

Facilities providing shelter/accommodation

The provision of shelter and accommodation is a key service offered by some MRRMs facilities. The nature and shape of facilities providing accommodation greatly vary from country to country, depending on the migratory context, the security situation, the level of engagement of government authorities, the location, the size of the population in need, the vulnerabilities of the beneficiaries and the length of their stay, among other factors. Shelter and accommodation for migrants may be provided in multipurpose centers, transit centers, collective centers, transit centers, reception centers and evacuation centers, among others. For accommodation in hotel room and guest houses, please consult [this entry](#).

Best practices from the field

Located in the city of Agadez, IOM largest transit center in Niger has a capacity of 1,000 people. The facility offers dedicated spaces for women and girls, families and migrants with medical needs, along as communal areas for recreational and training activities. All migrants hosted in the center also benefit from hygiene kits, food assistance, medical care, psychosocial and recreational activities, education and training, consular assistance and assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR).

Offering accommodation fills in important gaps in migrant protection and assistance. Nevertheless, the provision of shelter solutions is one of the most challenging aspects of MRRMs program implementation, ranging from the achievement of minimum standards to ensure the quality of life of residents to maintenance and budgetary implications. IOM estimates indicate that if the number of beneficiaries to be hosted is equal to or greater than 3,000 people per year, offering shelter in MRRM premises is more cost-effective than outsourcing accommodation.

The **selection and design of buildings** to be used to host beneficiaries directly affects the quality of life of residents. The configuration of the spaces must ensure the respect of minimum standards and

facilitate the provision of services. The **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere standards)** indicate that all facilities providing accommodation shall have one toilet (and shower) to 20 people, separated by gender. The minimum living space per person is 3.5 sq. meters, and separate sleeping area for male and female shall be foreseen, as well as specific areas for vulnerable beneficiaries, child friendly spaces and spaces for families. For further guidance on set-up and minimum needs, please consult the [relevant entries here and here](#). Each beneficiary needs a bed (or a culturally equivalent place to rest, e.g. hammocks or wickers) and mattresses must be plastic coated for ease of cleaning and disinfecting. The stock of sheets and blankets must be big enough to allow their turnover. A dedicated area is needed for medical cases or beneficiaries with other specific needs, as for instance women who just gave birth. Alternatively, additional accommodation may be found outside of the facilities for beneficiaries with special needs. Although the **length of stay of beneficiaries** in MRRM facilities greatly vary depending on the context, it is recommended to create common spaces for recreational and psychosocial activities, as well as for socialization and entertainment, as for instance TV areas or sports areas. Best practices show the eating areas shall be separated from other common spaces, and a shift system established if the space is not sufficient for all the guests.

When accommodation is provided, **IOM's duty of care** for its beneficiaries is 24/7. It is therefore recommended that personnel, including also health professionals, are present 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Outsourcing of security, food provision and cleaning is generally recommended.

References and Tools

- [IOM and UNHCR Collective center Guidelines \(Shelter, p.89\)](#)
- [East Africa transit centers guidelines: Standard operating procedures, forms, new hotel SOPs*\(p. 6-10\)](#)
- [IOM Niger MRRM Handbook \(draft version\)* \(Chapter 2.1 Transit centers definition and planning, p. 11\)](#)
- [The Sphere Handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response](#)