

Humanitarian Needs Overview

Shelter Sector Cameroon

Explanation of Methodology and Indicators

Background

For the 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview, the Shelter Cluster has decided to submit one indicator which is % of households living in adequate shelter. While being one indicator, this indicator in fact includes a number of proxy indicators which have been collected from numerous sources of data. The Shelter Cluster's analysis of this indicator originated from a severity analysis exercise that was conducted in June 2022 in the Northwest and Southwest regions with Shelter Cluster partners. The severity analysis and the associated methodology are documented through the guidance document [Assessing Shelter Vulnerability and Severity of Household Needs in Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest Regions: A Scorecard and Ranking System](#). The first analysis of severity was based on a household assessment conducted by Plan International Cameroon in the Northwest and Southwest regions in December 2021-January 2022. The full results of this assessment is found online through [the Shelter Cluster dashboard](#). The limitation of this assessment is that the results were only statistically relevant on the regional level for the 3 population groups concerned.

OCHA announced in the month of August 2022 that they would be using the same methodology as the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview: the Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework¹ (JIAF). The JIAF requires data at the Divisional level and given the absence of a household assessment conducted in the Far North region, it was decided to use the OCHA Multisector Needs Assessment data from August 2022 for both displacement crises in the Northwest-Southwest and the Far North. This would require the need to use several indicators to evaluate the qualitative condition of each site in all 3 regions. The methodology for the two regions² was introduced to be a composite of the following indicators which one would be able to collect through the MSNA:

- Settlement/Site Type:
 - Officially recognized location
 - Collective Shelter (over 20 people)
 - Bush or Informal Settlement
- Condition of Settlement/Site
 - Damaged
 - Good Condition
- Tenure Type:
 - Squatting
 - Hosted
 - Renting
- Shelter Type
 - House
 - Apartment
 - Collective Shelter (less than 20 people)
 - Traditional House in Thatch
 - Coca Oven

¹ <https://www.jiaf.info/>

² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiXJXuQy_i8

- Makeshift Shelter
- Other Agricultural Infrastructure
- No Shelter/Open Air
- Structure of Main Housing Types
 - Concrete/Cement
 - Mudbrick
 - Wood
- Condition of the Shelter
 - Good Condition
 - Damaged
 - Unfinished
- Cause of Damage to the Shelter
 - Burnt Intentionally During Conflict
 - Damaged Accidentally during conflict activity
 - Natural Disaster (Flooding, Winds, etc.)
 - Degradation while not present at the shelter
 - Lack of Maintenance

3 Population Groups Impacted by the Crises

In line with the Shelter Cluster strategy in the country updated in 2022, after each location in the Multisector Needs Assessment was ranked, the People in Need for each of the main population groups was calculated. The 3 Population groups are the following:

1. Internally displaced persons
2. Returnees
3. Non-Displaced: Hosts and those left behind in damaged shelters

The data sources for the first two population groups are stemming from the August round of the OCHA Multisector Needs Assessment in the concerned regions: Northwest, Southwest and the hosting regions of Littoral and West and the Far North. The population of Non-Displaced Figures proves to be more complicated in Cameroon given that there have only been 3 censuses that have taken place throughout the country's history. In analysis of the situation, it was noted that the use of population growth ratios could potentially lead to an over-estimation of the number of people. At the same time, the estimation of host population as a correlated estimate of the number of internally displaced people overlooks the impact of the crisis on those most vulnerable such as disabled, elderly, those without financial means, those without documentation who may have no other choice but to stay in shelters that have been burnt intentionally or damaged during the course of conflict. The Shelter Cluster has collaborated with OCHA in order to come up with a realistic caseload of those impacted by the crisis.:

- **Data Source:** Consultation of LandScan global population estimates found at the following link³: <https://landscan.ornl.gov/> Raster imagery is a way to estimate population statistics based on land use and patterns of movement during the day. Given the lack of official census and the events that have stimulated population movement in the impacted regions, this source was considered a useful source of data. Automatically all affected populations would be concerned through the analysis of this imagery as it is not direct data collection.

³ Sims, K., Reith, A., Bright, E., McKee, J., & Rose, A. (2022). LandScan Global 2021 [Data set]. Oak Ridge National Laboratory. <https://doi.org/10.48690/1527702>

- **Locations for houses burnt intentionally and houses damaged during the course of conflict:** Filtering the gps points for all villages in the Northwest, Southwest, and Far North regions where damages to shelters had been reported as damaged intentionally. This for the 3 regions covers 734 villages. It is important to recall that these gps points are locations taken during the course of data collection or found through secondary data sources online⁴ when not provided by IOM during the course of data collection. In the end, 79 villages remained without gps points.
- **Polygon challenges:** As the settlement reference point for humanitarian response, it would have been the preference of the Shelter Cluster to use polygons from residential areas of Open Street Map, but given the challenges in finding some locations and the fact that not all these settlements have been clearly mapped out in Open Street Map, there was a limit to using this data to estimate populations. Similarly, the crisis has stirred in the regions of Northwest and Southwest sudden construction in urban areas that may not be picked up immediately in Open Street map unless volunteers are mobilized to draw the new polygons. It was therefore decided to use a buffer of 1km radius for each gps point where there was a village that reported that houses were burnt intentionally or damaged accidentally during conflict activity.
- At the end of the analysis, this figure yields an overall result of 1,733,346 people:
 - 705,952 in the Far North
 - 582,503 in the Northwest
 - 444,981 in the Southwest
- Given that these figures are configured from random points, **they can't be considered to be the final PIN for the 3 regions.** One has to also remove the proportion of the population that are already counted as internally displaced persons who have left the immediate areas of conflict. For this process, the Shelter Cluster has used data coming from the OCHA Multisector Needs Assessment for the NWSW, an assessment conducted by Dedi in the West region⁵, and the IOM DTM for the Far North.
- After these populations are removed from the count to avoid double-counting, each region has applied a method to calculate the % of households living in damaged shelter and the host population:
 - NWSW: % of people living in damaged shelters for NWSW Plan International Shelter Cluster Assessment, proportionality of host households to IDP households from UNHCR Caritas registration data
 - Far North: mirror proportion of returnee in damaged shelters to estimate % of non-displaced in damaged shelters and hosting proportionality from Shelter Cluster partners.
 - In order to be realistic and that this is a new population group that was not analyzed in the previous years a calculation was done to ensure that there was no duplication of counting the shelters that are damaged where IDPs and hosts may be living together.

Reconciliation between NWSW and Far North

While evaluating internally to each hub the levels of severity, the results may be different, it was necessary to ensure that there were some equivalence between the two hubs to come up with the

⁴ Open Street Map, Wikipedia Francais, Historical documentation and gazeteers, etc.

⁵ <https://sheltercluster.org/west-region/documents/plan-danalyse-evaluation-des-conditions-des-abris-des-personnes-deplacees-et>

final People In Need figures. In order to do this, the following was done to ensure coherence between Northwest and Southwest regions and the Far North.

- 1. Cause of Damages are weighted:** Since its activation in the Northwest and Southwest regions, the Shelter Cluster has been responding to conflict causes of damage. Therefore, in the scoring of each settlement location would be better off if the cause of damage was not directly related with houses that were burnt intentionally or damaged accidentally during the course of conflict. The Far North region being a working group had not assigned any weight to this category, but to be compared with the Northwest and Southwest, a weight was required. Therefore, the Far North data was weighted.
- 2. Settlement type correction:** In the Far North data set, some settlements were mislabelled because they were a combination of two indicators in the Far North MSNA “*type de localité*” (location type) and “*contexte de l’évaluation*” (and context of the assessment). It was therefore necessary to ensure that each line of data was read jointly by these indicators. Therefore, the Far North had labelled some planned camps as being equal to officially recognized settlements. In agreement with the National Shelter Sector coordinator, it was decided to change all informal and IDP sites to the same as bush or informal settlements.
- 3. Concept of destruction and damaged:** There were a few villages in the Far North database that were labelled as being completely destroyed yet at the same time, they reported shelters in those locations being in good condition. Given that enumerators in these surveys are not given any guidance on this, it was agreed to change these villages to damaged given that buildings were still standing. It was re-emphasized to the Far North colleagues that destruction means 100% gone and levelled.
- 4. 2 Locations reporting a quantity of IDPs without shelter:** In the analysis of the Far North, two settlements reported the presence of no shelter. In the first draft of analysis, Far North had excluded these populations and shelter type from their analysis. It was therefore corrected in the final amalgamated analysis.
- 5. Shelter types:** While each hub has defined their shelter types which are contextual to their region, it was necessary to ensure comparison between the two hubs and not limit the analysis only within the hub. This required a ranking of 8 shelter types between Northwest, Southwest, and the Far North.
- 6. Collective Centre in the MSNA:** In the Multisector Needs Assessment database, each location represents one settlement. IOM, the organization responsible for data collection, has made a distinction between Collective Centres who have more than 20 people to be counted as a settlement type, whereas those with less than 20 people are counted as shelter type without information on how many exact people are in that location. To recognize these differences, the Shelter Cluster ranked Collective Shelters over 20 people with the settlement type score and the shelter score to the less than 20 people. While being a minority in both databases, in the weighting of data this does make a difference especially for urban locations. The Far North had confused the shelter type with the settlement type and that was corrected in the analysis.
- 7. Use of NFI indicator in the Far North removed from shelter analysis:** The Far North did not have a household assessment like the NWSW, so they had a need to use data on NFIs from the MSNA. The question concerned including asking key informants whether a household had access to each NFI item always, never, sometimes. This question was removed from the MSNA in the Northwest and Southwest because of its impossibility to measure especially in a key informant format. The Far North had included these indicators in their overall shelter score, but they were removed in order to make a comparison with the Northwest and

Southwest. The standalone indicator of % of people in need of NFI will be attributed from the MSNA in the Far North and for the Shelter Cluster in the NWSW the Plan and Dedi assessments using the Shelter PiN as the root. For NWSW, the assumption is that the need for shelter is greater than that of NFI given the much more limited shelter response in these affected regions.

8. **Makeshift Shelters Weighting by Material Type:** In the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, the Shelter Cluster had decided to evaluate quality of makeshift shelter by material type with the assumption that more durable materials would improve the shelter. The Far North did not have this question in their MSNA form, so they would not be able to evaluate the differences in material types, so in order to make an equivalent evaluation, the weighting was removed from the Northwest and Southwest.
9. **Littoral and West as host Regions for IDPs from NWSW:** While appropriate to compare the conflict-impacted regions of the Northwest, Southwest, and Far North, it was found that it would be difficult to compare the Littoral and West with the Far North region given that there is no direct relationship between the IDPs in these regions and the crisis that has impacted the Far North. It was therefore decided to keep the data from the first analysis of severity when the comparison was only between Northwest and Southwest.⁶

Encouraging a greater level of Human Reading and Expert Judgement in the Far North

Shelter Cluster data in the Far North region in 2022 has been far more limited this year than it has been for the Northwest Southwest crisis. The Shelter Cluster in the Northwest and Southwest had household assessments in the Northwest, Southwest, and West regions and greatly improved the analysis on shelter needs in the Multisector Needs Assessment. In addition to this, the Shelter Cluster has also introduced 7 data collection tools that are designed to both improve shelter programming and the analysis of the overall shelter conditions in the Northwest and Southwest. This has provided the Shelter Cluster with additional sources of data to which it can refer to verify whether such calculated exercises make sense. In addition, the Shelter Cluster held two workshops in the month of September to verify if the data matched the human reading that partners had of the situation in the ground. Feedback was provided that the shelter needs are particularly catastrophic in the divisions of Donga-Mantung, Menchum, and Kupé-Manengumba, as further explained in the HNO document. Additional household data further supports these observations:

<https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/assessing-shelter-vulnerability-and-severity-household-needs>

For the Far North region, it was required to re-examine the data in light of the fact that intercommunal conflict and informal settlements are found to be in greater quantity than those in the more urban regions of the Northwest-Southwest. It was decided to verify the data in the OCHA Multi-Sector Needs Assessment with Shelter Cluster partners as there was apparent mistakes in the data collection that was analysed in the original round of analysis. Therefore, the Shelter Cluster has revised the figures to be in line with recent flooding events and to be more descriptive of the overall shelter situation. It was also decided to delink the Far North Crisis from any comparisons with the Northwest Southwest crisis. This highlights the need for more data and analysis to be available in the Far North for 2023.

⁶ <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/shelter-typologies-and-needs-overview-camerouns-northwest-southwest>

