident danger to the displaced population, solutions such as relocation should be quickly identified to improve safety. Similarly, a site may become unavailable due to pressure from a land owner, seasonal needs or governmental decisions.
VI. Humanitarian actors in the camp: The traditional 3Ws (Who does What Where) should be updated to include involvement for camp closure operations and rehabilitation. The Camp Management Agency will normally have regular contact with humanitarian actors providing services in the camp, whilst the Camp Coordination Agency should advocate for the resource mobilisation of partners and funding for the closure process.

VII. Assistance needs during closure: Humanitarian partners may run out of funding and start phasing out before the planned date of closure. The Camp Management Agency should continue to monitor levels of services, and then address any needs and gaps with the Camp Coordination Agency and service providers.

VIII. Return Areas: Information on the level of access to common resources in areas of return such as water points and grazing land should be assessed along with challenges to re-establishing property rights. These details are useful in preparing compensation packages and feed into durable solutions.

IX. Awareness of camp population: The Camp Management Agency should assess the level of awareness among the population in camp, including those who might have difficulty assessing information. Involving the population in planning for closure will increase awareness of procedures and available solutions.

3.3 National Exit Strategy

The National Exit Strategy provides a general framework for camp closure implementation and guides the development of a localised action at the camp level, informed by analysis of political, social, structural and operational factors. It aims to facilitate a smooth transition from the emergency to the early recovery/development stage in order to assist the returning community to rebuild their lives.

Structured by area of intervention: such as housing, security, community infrastructure and basic services, security and protection. Each section should define management responsibilities and ensure that the rights of the displaced are upheld. Therefore it should be developed to serve as a source of reference in case of disagreement or disputes. It can also be used to commit stakeholders to abide by national policy and follow international standards.

Human and financial resources: Strategies and action plans should consider that camp closure requires significant human and financial resources. Some processes may require long term resource mobilisation, such as those related to rehabilitation and access to basic services at the community level.

Memorandum of Understand (MoU) may be required to indicate clear intentions in safeguarding the interests of displaced persons and the implementation of durable solutions. MoUs may also be specific to a Camp Closure Action Plan by referring to the National Exit Strategy and clarifying the responsibilities of involved stakeholders.

Contingency plans: With spontaneous or unplanned return, camps are sometimes evacuated en masse and there may not be adequate time to plan for an exit strategy. Therefore various contingency plans for camp closure and durable solutions should be drawn-up when a camp is being set up. The plan can then be reviewed according to the evolution of the situation and in line with the government’s development plan. Consultation with development partners and potential service providers is imperative.

3.4 Camp Closure Action Plan

This is an agreed camp specific plan to implement

A National Exit Strategy should include:

- Solutions for people in camps
- Solutions for concerns on infrastructure and services
- Operational mechanisms for closure
- Definitions of roles and responsibilities.
- Guidance on durable solutions: including consultation with the returning community to identify life skills within the community and alternative ways of becoming self-reliant.
- Security: Where security is a concern, it may stipulate that return is only facilitated to areas that are declared safe.
- Guidance on compensation and restitution for both property owners and the displaced. These should form the basis of local negotiations.
- Plans for the protection of the residual population and persons with specific needs for continued provision of protection and assistance in areas such as education, health care and WASH.
- Contents and parameters for distribution of return and reintegration packages
- Documentation guidance: Ensuring that both the returning displaced and residual population have access to documentation whilst ensuring confidentiality.
- Handover over and rehabilitation: Hand over of camp equipment and infrastructure, guidance on land rehabilitation than considers environmental factors.
- Time frame for the exit strategy plan
the National Exit Strategy led by either the Camp Management Agency or a Camp Closure Committee.

Procedures and mechanisms must be well identified but also remain relatively flexible.

Elements of a Camp Closure Action Plan are grouped together in three main sections:

- **Population elements** relate directly to the displaced population and the host community both within the camp and areas of return.
- **Infrastructural elements** relate to the infrastructure and land, including decommissioning of a camp area.
- **Operational elements** relate to movements, logistics, information and security throughout the closure process.

The plan is structured according to these three sections in order to systematise the document for easy operational use. Each section should provide details of activities and expected results, roles and responsibilities, planned use of resources, additional resources required and a time frame for implementation.

### 3.4.1. Population Elements (Camp Closure Action Plan)

1. **Intentions of the population**: The summary of intentions and timing and number of families and individuals planning to return, resettle to other locations or stay in the camp is a valuable tool for planning movements, distributions and other camp closure related procedures.

2. **Protection of the displaced and residual population**: In planned camp closures, protection initiatives mainly aim to ensure that displaced persons identify their preferred durable solution on a voluntary and informed basis. This is particularly important in spontaneous or forced camp closure.

3. **Residual population**: Those who need to remain on site may have specific needs relating to age, health, psychosocial, ethnic or political issues. The Camp Management Agency should plan with service providers to ensure the continuity of assistance and monitoring of levels of access to assistance after camp closure.

4. **Inclusion of the displaced in planning**: The most vulnerable should be identified and encouraged to participate in discussions so that interests of all are represented. This is often through the Camp Closure Committee.

### V. Community-based assistance

The absorption capacity of the return areas should be assessed as it will guide the integration needs of different population groups. Responsibility for service provision at the community-level in these areas needs to be anticipated by sectors of assistance as the provision of assistance at the community-level is often limited due to the lack available resources.

### VI. Information communication strategy

Ensures that all stakeholders, including the communities and the media, receive consistent and accurate information. Information dissemination methods should be accessible and easy to understand by all concerned in regards to language, literacy and the location of the information, in order to ensure common understanding, full transparency and accountability. This should include an information package on durable solutions.

### INFORMATION PACKAGE ON DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- **It** is important to develop an information package that allows displaced persons to make an informed choice about whether they are able to pursue any of these solutions and determine their preference.

- The right to make an informed and voluntary decision as to whether they want to return, integrate or relocate underpins the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and needs to be ensured.

Stakeholder consultations on durable solutions should begin as soon as possible.

### VII. Property, compensation and restitution procedures

All displaced individuals leaving the camp should be given access to registration for benefits they may be entitled to after their departure. Logistical preparations should include the setup of a location for any registration and deregistration processes that are necessary for access to land compensation and restitution. Procedures should be agreed on with governmental stakeholders.

### 3.4.2 Infrastructural Elements (Camp Closure Action Plan)

#### Key definitions

- **Rehabilitation**: In the context of camp closure, this refers to the restoration of sites and facilities used during the camp lifecycle so that the site can be restored to its original or planned function. This often involves the repair, upgrading or demolition of infrastructure such as
as camp buildings, according to agreements with host communities and local authorities governing their future intended use.

**Decommissioning** is the process of ensuring rehabilitation through the dismantling and management of obsolete, inoperative or hazardous structures. The Camp Management Agency should be involved in planning with services providers for the decommissioning of the site. The process should include sectoral partners and all stakeholders; there may be sector specific guidance on operations.

I. **Agreement on post closure infrastructure use:** The decommissioning process includes reaching agreement between humanitarian partners, government, land owners and the surrounding community on the future use of the site.

II. **Roles and responsibilities** must be agreed upon by all relevant stakeholders. If sectoral responsibilities are assigned at the national level, they will be included in the National Exit Strategy. However, in most cases the Camp Management Agency identifies partners willing to assume responsibility for sectoral decommissioning for a specific camp.

III. **Salvageable and recyclable materials:** Where there are temporary or semi-permanent shelter structures, the displaced may be asked to dismantle and pack usable items such as doors, beams and roofing material. Planning for this at the early stages of camp closure helps prevent unwanted events such as looting and/or the unauthorised removal of valuable resources and recyclable materials. Relevant stakeholders should collect salvageable materials immediately after the departure of the displaced. The Camp Management Agency should have an updated inventory of the facilities to determine what will be discarded, recycled, handed over etc.

IV. **Facilities remaining on site:** Agreements on the sustained management of remaining facilities should be part of the decommissioning process. Land owners, authorities and the community may request that facilities remain on site for continued use.

V. **Physical decommissioning** of camp/settlement infrastructure should be carried out as quickly as possible following the departure of the camp population.

VI. **Time frame:** If the displaced population is able and willing to transport some of the non-salvageable materials themselves (often shelter items), then the camp decommissioning process may begin during their movement.

VII. **Negotiations and agreements with land owner:** The owner of the land or buildings hosting the displaced population should participate in the planning discussions. Agreements should be signed when pre-existing structures are identified for upgrade, demolition or rehabilitation. Such agreements should be signed with the government if the owner cannot be present.

VIII. **Environmental considerations:** Rehabilitation should

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**Note:** The CMA should provide detailed maps of the site with all permanent and temporary structures identified to coordinate sectorial decommissioning operations.
reflect the landscape and livelihood activities. In planning this may be reflected through specific measures such as tree planting, proper decommissioning of latrines and the provision of a site plan to the land owners to ensure that water points are not installed near former toilet pits. Neighbours may be requested to restrict access to the area for a defined period of time to decrease potential public health hazards.

IX. Handover of assets: Assets may be requested (including partially requested) by the host community, local authorities and national government. Details for the hand over, such as inventories and responsibilities for future management of assets, are ideally included in written agreements that formalise roles and responsibilities.

3.4.3 Operational Elements (Camp Closure Action Plan)

I. Documentation: Correct data should be handed over to relevant departments (such as Social Services, Education and Health Department) in order to ensure that returning and residual displaced persons obtain proper identification and have access to basic services (e.g. education, medical services). All sensitive data should be handled confidentially and in-line with data principles in order to safeguard the right to privacy.

II. Registration: Deregistration should take place in situations where the camp population are registered. In cases where the displaced were not registered, either at the individual or household level, documentation of departures from the camp should take place instead. In situations where the displaced population are moving from one camp to another, a process of registration at the new camp and de-registration from the old camp should be put in place. Procedures should allow for follow up after the return of displaced persons.

III. Procedures for return and reintegration packages: The Camp Management Agency has to ensure that all stakeholders involved in the distribution of return and reintegration packages are aware and prepared for operations. The location of distribution points and the weight of the items being distributed need to be planned to ensure the provision of security, access for entitled beneficiaries, beneficiaries are only served items once and easy transportation to the departure area. Mechanisms for a steady flow between distribution, registration and departure points are necessary to avoid clogging. The displaced population are often active during the logistical operations leading to departure including participation at distribution points, transporting goods and belongings, or helping call the right person.

IV. Security: Procedures should be in place to avoid theft as there are many opportunities for looting as a camp empties. There should also be security for the displaced populations and staff during the camp closure process.

V. Local labour can be involved through community mobilisation activities, though workers must be adequately trained to carry out specific decommissioning tasks. Usually the residual population and host community will provide this labour, and additional labour should be provided by those displaced persons preparing to leave the camp. Some form of payment is likely to be requested; forms of payment include cash, food, vouchers and NFIs for work.

VI. Movements: Planning for the movement of people and their belongings during camp closure should be guided by the principles for voluntariness, inclusion and
security. The displaced are requested to sign a document to certify that their movement is voluntary. As much as possible, the displaced population should be in charge of their movement from the camp. If assistance is required then the Camp Management Agency should indicate the number of people needing assistance and the approximate quantity of luggage. Food and water may have to be provided.

VII. Monitoring and evaluation of closure operations is the responsibility of the Camp Management Agency and implementing partners. Mechanisms for monitoring should be outlined in the Camp Closure Action Plan, defining the roles and responsibilities of displaced persons and provisions for hiring additional labour. All works will need to be closely monitored, especially when using machines, to ensure that they are completed to the required standards and that no harm is done to the surrounding area. Monitoring serves as an important management tool, and also highlights any issues with the initial rehabilitation plan. Therefore, timely monitoring of projects will allow for the appropriate modification in the plan as necessary.

3.5 Establish a Planned Time Frame for Camp Closure

The Camp Management Agency in consultation with the Camp Closure Committee should identify all likely push and pull factors that may determine the timing, scale and nature of the return process. Factors include:

- **Harvest/planning season**: return should be planned before the beginning of the planting season, preferably before the harvest season as food prices are usually lower.
- **Academic school year**: return should be planned after the end of the academic year or before the beginning of the academic year.
- **Vaccination programs**: plan closure after mass vaccination programs have been completed as some may require booster inoculations.
- **Availability of shelter thatching materials**: such as grasses or reeds
- **Rainy season**: plan movement before the rainy season to make transportation possible. Closure should be planned for the end of the rainy season as demolition of mud bricks will be easier.

Factoring these in will allow displaced persons to make informed choices on whether to return, locally integrate or resettle. It may also increase the level of participation in the return process and facilitate smooth closure.

The agreed timing of closure must be communicated to both the displaced populations and local communities, following endorsement from the Camp Closure Committee.

4. SECTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

### KEY MESSAGES:

- Camp closure should involve all relevant sectoral actors, including the Protection, Health, Education, WASH, Early recovery and Shelter Clusters
- Phasing out of services should be planned so that the residual population have continued access to basic services.
- Handover of responsibilities and ownership of materials, buildings and land should be agreed in a consultative process

Camp closure needs to planned and implemented with the participation of all relevant sectors. For each of the main sectors, the relevant Global Cluster has provided input for these Guidelines on how their sectoral needs should be addressed.

4.1. Protection

Protection concerns must be mainstreamed into the camp closure process, and given its cross-cutting nature, protection standards, principles and best practices should be considered in all decisions made. All activities should ensure that the displaced enjoy physical, legal and material security without discrimination.

Vulnerable persons are often disproportionately affected for various reasons including:

- Lack of access to information on camp closure: e.g. older people or the chronically ill may not be able to walk to meetings
- Limited ability to make informed decisions, e.g. mental impaired persons or unaccompanied children
- Limited access to counseling to assist people in making informed decisions
- Insecurity due to the presence of abandoned structures.

In situations of forced or abrupt camp closure, particular attention should be paid to designing protection-oriented actions and monitoring measures.

Protection considerations during camp closure include:

I. **Continued access to basic services** for residual populations should be ensured. This can become quite complex, especially where humanitarian agencies begin the process of gradually withdrawing assistance.

II. **Assessment of the voluntariness of returns**:
Voluntariness of movement entails that the decision to return is made freely (without duress, compulsion or undue influence); based on accurate, objective information and made expressly and individually (with women on equal footing with men). It can be difficult to assess the voluntariness of movement, especially in large scale return or relocation contexts. Displaced populations may be vulnerable to outside manipulation, lack information and access to basic services. They may therefore feel compelled to return or relocate though it may not be safe to do so. While this is primarily the responsibility or protection actors, this is often conducted in conjunction with CCCM Cluster and other humanitarian actors.

III. Identification of key protection needs and risks for groups with specific needs should be ensured. Such groups include unaccompanied and separated children, unaccompanied older persons, persons with disabilities, chronically ill persons, unaccompanied women and single heads of households. Particular attention should be paid to those unwilling or unable to choose to return.

IV. Moving groups of vulnerable community members together along with their families/community groups should be considered in order to reduce protection and security risks, as well as the likelihood of separation.

V. Fostering arrangements: Determination of the stability of existing fostering arrangements and the number of children requiring new fostering arrangements should be planned before the departure of their foster parents. Departing foster parents may be able to recommend other potential foster parents.

VI. Protection monitoring and response is an integral part of the camp closure process, including during movement and arrival in areas of return; as the displaced may become more vulnerable due to anxiety, fear, stress and uncertainty.

Protection monitoring should ensure:

- The right to freedom of movement
- Access to basic services, including return and reintegration packages.
- Access to information on physical, legal and material support
- Access to counselling and psycho-social support
- Families are not separated during the return process
- Children are not left behind without an adult family member. For example when part of the family departs in advance to prepare for the arrival of the rest of the family
- Response to protection and security issues

3. Note there have been many documented cases where state/government actors actively encouraged or engaged in forcible returns of IDPs. In such cases it is the role of the of the Camp Coordination Agency and humanitarian community to strongly advocate for voluntariness of returns as stipulated by Principle 28 of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

4.2. Health

Health considerations should be mainstreamed in the planning and execution of the Camp Closure Action Plan. The plan should address specific health issues affecting new-born infants, pregnant women, lactating mothers, the chronically ill, disabled persons, and older persons. Considerations include:

I. Phasing out health services should be planned, for example by decreasing outreach activities and the number of in-patient beds. However, medical services must be available until every camp resident has departed.

II. Availability of follow-up medical care and services should be analysed by liaising with destination areas.

III. Assistance required for people with specific needs should be considered. For example, for certain medical cases, such as TB or mental health patients, movement may need to be delayed in order to complete their medical regimen or therapy especially. This is particularly important where there is knowledge that such medication or medical follow-up support is not readily available for the individual upon return.

IV. Medical records should remain with the displaced during transfer and confidentiality should be ensured.

V. Information regarding availability of health facilities in areas of return or resettlement should be provided. The importance of safe keeping and carrying medical documents should also be highlighted.

VI. Health service support during movement may be required. Mobile clinics should be set-up where applicable and available.

VII. Health related aspects of decommissioning and hand over: Includes hazardous waste disposal.

VIII. Hand over to local community of facilities and equipment.

IX. Timing of movement is important to avoid epidemics of communicable diseases with high mortality rates. Closure should be planned after a mass vaccination program has been completed, in order to cater for those who may require booster inoculations.

4.3. Education

Education must be taken into consideration when planning for camp closure in order to ensure a smooth transition and continuity, as education provides a degree of protection and accelerates reintegration into communities. This involves consultations with the displaced and host community at different levels, including school management committees, during the planning stage.

The intended use of education facilities (typically run by partner NGOs) after camp closure and their current condition should be carefully assessed, especially when planning rehabilitation.

Education considerations during camp closure include:

I. Maintenance of school records from the camp through collaboration between NGOs and Camp Management Agency.

II. Certification for students leaving school and transferring schools must be correct so that the skills and competence level of students can be efficiently assessed as part of their reintegration.

III. Certification and employment records for teachers in order to assist them in finding future jobs upon return or resettlement.

IV. Monitor protection risks associated with school going children being left behind to continue access to quality schooling in camps while parents may return to areas of origin.

V. School calendar should be taken into account when scheduling return movement.

VI. Specific needs of vulnerable groups of the population aiming at reintegration e.g. female students may be marginalised upon return.

VII. Decommissioning and hand-over of education facilities to relevant education authorities. To ensure that these processes are appropriate the inputs of the community should be taken into consideration.

VIII. Relocation of schools from camps to return or resettlement communities should be supported.

4.4. WASH

The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster/Sector in collaboration with the Camp Management Agency, local water authorities, camp residents and host populations should ensure that the orderly closure of WASH operations in the camp includes plans for transfer/redeployment of equipment, termination of contracts, and rehabilitation of land7. A WASH strategy should also

7. Responsibilities and Accountabilities Matrix CCCM and WASH Clusters
guarantee continuation of WASH services in areas of return.

WASH considerations during camp closure include:

I. Progressive reduction of service provision in accordance with needs assessments as the number of camp inhabitants diminishes.

II. Continue services for residual populations until durable solutions can be found or an alternatives have been arranged.

III. WASH assistance for host community might be required, or they may benefit from rehabilitation of the existing structures built in the camp for the displaced population.

IV. Removal, rehabilitation or handover of existing facilities should be decided upon and planned by WASH agencies.

V. Latrines and other pits should be filled in as soon as the camp is vacated otherwise these will present a hazard, especially if they become overgrown with vegetation.

VI. Proper backfilling is crucial to avoid depressions after soil settling. Excess rubble from concrete structures such as latrine slabs must be broken up and disposed of appropriately. Recyclable materials must be disinfected and taken by the displaced to their return areas, relocation sites or donated to the land owners/host community.

VII. Remove tube well PVC pipes or fill in properly to prevent ground water contamination.

VIII. Biodegradable and non-biodegradable materials should be sorted, with non-biodegradable materials being taken to an approved dumping site.

IX. Training and informing workers on possible risks: All workers must be monitored by agency field staff at all times and workers should be equipped with appropriate protection gear and first aid kits.

X. Water points to be shut down should be identified. Reusable and transportable materials such as water tanks and water pumps should be removed.

XI. Handover of camp WASH structures should be organised and documented. Structures for rehabilitation should be identified and maintenance responsibilities should be identified.

XII. Assessment of potential environmental risks as a result of WASH installations should be carried out and plans made for restoration. This can guide and support authorities on land rehabilitation issues.

4.5 Shelter

Proper decommissioning of shelter materials and foundations should be arranged in order to return the land to its pre-existing condition or to prepare the land according to future use. Durable structures are often handed over to the host community, though the default owner is usually the landowner.

Issues of ownership of the shelters should be resolved by the Camp Management Agency long before camp closure. For longer lasting-structures, such as those made out of mud, issues of ownership should be resolved before construction of the shelter begins as it is more problematic. Alternatively, in situations with issues of overcrowding the Camp Management Agency may decide to move other displaced families into the already-constructed houses.

Shelter considerations during camp closure include:

I. Removal, rehabilitation or handover of existing facilities: Shelter Agencies should participate in these discussions and decisions.

II. Ownership of decommissioned materials: Ownership of shelter materials will usually remain with those who lived in the shelters prior to camp closure; they should be encouraged to dismantle and take recyclable materials with them for use in areas of return. In some circumstances the Camp Management Agency may retain materials for reuse in return areas to the rehabilitate existing dwellings.

III. Develop guidelines on demolition of abandoned structures to ensure safety during demolition.

IV. Demolish and remove all concrete structures including reinforced concrete structures. Where possible use this material to fill in unusable wells and empty latrine pits to reduce the amount of waste that will require dumping. Any reinforcements must be salvaged for reuse if possible.

V. Remove drainage channels, foundations and holes where possible (including holes made when removing any structures). If such depressions are deep they can first be filled with fine rubble and then covered with soil and land. The site should be levelled and graded as deemed appropriate.

VI. Foreign materials used should be properly removed in order to make the land suitable for future use, especially in cases where a camp has been set up on farm land.

VII. Camp structures identified for rehabilitation should be prepared for their new users. A proper handover should be organised and documented, including maintenance responsibilities.

9. Camp Management Toolkit pg 462
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VIII. Replant with trees and other plants if possible, in line with the site’s previous levels of vegetation and usage. The future ownership and care of these plants is the responsibility of the land owner.

4.6 Environment

Some clean-up activities are likely to have taken place earlier in the camp closure process, but a significant amount is likely to remain once the site has been fully vacated. Priority should be given to the re-use and recycling of materials wherever possible.

I. Clearing of all burnable waste and rubbish to central collection points and properly incinerating them may be necessary when composting is not possible.

II. Obtain a list of government authorised dumping sites whenever possible. It is useful to require service providers to give proof of delivery in the form of certification or receipts from the sites to confirm that the waste material has reached them.

III. WATSAN facilities should be decommissioned properly and all latrine pits and sewers emptied, unless requested by the government or landowner for their particular use.

IV. Local labour should be used in clearance activities where possible, rather than hiring machines. Labour payment should be made at prevailing market rates. It is suggested to use ‘piece work’ payments for completion of particular tasks (such as removal of all bathing areas), with any additional bonuses for particularly heavy or unpleasant tasks. Consider engaging one member of each household in order to share benefits more widely across the community.

4.7. Early recovery

The priorities for early recovery and the entry point for programming support vary in different contexts. Planning for early recovery should take the profile of the displaced population into account, for example support packages should reflect the skills and intentions of the population.

Early recovery considerations during camp closure include:

I. Reintegration through the distribution of tools and agricultural inputs in areas of return or resettlement should be supported where appropriate

II. Transportation of equipment should be facilitated to support the establishment of income generating activities in areas of return or resettlement.

III. Active participation of women and women’s organisations ensures their active and equal participation in all aspects of early recovery.

IV. Promote transfer of skills, using returnee skills learned during and before displacement.

V. Recognition of certificates received during displacement, and reintegration into the national system upon return or local integration should be supported.

5. HANDOVER PROCESS

A ceremony to officially hand-over the site to the appropriate landowners with the host population, local and central government and implementing partners is useful following camp closure. It marks the end of the camp duration and provides an opportunity to thank the host population and government for their support in hosting IDPs, which can be seen as a gesture of good will.

Training of government and Local Authority staff on all aspects of the durable solutions and needs of the residual population may be required in order to ensure the capacity of the Camp Management Agency to be an informed and effective lead the process. Trainings may include:

• Communications skills
• Human rights issues and IDPS
• National laws and policies on IDPs
• Protection (including gender and vulnerable groups
• Participatory assessments
• Data collection and processing

Lessons learnt reports should be drafted and shared between the relevant stakeholders, including the Camp Management Agency, Camp Coordination Agency and sectoral partners.
ANNEX: REFERENCES AND TOOLS

Useful References and Resources
The following documents should be useful for practitioners. Links to the documents can be found at the Global CCCM Cluster website (http://www.globalcccmcluster.org/tools-and-guidance)

A. Key Resources
• Camp Management Toolkit, 2008
• Collective Center Guidelines, UNHCR/IOM, 2010
• Sphere Handbook, Geneva, 2011
• Environmental Considerations for Camp Phase-out and Closure: A UNHCR Plan of Action, UNHCR Geneva, 2009
• IASC Guidelines on Gender Based Violence in Humanitarian Settings, 2006
• IASC Guidelines on Gender in Humanitarian Action, IASC 2006
• Framework for Durable Solutions, 2010
• Operational Protection in Camps and Settlements, UNHCR, 2006
• Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons, 2007

B. Lessons Learnt Documents
• Practical Guide to Camp Phase-out: Lessons from Lango (second draft), 2007
• Liberia Camp Closure Assessment Report, UNHCR, 2006
• Environmental Perspectives of Camp Phase-out and Closure: A Compendium of Lessons Learned from Africa, UNHCR Geneva, 2009
• Camp Closure Processes and Environmental Rehabilitations in North Western Tanzania Refugee Operations: Lessons learned
• Guidance note on standards for closure of Evacuation Centres in the Philippines, with particular attention to the case of public schools, 2009

C. Other Documents
• National Camp Phase-Out Guidelines (Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda)
• WatSan Needs Assessment: Recommendations for Prioritising Camp Closure, WSWG, 2006
• DOUGEE refugee camp –Site Decommissioning and Rehabilitation Basic Guidelines UNHCR, 2013

If any of these documents cannot be found please contact the Global CCCM Cluster at globalsupport@cccmcluster.org

ACRONYMS

CA: Camp Administrator
CC: Camp Coordinator
CCA: Camp Coordination Agency
CCC: Camp Closure Committee
CCCM: Camp Coordination and Camp Management
CMA: Camp Management Agency
HC: Humanitarian Coordinator
IASC: Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons
IM: Information Management
IOM: International Organization for Migration
MoU: Memorandum of Understanding
NFIs: Non-food Items
OCHA: Organisation for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ToR: Terms of Reference
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR: UN High Commissioner for Refugees
WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP: World Food Programme
Providing **equitable access** to services and protection for **displaced persons** living in communal settings