

Shelter and Non-Food Items

People in need	People targeted	Requirements (USD\$)	Partners	Projects
1.8 M	776.800	33 M	13	17

Objectives

1. Provide life-saving shelter and NFI assistance
 2. Provide sustained access to shelter
 3. Support an enabling protection environment and social cohesion by improving housing and related community/public infrastructure
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In the Far North, North-West, South-West, West and Littoral a total of 1.8 million people is considered in need of adequate shelter and essential household items. In 2023, 13 partners are planning to assist 776,800 people in need in the Far North, North-West, South-West, West, and Littoral regions through Shelter and NFI activities. This sectorial plan overall is estimated to cost US\$ 33 million.

Sector approach principles

Shelter should be adequate, dignified, and safe to all individuals if not then domestic tensions, physical/psychological distress, risk of health diseases and gender violence will arise.

Shelter and household items should be accessible to all individuals in equal/sustained manner if not then deterioration of social cohesion, misperception of social justice, criminality, violence, stigmatization, isolation, discrimination, eviction, poverty will arise. For example, gender-specific differences require special measures to enhance gender equality in HLP through ensuring better access for women.

Shelter action should be inclusive and empowering through engaging all community members in shelter solutions design and when possible, integrate their available resources, skills through market-based interventions if not then humanitarian aid dependence, diminishment of human capital, demotivation, additional psychological distress, eviction will arise.

Overall, the Shelter/NFI Sector encourages partners to provide CVA when do no harm risk analyses and market surveys show relatively low impact risks. The cash modality empowers displaced populations and limits burdening them with carrying heavy items back to their shelters following distributions. Some contexts are more conducive to a monetization of aid support and therefore a systematic market monitoring should take place together with do not harm assessments to establish feasibility and verify the price's fluctuation. The

sustainability of intervention will have to be consulted with local authorities and coordinated with other similar social protection systems already in place.

Evidence-based activities are encouraged to inform compelling programming for the Shelter/NFI Sector to capitalize on assessments conducted by partners during the previous years. The Shelter/NFI needs assessment funded by the Sector lead agency UNHCR¹ in the North-West, South-West, and West regions, together with the UNHCR sites profiling exercise launched in the Far North region, set a baseline to quantify damages caused by displacement and impacts of shelter interventions. The progress towards the objectives of the 2023 sectorial plan will be verified through partners' monthly reports (5W) and monitoring activities, including post distribution monitoring.

Shelter action should be accountable and encourage the set-up of appropriate mechanisms, through which affected populations can measure the adequacy of interventions, address concerns, complaints and apply corrective action. Partners have put in place complaints and feedback mechanisms and will carry out post-distribution monitoring² (PDM) and/or post-construction monitoring to assess the quality of the response, adapt future activities to changed needs of affected populations, and improve the effectiveness of the response. The Sector will continue encouraging partners in sharing lessons learned, trends from the post distribution monitoring and complaints from the feedback mechanisms by fully standardizing systems and tools and thus enhance the members' complementarity of their Shelter and NFI interventions.

A gender-sensitive, participatory approach, involving women, girls, men, and boys, at all stages of the project cycle will help ensure that an adequate and efficient response is provided. In addition to evaluating shelter vulnerabilities for beneficiary selection, priority will be given to older people, separated or unaccompanied children, female-headed households, persons living with disabilities, households living with a person with disabilities, households with more than three children under five, pregnant/ breastfeeding women and people with chronic illnesses.

Different Shelter/NFI solutions are proposed to assist the most vulnerable groups, according to the level of shelter adequacy, security, stabilization, land tenure/ property arrangements, social cohesion, access to ID documentation, and vision of local authorities. Where the security context is safe and the risk of further displacement or eviction is low, partners are encouraged to support durable solutions such as the integration with the host community or in the case of voluntary returns, repairs of houses damaged by the crisis.

The Shelter Sector is also encouraging the mainstreaming of environmental considerations. During 2023, green standards will be introduced to reduce the impact of shelter humanitarian assistance on the environment and provide partners with a valid alternative. For this purpose, a green indicator is proposed for each activity of the sector response plan.

In line with the humanitarian global commitment on localization, the Shelter Sector will progressively move away from sub-contracting relationships in humanitarian response and increase emphasis on strategic, more equal partnerships which involve collaboration around shared goals and responsibilities.

¹Shelter/NFI needs assessment, funded by UNHCR, implemented by Plan International and DEDI:

<https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/pages/shelter-cluster-household-assessment-northwest-and-southwest-regions>

² <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/international-rescue-committee-post-distribution-monitoring-voucher>

Overall, durable solutions will be promoted through a transfer of capacity to local authorities and civil society and resilience strengthening in the following domains: camp management and camp coordination; disaster risk reduction; house land and property, and urban planning. These activities would lay down the basis for sustainable long-term solutions and consolidating a safer environment, security around land and properties tenure, and equitable and inclusive governance. Effective synergies with development actors and local stakeholders will be enhanced through the Nexus platform.

The Response Plan in 2023

In 2022, Shelter Sector partners reflected in its strategies³ that the shelter response needed to be upgraded and diversified to better meet the scale of needs generated across the different areas of crisis (North-West, South-West, Far North regions).

While for the last few years, emergency shelter kits and NFI kits were the bulk of the response, the Shelter Sector is now advocating for shelter repairs/rehabilitation and to support the population in purchasing construction materials and tools.

The Shelter Sector continues to envision emergency shelter kits⁴ for situations where the population may be recently displaced to the bush/informal settlements or as partitions in collective centers or in hosting situations to increase privacy or when a shelter is newly damaged.

On the other hand, transitional/emergency shelter interventions are recommended in situations of protracted displacement when land is not secured or in congested makeshift shelters.

Beyond the in IDPs emergency or protracted crisis, for returnees who find their house damaged or destroyed or for vulnerable populations who are left behind in damaged shelters, the Shelter Sector is advocating to provide more sustainable materials and tools for repair, rehabilitation, or reconstruction. Common shelter types throughout the areas of crisis rely on natural resources such as mud (mudbrick shelters are the most common shelter type), wood, bamboo, thatch and provide more adequate shelter.

Shelter repairs and support with hiring labor would be a better way to address the shelter needs, particularly for persons with disabilities left behind in damaged shelters. Through such activities, partners will work with local shelter committees to build local capacity and support them in training on safer building practices. By taking a community-based approach, sector partners are also seeking to build capacity at the local level and sustain the interventions.

The Shelter Sector is also encouraging the production of construction components and/or the engagement of the population in livelihood projects such as cash for work, supporting construction workers impacted by the crisis with starting a business, trainings on safer building practices. Hiring labor for repair and construction can

³ Shelter/NFI Cluster Strategy, NW-SW regions: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/2022-northwest-and-southwest-cameroon-shelter-cluster-strategy>

Shelter/NFI Sector Strategy, National: <https://sheltercluster.org/cameroon/documents/cmrshelter-nfi-sector-strategyjune-2022national>

⁴ Shelter/NFI Sector Activity Matrix, National: <https://sheltercluster.org/cameroon/documents/shelternfi-sector-activity-matrix-2022>

Shelter/NFI Sector Activity Matrix, NW-SW regions: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/shelter-kit-guidelines-and-review-2022>

also be considered a market-based intervention to rebuild the construction sector which has been particularly hard hit in more remote areas of the two crises.

Affordability of shelter has also been reported as a critical need amongst the population, therefore the Shelter Sector is advocating for rental assistance. Lessons learned from 2022 reveal that rental assistance can support households in moving to safer and more habitable shelter and in providing secure enough tenure for a few months.⁵ Such programs require monitoring and can be coupled with repair support to ensure that the shelter is meeting minimum standards.⁶ Rental interventions can also be seen as a part of GBV risk mitigation measure. The Shelter Sector jointly with the Protection Sector proactively coordinates when needed, the move of persons at risk from overcrowded shelter to safer and more dignified solutions.

Issues with overcrowding are widely reflected in Shelter Sector Assessments and Post Distribution Monitoring, and it is important that shelter interventions mitigate the risk of GBV by seeking to create space and privacy for those living in hosted or rental type scenarios.

In 2022, the Shelter Sector revised its standard NFI kit to provide more dignified living conditions and ad hoc content according to needs by area of crisis.⁷ It is also important to consider larger household sizes and households where there are many hosts and IDP families who may need to receive more than one kit to ensure non-sharing of mosquito nets, mattresses, and sleeping spaces.

In terms of modality of implementations, cash is the preferred modality of most beneficiaries.⁸ During 2022 the Shelter Sector through its lead agency and partners supported monetization feasibility studies,⁹ developed policy documents¹⁰ including the Sector Minimum Expenditure Basket and transfer value recommendations for Multi-Purpose Cash assistance.¹¹ However when it comes to shelter repairs and use of shelter kits, Shelter Sector partners report that beneficiaries would prefer a combination of cash and in-kind support.¹² This is also in line with Global Shelter Cluster guidelines to ensure technical monitoring of any repair or cash for repair

⁵ <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/nrc-lessons-learned-document>

⁶ Shelter/NFI Sector Activity Matrix, National: <https://sheltercluster.org/cameroon/documents/shelternfi-sector-activity-matrix-2022>

Shelter/NFI Sector Activity Matrix, NW-SW regions: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/shelter-kit-guidelines-and-review-2022>

⁷ Shelter/NFI Sector Activity Matrix, National: <https://sheltercluster.org/cameroon/documents/shelternfi-sector-activity-matrix-2022>

Shelter/NFI Sector Activity Matrix, NW-SW regions: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/shelter-kit-guidelines-and-review-2022>

⁸ Cash Feasibility Assessment, UNHCR, October 2022

Shelter and NFI Cluster, NW-SW regions, Needs overview, October 2022: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/nsw-cameroon-october-snapshot-needs>

⁹ Cash Feasibility Assessment, UNHCR, October 2022.

¹⁰ <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/shelter-cluster-guidance-transfer-value-and-monetization-shelter>

¹¹ Shelter/NFI Sector Minimum Expenditure Basket, 2022, <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/northwest-southwest-shelter-cluster-position-paper-minimum>

¹² Cash Feasibility Assessment, UNHCR, October 2022

Shelter and NFI Cluster, NW-SW regions, November Factsheet: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/factsheets/2022-11>

<https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/shelter-cluster-guidance-transfer-value-and-monetization-shelter>

interventions. Cash and Voucher activities for NFI have shown to yield success.¹³ A challenge, however, has been the rising prices of the items in the kits, especially during the months from March to August where global markets were impacted by the crisis in Ukraine.¹⁴

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¹³ <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/international-rescue-committee-post-distribution-monitoring-voucher>

¹⁴ In August the Shelter Cluster in the NW-SW regions revised the price of NFI Kit: <https://sheltercluster.org/north-west-south-west/documents/minimum-nfi-kit-reviewed-2022>