



## **Guiding Principles and Exceptional Circumstances for CCCM & Protection Partners regarding the use of Perimeter Fencing for IDP Hosting Sites in Yemen, July 2020.**

As a general rule, humanitarian actors should avoid engaging in, or supporting the construction of perimeter fences for IDP hosting sites. In exceptional circumstances, fencing of IDP hosting sites might be considered as a last resort if all other solutions have been exhausted and an in-depth analysis of protection risks has been conducted. Any fence installation should be completed with the primary aim of contributing to mitigating and reducing clearly identified protection risks.

### **Red Lines:**

- Humanitarian partners will not support any activity, including the building of fences, which either by intention or result, serves to contain or restrict the movement of IDPs;
- Humanitarian partners will not support any activity, including the building of fences, which either by intention or result, serves to limit access of IDPs to essential facilities and services inside and outside of sites;
- Humanitarian partners will not support any activity, including the building of fences, that contributes to the securitization or militarization of IDP hosting sites, whether actual or perceived;
- Humanitarian partners will not take responsibility for the physical protection and security of IDPs living in sites, as this (including any infrastructure deemed necessary by the local authorities for the purposes of security) remains the primary responsibility of the state authorities;
- Humanitarian funding should not be used to pay for land for IDP hosting sites, nor should partners cover the costs of infrastructure works which are designed primarily to benefit the landowner in lieu of payment for the use of land. If fencing is required to protect the land and assets of the landowner, it is first and foremost the responsibility of the local authority to cover this requirement to ensure suitable land is available for the use of IDPs;

### **Consideration of Exceptional Circumstances:**

- The role of humanitarian partners is to help identify the threats that IDP site residents may be exposed to, and determine and implement measures that can prevent or mitigate the impact of such threats;
- In cases in which the use of a fence is being considered to mitigate a threat to IDPs, humanitarian partners (Protection and CCCM) should:
  - Conduct a detailed risk analysis regarding the use of fencing (including consideration of protection risks and fire safety risks);
  - Review options for fence design and materials which will mitigate related protection and safety concerns;

- Conduct extensive community engagement with the IDP community regarding their perceptions of risk and the impact of a fence on their safety, dignity, and wellbeing in the site;
- Conduct extensive community engagement with the Host Community regarding their perceptions of risk, concerns regarding the IDP population, and the impact of a fence on their safety, dignity and wellbeing regarding living adjacent to the IDP hosting site;
- Only once these steps have been completed, and the fence is deemed a last resort, essential to uphold the protection of the IDP community, and approval is granted from the relevant CCCM and Protection Clusters and local authorities, should a humanitarian partner move ahead with fence installation;
- In cases where the site concerned is a new site that is not yet inhabited, the same procedure should be followed, with community consultations conducted in order to capture the perception of IDPs regarding moving to a site with walls / fences around it.
- Similarly, in cases of requests for already-existing fences to be raised or updated.

#### **Engagement with Local Authorities:**

If fencing is requested by local authorities or landowners, humanitarian partners (Protection lead) should initiate advocacy with local authorities (and other relevant actors) regarding the position of humanitarian partners on fencing of sites. Talking points should focus on the following:

- Humanitarian partners are responsible for ensuring IDP hosting sites provide safe and dignified living conditions for IDPs. In most circumstances, fencing does not contribute to improving the safety and dignity of IDPs living in sites.
- Humanitarian partners work to ensure the movement of IDPs is not restricted, that IDPs are able to access all essential services and facilities, to the greatest extent possible, and that IDPs are not perceived by the local community as a risk or a threat to the wider community. Fences risk increasing some or all of these threats to the safety of IDPs;
- Humanitarian partners are not able to use humanitarian funding streams to cover the costs of perimeter fencing for sites – these are highly costly, require regular maintenance work, and are not funded by most donors. Security infrastructure, if required for the protection of IDPs in a site, is the responsibility of the local authority, not of humanitarian partners;
- If a fence is suggested to be required for the protection of the IDPs (and for no other reason), then an extensive assessment and consultation process will need to be undertaken by Protection and CCCM partners operating in the site. This will assess IDP and Host Community feedback on fencing before a final decision can be made and any work can commence. A decision made on the necessity for a fence in one site cannot be utilized for any other site – the need for a fence in each site must be uniquely reviewed and assessed, with community consultation, before a final decision can be made, and must then be communicated clearly to the population of concern.