

UNHCR SITE ASSESSMENT FORM

Revised September 2025

Notes:

1. UNHCR advocates for forcibly displaced people to be able to settle along hosting communities, enjoy freedom of movement, access local services and be included in development plans. Formal settlements and camps should be considered as a last resort. When they are unavoidable, the feasibility of developing new settlements in a given site should be carefully analyzed.
2. In line with Sustainable Responses and Inclusion from the Start approaches, the suitability of any site should be assessed against existing services that could be expanded, upgraded or strengthened (preferred site development modality), rather than establish parallel systems (least preferred modality and only to be considered as last resort).
3. As part of the Master Plan Approach, this multi-sectoral site assessment form includes key guidelines for selection of new sites and the extension of existing ones to accommodate forcibly displaced people.
4. This site assessment form should be filled in by a multi-functional team, ideally composed of settlement planning, shelter, WASH, energy, health, education, livelihood and protection colleagues. Involvement of local authorities and representatives from hosting communities should also be considered.
5. The final suitability of an assessed site should be decided with the multi-functional team and local authorities.
6. Environmental considerations are mainstreamed throughout this document, also incorporating aspects from the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+).
7. For further details on sector specific guidance, please reach out to the Technical Support Section at headquarters at the following email address: hqsl00@unhcr.org.

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1 INFORMATION



1.1 Response / Country Operation	
1.2 Government counterpart	
1.3 Assessment team	
1.4 Date	
1.5 Prepared by	

2 KEY PLANNING FIGURES



2.1 Planning figures/ # of refugees/ IDPs	
2.2 Average No. of people per Household	
2.3 Gender disaggregation	
2.4 Age disaggregation	

3 SITE LOCATION



3.1 Site name	
3.2 GPS Coordinates	
3.3 Admin division (Admin level 1,2,3)	
3.4 District	
3.5 Province	
3.6 Country	
3.7 Site profile (Brief description of the site characteristics)	
3.8 What is the Host community profile (including language, cultural/ethnic background, and religious affiliation)	
3.9 What is the Forcibly Displaced Population (FDP) profile (including language, cultural/ethnic background, and religious affiliation)	

4 SITE MAP



(Identify site location and nearby villages or agglomerations)

5 PROTECTION



5.1 Is there any information about potential existence of land mines and Unexploded Ordnances (UXOs) within and/or near this site? <i>Please expand in the remarks point 15</i>	Yes	No	Explain:
5.2a Is this site vulnerable to significant security risks? <i>Please expand in the remarks point 15</i>	Yes	No	Explain:
5.2b Are there concerns around tensions with local communities that could generate protection risks? <i>Please expand in the remarks point 15</i>	Yes	No	Explain:
5.3 Locations agreed with the government are safe and sufficiently distanced from sensitive areas?	No	Yes	Explain:
5.4 Are there military installations nearby?	Yes	No	Distance in Km:
5.5 What protection considerations should be made?	Explain:		
5.6 Is there a mobile phone network available?	Yes	No	



<p>6.1 What is the distance to the nearest populated area/locality (city, town, or village)?</p> <p><i>If there is more than one, list all major ones located within a 50 km radius in point 4.</i></p>	<p>Name of the locality:</p> <p>Population of the locality:</p> <p>Travel distance in Km:</p> <p>Incoming population: compared to the locality's</p>	<p>Core services available:</p> <p>Civil administration Registration & documentation Banking Post Markets Other</p>				
<p>6.2 What is the distance between the site and the largest city/ urban center in the region?</p>	<p>Name of the city:</p> <p>Population of the city:</p> <p>Travel distance in Km:</p> <p>Incoming population: compared to the city's</p>	<p>Core services available:</p> <p>Civil administration Registration & documentation Banking Post Markets Other</p>				
<p>6.3 The travel distance between the proposed site and existing primary health facilities exceeds the national standard?</p> <p><i>In the absence of a national standard, assess whether it is not accessible within a reasonable time frame, considering local terrain and transport options.</i></p> <p><i>(Sphere Standards specify that primary healthcare should be within one hour's walk from dwellings, aligned with WHO global standards).</i></p>	<p>Travel distance is more than the national standard or reasonable distance.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> <p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p>		<p>Type of Facility:</p> <p>Capacity:</p>
Yes	No					
<p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p>						
<p>6.4 The travel distance between the site and Primary Education Facilities is more than proposed distance in the national standard?</p> <p><i>In the absence of a national standard, assess whether it is not accessible within a reasonable time frame, considering local terrain and transport options. (For additional guidance on proximity of learning sites, refer to the <u>INEE Minimum Standards</u> which provides guidance on security, safety and accessibility. <u>UNESCO reports</u> also indicate that walking distances of up to 3km - and up to 5km in low-density contexts- are considered reasonable in several regions for children commuting to school).</i></p>	<p>Travel distance is more than the national standard or reasonable distance.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> <p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p>		<p>Type of Facility:</p> <p>Capacity:</p>
Yes	No					
<p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p>						
<p>6.5 The travel distance to secondary education facilities is more than proposed distance in the national standard?</p> <p><i>In the absence of a national standard, assess whether it is not accessible within a reasonable time frame, considering local terrain and transport options.</i></p>	<p>Travel distance is more than the national standard or reasonable distance.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> <p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p>		<p>Type of Facility:</p> <p>Capacity:</p>
Yes	No					
<p>Travel Distance in Km:</p> <p>Is public transport connection available? Yes No</p> <p>Travel time by car/ public transport:</p>						

6.6 Are functioning markets that adequately meet the daily essential goods & service needs of FDPs - accessible within a reasonable distance.	Functioning markets accessible within a reasonable distance.		Description:								
	No	Yes									
	Travel Distance in Km: Is public transport connection available? Yes No Travel time by car/ public transport:										
6.7 What evidence exists of employment and economic opportunities in the surrounding area?	Explain:										
6.8 Are there accessible financial services near the site (banks, mobile money, microfinance institutions) nearby?	Yes	No	Description (types of services available, providers, distance)								
6.9 What is the distance to the nearest police point?	Distance in Km:		Type:								
6.10 What is the distance to the nearest public transport route?	Distance in Km:		Type:								
6.11a What is the distance to national power grid?	Distance in Km to national power grid:	Distance in Km to primary/ local sources of electricity:	Type of primary/ local source of electricity if not national grid:								
6.11b What is the distance to the primary/local source of electricity?											
6.12 Does the proposed settlement location affect how easily the host and displaced populations interact?	Explain:										
6.13 What is the potential positive and negative impact in host population if the settlement was developed in this site?	Explain:										
6.14 Is the site currently included in, or impacted by, any national development plans or nearby urban or infrastructure expansion plans?	Explain:										
6.15 What is the location's capacity to sustainably absorb more FDPs in the future?	Explain:										
6.16 What local infrastructures and services could be strengthened to also service the new settlement?	Type of Service & Distance to the closest Access Point: <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Water</td> <td>Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Electricity</td> <td>Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Solid waste management*</td> <td>Housing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wastewater management*</td> <td>Connectivity</td> </tr> </table> * including treatment and disposal			Water	Health	Electricity	Education	Solid waste management*	Housing	Wastewater management*	Connectivity
Water	Health										
Electricity	Education										
Solid waste management*	Housing										
Wastewater management*	Connectivity										
6.17 What will be the primary sources of cooking & heating fuel?	Primary sources of cooking & heating fuel:		Primary cooking & heating technology:								

7 ACCESSIBILITY



7.1 Is road and route accessible for the provision of humanitarian life-saving assistance all year round? <i>Please expand in the remarks point 15</i>	No	Yes	Explain:
7.2 Is the site accessible by road?	Yes	No	
7.3 What is the surface type of the road (e.g. paved, dirt, tarmac)?			
7.4 Is the road type considered "all weather"?	Yes	No	
7.5 Any other access related issues?	Yes	No	Explain:
7.6 What is the land cover close to the road (e.g. shrubland, agriculture, wetland, forest, grassland)?	Explain in detail :		
7.7 Is there any drainage near the planned access road?	Yes	No	
7.8 Are there any bodies of water (including lakes, rivers, wadis) close to/crossing the planned access route?	Yes	No	Explain:
7.9 Will the planned access road cut through sensitive natural habitats?	Yes	No	

8 SITE CAPACITY



8.1 Site surface area? (Ha / m ²) <i>Indicate in sketch section 10</i>	
8.2 Potentially usable land area? (Ha / m ²) <i>Indicate in sketch section 10</i>	
8.3 What is the site carrying capacity ? Elaborate on critical considerations and assumptions for the capacity definition.	

9 TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE



9.1 What is the slope percentage?	Flat 0%-2%	Ideal 2%-4%	Moderate 4%-6%	Steep 6%-10%	Severe >10%
9.2 What is the soil condition?	Sand	Rock	Clay	Silt	Gravel
9.3 Is the soil type "black cotton" soil?	Yes	No	Any other type:		
9.4 Are soils permeable?	Yes	No	Explain:		
9.5 Has the soil shown collapsible characteristics in the past?	Yes	No	Explain:		

9.6 What is the site elevation above sea level:	Elevation in meters
9.7 What are the drainage patterns and types? <i>Indicate in sketch section 10</i>	Explain:
9.8 Any other physical feature?	Explain:

10 SITE SKETCH



Identify site characteristics such as crest areas, natural drainages, flood risk areas, other natural hazards risks areas, vegetation type, access, pockets for potential sheltering areas, existing infrastructure and other relevant features.

(See example at the end of the document)



11.1 Is access to available water source(s) compromised by a risk of contamination or overexploitation? <i>Please expand in the remarks point 15</i>	Yes	No	Explain:
11.2 What are the existing water sources of the site?	Surface Water River Lake Host Community Pipeline		Ground Water Borehole Spring Hand-dug wells
11.3 Is water available year-round?	Yes	No	Indicate the source of information:
11.4 What is the distance to nearest water source? (if boreholes indicate the depth)	Distance in m:		Indicate the source of information:
11.5 What is the water table depth?	Less than 3 m below the ground level		More than 3 m below the ground level
	Indicate depth (m):		
11.6 Are hydro-geological and/or geophysical investigations available?	Yes	No	Explain:
11.7 What are the primary source(s) of potable water for households in the proximity of the site?	Surface Water River Lake Host Community Pipeline		Ground Water Borehole Spring Hand-dug wells Other:
11.8 What are the observed types of sanitation facilities and practices among local communities?	Pit latrines Pour flush latrines Flushing toilets Managed Defecation Trenches		Undefined and unmanaged open defecation Other (please explain):
11.9 What are the final disposal sites for wastewater and sewerage, if disposal is not onsite?	Explain:		
11.10 What are the current sanitation facilities (if extension of a site)?	Pit latrines Pour flush latrines Flushing toilets Managed Defecation Trenches		Undefined and unmanaged open defecation Other (please explain):
11.11 What are the contamination risks for the primary source(s) of water?	Agricultural runoff water Sewage Fuel spills Leachate from solid waste		Greywater and other wastewater sources Other (please explain):
11.12 Who is responsible for regulating water sources?	Explain:		
11.13 Who is responsible of water safety? What is the location of referral laboratory for water testing?	Explain:		
11.14 What are the final disposal sites for solid waste?	Private household pit Communal pit (unprotected) Communal pit (protected)		Municipal landfill Other (please explain):

<p>12.1 Does historical data indicate that the area is prone to natural disasters, flooding and/ or landslide? <i>Please expand in the remarks point 15</i></p>	Yes	No	<p>Source of information:</p> <p>Meteorological data Landslides Informal narrative Other (please explain): Flood risk analysis</p>	
<p>12.2a Is there a rainy season? 12.2b What is the average rainfall per season? (mm)</p>	<p>Indicate the months of the year: Rainfall in mm per season:</p>			No
<p>12.3 Are FDPs and the host community aware of environmental risks/hazards? If so, what kind and during what months, and how severe?</p>	FDPs:		Host community:	
	<p>Types of environmental risks/hazards:</p> <p>Floods Sandstorms Cyclones Volcanos Droughts Heatwaves Landslides Other: High winds Wildfires Earthquakes</p>			
	Months most likely of extreme weather:			
<p>12.4 What are the maximum and minimum temperatures year-round?</p>	<p>Max. Temperature: Which months:</p>		<p>Min. Temperature: Which months:</p>	
<p>12.5 Does it snow?</p>	Yes	No	If yes, which months?	
<p>12.6 is there significant wind?</p>	Yes	No	Average wind speed in mph:	Which months:
<p>12.7a What is the existing type of vegetation? <i>Indicate in sketch section 10</i></p> <p>12.7b What is the dominant and secondary land cover? <i>Provide images, if possible, of the dominant and secondary land cover density in an annex.</i></p>	Explain:			
<p>12.8 What level of vegetation clearance will be required to enable construction, (avoid indiscriminate bulldozing) ? <i>Indicate in sketch section 10</i></p>	Explain:			
<p>12.9 What is the distance from protected areas and natural ecosystems?</p>	Distance in Km:		<p>Type:</p> <p>National Parks Bio reserves Forests</p>	<p>Riverlines Streams Lakes Wetlands</p> <p>Coastal Zones Mangroves Other:</p>
<p>12.10 Is there evidence of any major environmental health or bio hazards? <i>(e.g. malaria, bilharzia, cholera, industrial pollution, near-by medical waste disposal site, dangerous animals, unsafe burial practices etc.)</i></p>	Yes	No	Explain:	
<p>12.11 Is the area prone to any other identified natural hazard?</p>	Yes	No	Explain:	

13 LAND USE AND LAND RIGHTS



13.1 Who owns the land, how is it currently being used, and what formal land and property rights govern its use, in the area being assessed? <i>* Assess both the site and its surrounding areas.</i>		Explain:	
13.2a Have there ever been or are there currently any agricultural activities on this site and surrounding areas?		Yes	No
13.2b If yes please describe:			
13.3 Have land rights for any planned agricultural areas been assessed?		Yes	No
13.4a Are there or have there ever been crops on this site?		Yes	No
13.4b Will a compensation be required?		Explain:	
13.5 In and around the site, are host communities collecting and selling natural resources for commercial purposes?		Yes	No
13.6 In and around the site, is there any known conflict related incidents related to natural resource extraction?		Yes	No
13.7 Do opportunities exist for settlement populations to:	Access firewood	Access construction materials	Graze animals
13.8a Is water available near the site for productive use, like agriculture, livestock and small-scale production?		Yes	No
13.8b If yes, are there existing irrigation networks or infrastructure to support such use?		Yes	No

14 SUMMARY OF ASSESSED RED AND ORANGE LINES



*** Red lines are alerts flagging absence of critical elements to enable the development of the site**

5.1 Is there any information about potential existence of land mines and Unexploded Ordinances (UXOs) within and/or near this site?	Yes	No
5.2a Is this site vulnerable to significant security risks?	Yes	No
5.2b Are there concerns around tensions with local communities that could generate protection risks?	Yes	No
7.1 Is road and route access compromised for the provision of humanitarian life-saving assistance all year round?	Yes	No
11.1 Is access to available water source(s) compromised by a risk of contamination or overexploitation?	Yes	No
12.1 Does historical data indicate that the area is prone to natural disasters, flooding and/ or landslide?	Yes	No

*** Orange lines are alerts flagging that heavy mitigation activities will be required to enable the development of the site**

5.3 Locations agreed with the government are safe and sufficiently distanced from sensitive areas?	No	Yes
6.1 What is the distance to the nearest populated area/locality (city, town, or village)?	Km:	
6.2 What is the distance between the site and the largest city/ urban center in the region?	Km:	
6.3 The travel distance between the site and existing Primary Health Facilities exceeds the national standard or reasonable distance?	Yes	No
6.4 The travel distance between the site and existing Primary Education Facilities exceeds the national standard or reasonable distance?	Yes	No
6.5 The travel distance between the site and existing Secondary Education Facilities exceeds the national standard or reasonable distance?	Yes	No
6.6 Are functioning markets that adequately meet the daily essential goods & service needs of FDPs - accessible within a reasonable distance.	No	Yes
9.1 Is the percentage of the slope indicating a flat (0%-2%), steep (6%-8%) or severe topography (> 10%)	Yes	No
9.2 Is the soil assessed indicating sand or rock soil type?	Yes	No
9.3 Is the soil assessed "black cotton" soil type?	Yes	No
11.5 Is the water table less than 3 meters below the ground level?	Yes	No

15 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



(this part should be filled by a Multi-Functional Team)

Is the site suitable?	Yes	No
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Remarks:

