

I. Brief background:

Each year, the Yemen Shelter Cluster gathers to review the overall response, share good practices and lessons learned to improve the shelter response. Accordingly, for 2023, a two-days Shelter Cluster Annual Consultation Meeting was held on 31 July to 01 August 2023. The meeting was conducted using a hybrid approach with a physical presence in Aden and Sanaa respectively, and plenaries virtually. A total of sixty-five representatives from authorities, National and International NGOs, and UN agencies, including OCHA participated in the meeting.

II. Introduction and Opening Remarks:

During the introduction, the Snr. Shelter Cluster Coordinator welcomed all participants, recognizing the high level of partnership and collaboration in providing shelter assistance to the most vulnerable families in Yemen. All clusters were appreciated for the level of coordination and in achieving shelter outcomes through integrated approaches and referrals but encouraged all to do more. In recognition of the shelter cluster partner's efforts, the Shelter Cluster Coordination Team committed to awarding a Certificate of Participation to each humanitarian organization who successfully participated in the Consultation Meeting.

For the opening remarks, both UNHCR and OCHA appreciated the work of the Yemen Shelter Cluster and the level of cooperation with all stakeholders in meeting the shelter needs of the most vulnerable population. The authorities were appreciated for facilitating access and collaboration with the Shelter Cluster.

They highlighted the need to maintain effective partnerships and enhance coordination in meeting the shelter needs of the most vulnerable. The two agencies emphasized the need to prioritize through integrated programming/area-based approach to achieve greater impact given the limited funding outlook for 2024. The need to enhance accountability to the affected population, which is one of Grand Bargain's commitments was emphasized. All partners were encouraged to actively engage in resource mobilization efforts, including bilateral donor engagements, to reduce dependency on common humanitarian funds like YHF and CERF, given their limited funding envelopes.

III. Expectations

- Discuss how to ensure adequate humanitarian response despite a potential fund decline in 2024.
- Identify priorities for humanitarian aid.
- Strengthen the role of local authorities and the local community in humanitarian interventions (localization).
- Understand durable solutions and how they can be delivered.
- Identify alternative solutions in the response to emergencies.
- Develop severity scores and needs as part of the HNO 2024.
- Create a mechanism to mobilize new funding.
- Identify solutions for the challenges faced by the shelter cluster and its partners.
- Enhance coordination between and among cluster partners and other clusters.
- Discuss the 2024 shelter cluster strategy.
- Discuss the shelter cluster's new structure (coordination mechanism).
- Discuss lessons learned from 2022-2023 projects.
- Understand the Shelter Cluster strategy for accountability.
- Improve coordination among cluster partners.
- Have a clear vision to improve humanitarian interventions and overall performance.

IV. Summary of outcomes of the meeting and the way forward for 2024:

- Maintain emergency preparedness and response capacities.
- Maintain both cash and in-kind modalities. While the affected communities prefer cash-based interventions/assistance, it must be informed by markets, availability, and accessibility. Prioritize in-kind assistance including for emergency response where markets are not available and accessible. **All Shelter responses MUST incorporate technical support despite the modality. Cash-based assistance for shelter and NFI responses must be conditional/restricted. However, for NFIs some flexible can be applied to allow families buy the items they need based on the geographical context.**
- Integrate the environment in all shelter activities to mitigate further negative impacts using the **Global NEAT+ tool** to identify potential risks and mitigation measures.
- Support transitional localized shelter solutions until a durable solution is found in displacement locations.
- Support minor rehabilitation of houses in return areas to enable dignified and safer living conditions and improve the living standards of the most vulnerable families.
- Promote the centrality of protection including AAP, Gender, HLP, etc in all shelter activities as well as inclusion (making shelter accessible). Enhance community-driven response to build resilience and ownership.
- Promote the settlement or area-based approach through integrated response with other clusters/sectors to generate shelter and protection outcomes.
- Enhance data collection and analysis to support evidence-based response and programming.
- Enhance coordination with development partners to support the HDP Nexus towards sustainable solutions, including linking cash for rent assistance to livelihood support.

- Enhance capacity building and localization.
- Embark on resource mobilization through bilateral donors and engagement. This includes enhancing donors' engagements and briefings on the situation in Yemen.

V. Review of Cluster Performance:

Core Function 1: Supporting service delivery

- Include HLP considerations in the Transitional Shelter guideline.
- Consider including the impact of using local materials in the environmental profile.
- Partners should ensure participation in the SC monthly coordination meetings and ad hoc meetings for effective coordination of response, especially during emergencies.
- Share meeting minutes and follow-up actions timely.
- Share SC updates through the most accessible communication sources.
- Consider an inter-agency MoU to use a specific humanitarian platform when needed.
- Plan to roll out NEAT+ assessment to mitigate the negative impact of using local shelter materials.

Core Function 2 (Informing HC/HCT strategic decision-making) & 3 (Planning and implementing cluster strategies)

- Ensure effective coordination between the cluster coordination team and partners.
- Ensure the cluster strategy reflects the current situation, donor strategy, environmental factors, and durable solutions.
- Initiate a multi-cluster consultation meeting with other clusters to ensure comprehensive response coordination.
- Ensure need-based evidence during assessments.
- Develop clear information about the returnees, including through assessments and other sources and pilot projects that respond to their needs.
- Provide accurate data on targeting and reporting.
- Advocate for funding transitional/durable shelter solutions and a limited percentage for emergency response.
- Ensure that partners report needs and responses at the site level, to support identifying gaps and planning interventions.

Core Function 4 (Monitoring and evaluating performance) & 5 (Building national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning)

Monitoring and evaluating performance:

- Encourage all partners to share success stories, lessons learned, and best practices with the cluster.
- Update the selection criteria for Shelter/NFI interventions to meet the changes in the humanitarian situation.
- Develop an online monitoring tool to be filled by sub-national coordinators during the monitoring field missions.

Building national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning:

- Assign roles and responsibilities among cluster partners (including those responding to conflict-related needs, fire incidents, earthquakes, floods, and heavy rain).
- Advocate for funding to support initiatives such as the transportation and distribution costs of the SC common pipeline.
- Involve the Sub-National cluster in ad hoc annual/strategic planning meetings and those with donors at the national level.
- Involve governmental stakeholders in all planning preparation stages—close coordination between clusters at the Sub-National level during the plan development is important to ensure the integrations.
- Conduct training sessions to raise partners' awareness about how to provide life-saving support and how to use the shelter cluster common pipeline.

Core Function 6 (Supporting robust advocacy) & 7 (Promoting accountability to affected populations)

- Provide regular reports and analysis on During Distribution Monitoring, Post Distribution Monitoring, 5Ws, Community Based Protection Networks reports, etc.
- Conduct regular field visits to PoCs.
- Ensure more engagement and contribution of the local partners, Sub-National Coordinators, and other actors in developing strategies and contingency plans, preparedness plans, etc.
- Advocate for more funding to support durable solutions, gap-filling, and mobilization of resources.
- Ensure that field visits have informal and formal meetings with KI and PoCs, including women, men, girls, and boys, to be part of the decision-making process.
- Promote systems for CFM, referral, and empowering PoCs.
- Ensure partner's adherence to environmental aspects. Advocate for the use of Biodegradable items (e.g., bioplastics), in the packaging to ensure minimal to no natural and social harm or degradation of the environment.
- Develop evidence-based assessments focusing on durable solutions in the mid-term to long-term.

- Advocate with local authorities for more inclusion in response, explicitly highlighting the women's movement restrictions.
- Develop a Community Engagement Policy or SoP for the Shelter component.

VI. Recommendations and Actions to improve the overall Shelter response in Yemen:

A. Capacity Building:

Recommendations	Participant interaction Q&As	Action point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparedness and emergency response - Physical site assessment and settlement planning - Durable shelter solutions - Post distribution monitoring - Housing Land and Property in Practice - Information Management Refresher Training (incl. reporting) - Development of project proposals (CERF & YHF) for partners 	<p>HLP's situation and challenges impact the shelter response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HLP Due Diligence Guidance Notes for Transitional Shelter and Housing Rehab are to be shared with Shelter TWIG and SAG for review and endorsement and then to be uploaded on the Shelter Cluster website. - HLP WG to work with Cluster to finalize the beneficiary selection criteria and verification mechanism. - HLP WG and Shelter Cluster to explore Socio-economic assessment for livelihood and income generation activities for the Marib rental eviction cases. - HLP rights training to be provided for the authorities. - HLP WG to share the presentation and all HLP-related guidance notes (including the MCLS assessment forms). 	<p>IFRC/YRCS</p> <p>SCT</p> <p>SCT</p> <p>HLP Taskforce SCT OCHA</p>

B. Shelter Cluster Strategy Review

Group Recommendation	Participant interaction Q&As	Action point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building is to be added as a section in the strategy. - Resource mobilization and funding are to be added as well. - Add indicators related to the environment. - Exit strategy for cash-for-rent activity through linkage with livelihood. - Review the shelter cluster activities costing. - Targets should be reviewed based on the achievements made to date. - More advocacy from the cluster and partners is needed. - Provision of accurate needs-related data. - Focus on capacity building, especially related to AAP. - Support partners in terms of addressing access issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider linking shelter cash programs. - Explore implementing shelter activities through cash for work wherever possible. - Ensure an Area-based approach in return areas. - Explore Micro projects for economic empowerment for vulnerable people with limited capacities. - How to improve "go green" on shelter activities using environmentally friendly shelter material.? 	<p>TWIG to discuss these suggestions, including using available local environmentally friendly materials.</p>

C. Best Practices and Lessons Learned (Project Cycle)

Group Recommendation	Participant interaction Q&As
<p>Identification of needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct needs assessments using the cluster tools and consider the involvement of all affected people, including women, men, boys, and girls as well as PWDs and older people and relevant stakeholders. The assessments shall consider using the communications mechanisms. - Discuss the challenges and needs of the communities and understand their views on how to address them. <p>Program design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design should address vulnerable groups' needs. - Ensure addressing needs of the IDPs in sites according to the needs assessment exercise. - Consider all the identified risks in the needs assessment. - Pay attention to the donors' requirements to raise chances for funding. - Think of the best ways of marketing the proposal. - Maintain some emergency responses. - Planning should consider environmental factors and durable solutions. <p>Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination and consultation with all stakeholders is necessary. - Consult with different groups from the beginning of the implementation and adjust where relevant. - Ensure identification of community-preferred Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to involve the affected population during implementation. - Assessment and analysis of needs should be done using the cluster's unified forms. - Partners should share needs assessments with the cluster. - Sharing findings of risk analysis and humanitarian access constraints is critical. - Preparedness and strategic planning is key. - Adopting a nexus approach in project planning is needed. - Consider environment-friendly projects. - Move towards durable solutions. - Consider donors' requirements during the development of proposals. - Understand donors' strategy. - Utilize the Shelter Cluster Common Pipeline in emergencies.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct more monitoring visits to project sites and get the views of the people (all groups) on the implementation of the activities, record their feedback, and take stock of their suggestions to fine-tune the project implementation when necessary. - Disseminate clear information to the target population related to their entitlements/services. - Mobilize resources and implement the project in a timely manner while engaging all stakeholders. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish appropriate CFMs. - Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of activities (FGDs, individual interviews with PWD, women, men, girls, and boys) to get their views on the implementation. - Ensure field visits by the MEAL Team. - Record lessons learned and best practices as well as success stories. - Consider AAP, CFM, CWC, AGD, rights-based and community-based approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure close coordination with all stakeholders, including local authorities, during the implementation process. - Compliance with sphere standards during the implementation is necessary. - Ensure close coordination for a more integrated response. - Conduct Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) and report on implemented activities. - Evaluate the impact of projects.
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D. Efficient use of resources to address identified gaps promptly

Group Recommendation	Action point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an online response platform. - Provide daily updates. - Ensure Integrated response. - Develop an inter-cluster beneficiary cross-checking mechanism. - Minimize the response timeframe. - Allocate budgets/partners to respond to natural disasters. - Ensure proper coordination with partners, local authorities, other clusters, host communities, etc. - Ensure verification of BNFs lists. - Report activities to cluster ActivityInfo. - Share PDM, distribution, and evaluation reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Form a small committee to discuss the SC common pipeline SoP. The facilitator is DRC, while other members are to be assigned by the cluster coordinator. - Build partner's capacity on the SC Pipeline SoP and need assessment. Nominated facilitators are DRC, SDF, Deem, JAAHD, Acted, YDF, AOBWC, YGUSS, QC, and RADF.

E. Beneficiary selection and targeting

Group Recommendation	Participant interaction Q&As	Action point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider in polygamous settings where a man has more than one wife, each wife is registered as a separate HH, and her dependents (The husband is included as a member of one of these units). - Households with more than 7 members should receive assistance for two families (2 HHs). - Adult females above 18 years old in one family should be considered to have specific assistance related to dignity and privacy. - Establish a unified data system for all humanitarian agencies. - Improve the data sharing protection policy. - Harmonize all related tools for the registration and verification processes. - Identify a shelter cluster focal point for coordination at the governorate level. - Add marginalized groups to the selection criteria. - Consider local context, age, gender, and diversity. - Ensure referrals are reported with proper follow-up. - Review prioritization criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider shelter space standards for large families. - Ensure the needs of people with specific needs in Shelter/NFI assistance are considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Form a committee to review the vulnerability criteria, Led by DRC, and participated by NFDHR, AOBWC, TYF, Safe Road, ADO, BFF, and RADF by 15 August. - The NFI TWiG to review the NFI content and include PwSN.

F. Accountability to Affected Population

Group Recommendation	Participant interaction Q&As	Action point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the SC needs assessment tool to be more inclusive for all shelter interventions and obtain info. on preferred CFM. - Ensure that the PwDs are participating during the decision-making stage, such as FGDs for PwDs, and identify PwD's needs and barriers. - Ensure the Community Committees include men, women, PwDs, and marginalized groups. - Apply an environmental lens, especially in the needs assessment stage. - Ensure that the shelter interventions consider BNFs' capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People of concerns from diverse backgrounds should be engaged meaningfully and consulted on assistance or solutions. Further engagement includes ensuring participation and community capacities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shelter cluster to share the shelter gaps regularly. - Organize a training led by YFCA and NFDHR for partners on CFM,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote community ownership and advocate for the hybrid modality for implementing shelter interventions. - Conduct information dissemination campaigns and develop IC materials adopting PwD needs. - SC to improve transparency by providing clear and accessible information about the gaps in the country through any appropriate channel(s). - Develop the technical guidelines for all shelter interventions. - Consolidate partner's complaints and feedback systems, analyze them, and develop SOPs for the CFM. - Ensure that the CFM is accessible for affected populations such as PwDs. - Ensure engagement of PoCs in the selection and participation of beneficiaries from different diversities and backgrounds. - Strengthen communications and transparency. - Enhance collaboration with other clusters and partners to get more synergies to support PoCs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal and informal feedback from PoCs should be systematically collected and inform the program or corrective actions. - Allocate human and financial resources to ensure complaints and feedback are systematically collected. - Strengthen collaboration with partners in feedback, referrals, and response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - safeguarding sensitive issues (TBC). - OCHA to train partners on the AAP (TBC).
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