

IDP Camp Safety

During the time between your arrival at a new site and the setting up of formal camp management procedures it is very important that you and your community set up some simple rules to keep everybody safe from avoidable dangers.

The following are some basic guidelines that may improve conditions in your site and make it a safer place to live.

These guidelines are the first step in a process of continual improvement to your living conditions and forms part of a working partnership between you and the Humanitarian Community.

Site Planning

In the early stages of a camp tents are often provided as an emergency shelter for arriving families. In many cases it is your responsibility to put up these tents and the following should be considered at the setting up stage;

1. Leave enough space around each tent to allow people to walk around and carry out general living activities. People must be able to store belongings close to their own tent and still be able to move around easily.
2. Where space is limited straight wide pathways between tents will mean space for young children to play without leaving the sight of their parents. A crowded mixture of tents will mean children are soon out of sight and may get lost.
3. Straight, regular pathways will also make it easier for people to move around at night.

Fire

Fire can spread very quickly through a tented community and is a serious threat to life. The following should be considered to reduce the risk of fire;

1. Cooking fires should ideally be located in a separate area away from living spaces although it is recognized that many people prefer to cook close to their own shelter.
2. If people DO decide to cook next to their living area then small cooking fires circled with stones should be used. Small fires should be at least 2m (6ft) away from tents and shelters including all canopies. Space for cooking will need to be considered at the site planning stage.
3. Flammable liquids such as lamp and cooking oil should be stored in a communal location well away from all living areas. No fires or naked flames should be allowed near this communal store.
4. Only the minimum amount of lamp oil should be distributed to families for lighting around living areas each night. Do not store flammable liquids in tents or shelters.

5. If available, sand or water buckets may be used to put out small fires and these should be kept in locations where they may be found and used quickly.
6. In the event of the spread of fire the priority should be given moving all people to a place of safety. Do not risk unnecessary injury or death trying to put out a large fire if it is no longer a threat to life.

Temporary Electricity Connections

Temporary electricity connections are used by many IDP's to provide common lighting. This type of electricity supply is not encouraged as there is a significant risk of serious injury or death from a bad connection. It is preferred that alternative lighting methods are used until a safe supply can be properly installed by CEB.

If you must use temporary electricity connections the following should be considered;

1. Keep all wires out of the reach of children. High level wiring and lighting using trees and wooden poles will reduce the danger of accidental electric shock.
2. Insulate all wire connections with electrical insulating tape or connection blocks. Cover all bare wires thoroughly.
3. If available, ask a qualified electrician from the local community to install the supply and check it for safety.

Waste Management

Household waste can cause serious problems to health if it is not disposed of properly. The following should be considered as a temporary measure until a regular system of collection and disposal can be established;

1. A single area for the dumping of household waste should be chosen quickly and used by the whole community.
2. Do not choose low ground or wet areas as wet garbage will quickly become a breeding ground for mosquitoes and is a risk to health.
3. Burning of waste is an acceptable method to reduce the volume but should only be carried out when the wind is moving away from living areas.
4. Access by tractor to the chosen area should be available for eventual collection by municipal authorities.
5. Small 'clean up' teams from your community can be used to collect waste and remove to the chosen dumping area.

Mobile teams of Camp Development and Sanitation specialists will be visiting all IDP locations regularly to provide Advice, Tools and Assistance to help you solve some of your immediate problems. Please make sure these problems are pointed out to them when they visit your community. They are there to help you as much as they can