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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
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**Global Shelter Cluster**  
ShelterCluster.org  
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

# ADVOCACY PLAN

THE LACK OF FUNDING IN A NEGLECTED CRISIS

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## Advocacy Plan

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<p><b>What is the issue?</b></p>	<p><i>“Increasingly viewed as a commodity, housing is most importantly a human right.”<sup>1</sup></i></p> <p>As of September 2023, the 24%<sup>2</sup> of total sector requirements equivalent to 7,8 M USD\$ has been allocated to the Shelter/NFI Sector. So only 8% of people in need of household items and shelter have been supported so far.</p> <p>The Shelter/NFI Sector is among the least funded sectors in Cameroon according to the Financial Tracking System by OCHA.</p> <p>In Cameroon a total of 1,813,757 people needs adequate shelter and household items. Approximately 830,000 of them are in the Far North region where a surge in inter-communal violence in mid-2021 and continuous attacks at the Nigerian border contributed to an increase in displacement. Shelter needs have been further exacerbated by severe-flooding in September 2022 with an exceptional destruction of infrastructures.<sup>3</sup> The majority of crisis affected people are hosted by other families or are living in makeshift shelters at informal sites with no access to basic services.</p> <p>Within the North-West and South-West regions, 885,000 people need shelter and household items as violations of human rights continue with the intentional burning of homes, overcrowded shelters with host families and people living in inadequate makeshift shelters in the bush. In the neighboring regions of the Littoral and West, almost 100,000 IDPs need better shelter, as most are either struggling to afford the cost of rent or are living in inadequate shelters with host families who have limited resources.</p> <p>The Shelter Sector has identified three population groups with shelter needs which differ according to their status of displacement: 823,000 IDPs, 544,500 returnees who have come back to their house of origin prior to displacement, and 446,500 non-displaced persons.</p> <p>For the first time in Cameroon since the start of the humanitarian response, the non-displaced population group includes not only the host community but also vulnerable populations left behind in damaged shelters such as persons living with disabilities, older people, persons without financial means to move, those without</p>
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<sup>1</sup> “The human right to adequate housing”, OHCHR, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-housing/human-right-adequate-housing#:~:text=Increasingly%20viewed%20as%20a%20commodity,home%20or%20lands%20taken%20away.>

<sup>2</sup> Source: Direct consultation with donors and operational partners

<sup>3</sup> MSNA, IOM, August 2022. In North-West, South-West regions IDPs hosted are the 57% of total IDP population while in the Far North region IDPs hosted are the 56%.



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	<p>documentation who may have no other choice but to stay in shelters that have been burnt intentionally or damaged during the course of conflict or natural hazards.</p> <p>Using the OCHA Multisector Needs Assessment (MSNA) as a data source, shelter severities were analyzed at the settlement level according to the type of settlement, the condition of the settlement, the type of tenure arrangements of the IDPs, the types of shelters of IDPs and returnees, the conditions of the shelters, and, if damaged, the cause of damages</p>
<p><b>What do we want to change?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase in qualitative funding for a qualitative shelter and NFI response that satisfy people in need. Qualitative funding means flexible, timely, multi-year, local and traceable.</li> <li>▪ Hire more specialized staff for the implementation of alternative shelter solutions in remote challenging contexts.</li> <li>▪ Strengthen coordination between humanitarian and development especially around chronic crisis whose root causes are anchored to the development issue. By preventing aid funds dispersion humanitarian relevance and impact would increase consistently.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Why is this change necessary?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of privacy in makeshift shelters expose especially women and girls to serious risks of gender-based violence;</li> <li>▪ Degradation of shelter forces adoption of negative coping strategies such as early marriage, economic exploitation, recruitment by armed groups and other human rights violations;</li> <li>▪ Overcrowded conditions bring to improper sanitation and inadequate ventilation risking the transmission of diseases such as cholera, measles, chronic conditions brought on by stress and trauma;</li> <li>▪ Adequate housing and food are two fundamental human rights, intertwined, essential contributors to health.</li> <li>▪ Coordination of transitional activities, including resilience, countering violent extremism, and social cohesion activities, currently falls between the two stools of development and humanitarian coordination and is only understood to a limited extent.</li> <li>▪ Despite the existence of multiple planning frameworks, the fragmented nature of coordination, and gaps in the evidence-base means that it remains extremely difficult to determine</li> </ul>

	<p>what the needs, priorities, coverage, and gaps are across the nexus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The mapping exercise of funding and activities across the nexus remains a one-off exercise and has not been widely referred to.</li> <li>▪ Both humanitarian and development donors consistently note that due to their limited country presence, they struggle to participate in coordination forums and need to prioritise their engagement carefully.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who has the power to make this change?</b></p>	<p>Emergency Relief Coordinator, High Commissioner, Global Shelter Cluster; Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator; UNHCR Representative; Humanitarian Country Team; OCHA Secretariat; Humanitarian donors (BHA, ECHO, SHELTER BOX, NMFA, GFFO, CERF, GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN, CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND, SIDA, CDCS, GOVERNMENT OF GERMANY, SWISS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION); Inter-Sector Coordination Group; Sector partners (UNHCR, NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL, ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION, AAEDC, PUBLIC CONCERN, INTERSOS, DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, PREMIERE URGENGE, INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COUNCIL, H4BF, AWA, SHUMAS, AMEF, SIRDEP, CARITAS BAMENDA, ASFH, SAHELI, COHESODEC, STRATEGIC HUMANITARIAN SERVICES;</p>
<p><b>Who has also an interest in changing this?</b></p>	<p>Government of Cameroon (MINEPAT); UN Country Team; NEXUS Task Force; Development Donors (EU Delegation, World Bank, African Development Bank Group, USAID, KOICA, JEICA, GIZ, AFD, SWISS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION); Cameroon Red Cross; Civil Society.</p>
<p><b>Who do we have access to?</b></p>	<p>Humanitarian Donors: direct access via bilateral meetings, ad hoc donor briefing; indirect access through monthly Newsletter.</p> <p>Humanitarian Country Team: direct access via ad hoc joint ISCG-HCT meetings or bilateral meetings; indirect access through monthly Newsletter.</p> <p>UNHCR Representative: direct access via monthly update meetings; indirect access through monthly Newsletter, bilateral emails.</p> <p>OCHA Secretariat: direct access via monthly Inter-sector meetings; indirect access through bilateral emails, monthly Newsletter,</p> <p>Sector partners: direct access via bi-monthly sector meetings, bilateral meetings; indirect access through monthly Newsletter</p>

	<p>Global Shelter Cluster: direct access at HQ during the annual event, bilaterally emails, monthly calls; indirect access through monthly Newsletter.</p>
<p><b>What do we need to do to create this change?</b></p>	<p><i>What activities are required?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map and track shelter funds at least twice a year (June, December);</li> <li>▪ Reach out to donor regularly in-country, at regional and global level and advocate for qualitative funding;</li> <li>▪ Advocate for interoperability in the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework with OCHA/HCT/HC/GSC for equity in sectoral needs prioritization;</li> <li>▪ Joint advocacy with FSL/PRT/Health Sectors around consequences of Shelter Sector underfunding on the food security, health conditions, protection threads;</li> <li>▪ Promote joint programming among FSL/Health/PRT Sectors' partners;</li> <li>▪ Bilateral consultations with Shelter Sector partners to verify their absorption capacity and in case support during the project proposal phase</li> <li>▪ Safe access and less administrative burden for construction activities in the NW-SW</li> <li>▪ Advocacy for activation of Country Based Pooled Fund whose main recipients could be national NGOs</li> <li>▪ Get more attention on Cameroon issue through social medias</li> <li>▪ Alignment of donor/partners/UN Lead Agencies on sector strategic objectives and standards</li> <li>▪ Common understanding on multisectoral approach and its feasibility by donors/partners/Clusters/OCHA Secretariat</li> </ul> <p><i>Do we have all necessary data?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Important gaps have been identified in the Financial Tracking System (<a href="https://fts.unocha.org/countries/39/summary/2023">https://fts.unocha.org/countries/39/summary/2023</a>). Partners in country or their Focal Points at Head Quarters report on voluntarily basis according to their own schedule so the tool is extremely unpredictable and unreliable.</li> <li>▪ Some organizations/agencies report different amounts than what effectively committed/allocated to the sector program, some others report development grants under the humanitarian shelter sector, some others just report under the wrong sector.</li> <li>▪ Unearmarked funds are very challenging to trace and depend on the selected recipient's strategy priorities so double check with partners becomes necessary.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For multisector funds there is not sector disaggregation so impossible to identify the Shelter/NFI component.</li> </ul> <p><i>Do we have specific recommendations on how to achieve the results?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activities listed above must be implemented consistently and coherently across the year at country/global level;</li> <li>▪ The result intended as the % of increase in quality funds yearly must be realistic also considering the rest of humanitarian priorities globally.</li> </ul>
<b>How can we make the change happen?</b>	Meetings; Newsletter; Policy brief note; Ad hoc meetings; Social Media via Global Shelter Cluster twitter account; presentations at Global Shelter Cluster annual event.
<b>How will we monitor and evaluate the advocacy actions?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The number of mentions of the above topics in coordination meetings/documents during a year;</li> <li>▪ The number of meetings convened annually for advocacy purpose during;</li> <li>▪ The number of new donors funding the Shelter/NFI sector;</li> <li>▪ The number by non-traditional Shelter/NFI Sector partners that would include Shelter/NFI activities in their proposals;</li> <li>▪ The number of validated/not validated proposals by traditional Shelter/NFI Sector partners;</li> <li>▪ The % of increase in quality funding within the Shelter/NFI Sector;</li> <li>▪ The number of synergies with Government entities and development actors (via Shelter/NFI Sector Coordination Team or NEXUS Task Force) that concretely enables to save humanitarian funds.</li> </ul>

#### Calendar

Event/Activity	Date/Period	Background info (or links)	Focal point in country
<b>Newsletters</b>	Monthly	Circulated monthly through distribution list	Coordinator National Level
<b>Donor bi-lateral meetings</b>	Twice a year		Coordinator National Level
<b>Donor Task Force meetings</b>	Once a year	These are only donors' meetings which on ad hoc basis open to specific guest/topic under request	Chaired by the Swiss Development Cooperation
<b>Donor mapping</b>	Twice a year	Document posted on the	Coordinator National

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		Shelter Cluster Website <a href="#">LINK</a> and circulated in the monthly newsletter to the humanitarian community	Level
<b>Briefing Note <i>Status of Funds to Shelter Cameroon</i></b>	September 2023	Document posted on the Shelter Cluster Website and circulated in the monthly newsletter to the humanitarian community	Coordinator National Level
<b>Advocacy Plan</b>	September 2023	Document posted on the Shelter Cluster Website and circulated in the monthly newsletter to the humanitarian community	Coordinator National Level
<b>Meeting with most relevant FSL/Health/PRT Sector partners</b>	September – December 2023	Understanding potential interest in joint programming	Coordinator National Level
<b>Attending regular NEXUS TF meeting</b>	Monthly	Promoting / following up the NEXUS operationalization progress	Coordinator National Level

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