

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) SHELTER CLUSTER IN YEMEN

I. BACKGROUND

After almost five years of conflict, and despite all efforts to halt displacement, hunger and disease, the situation in Yemen remains catastrophic and continues to be the worst man-made humanitarian crisis in the world which has torn the nation apart and set back the standard of living by decades. The Shelter/NFI situation deteriorated as a result of the intensified conflict and shift of frontlines, coupled with insecurity and recurrent natural disasters in addition to the alarming deterioration of the Yemeni economy including depreciation of the local currency, unprecedented shortage and increase in the price of fuel and high inflation rates resulting in increased prices of basic commodities in local markets including household items and shelter materials.

The Shelter/NFI Sector has been in existence since 2009, it was merged with the CCCM Sector in mid-February 2010 after which the Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster was activated on 5th March 2010 due to the deteriorating conflict situation. The No-IDP camp policy was adopted in 2015 by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), meaning that IDPs living in camps and camp like settings were not formally recognized and tents distributions has to be in case by case basis which was derived by previous displacements in Yemen where the conflict was going to be fast, and creating camps triggered a protracted situation. Since then, the situation has been reversed and the Humanitarian community recognised that the non-recognition of an IDP Hosting Site (Collective Centres and Spontaneous Settlements) did not equate to non-assistance of its residents. This led to an enhanced and more visible role for the Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster responsible for establishing, managing and leading the response in IDP Hosting Sites. As a result, the Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster has had to restructure and re-strategize to meet this challenge also it had issued Alternative to Camps Guidelines which included ladder of options. In July 2019, the CCCM Cluster was activated as a stand-alone coordination structure.

The work of the Shelter Cluster (SC) members is guided by the principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence and the humanitarian principle of do not harm. The Shelter Cluster priorities for 2019-2020 are articulated in its Strategic Operational Framework which could be found [here](#).

II. OBJECTIVES

The key objective of the Shelter Cluster is to enhance the coordination and effectiveness of provision of Shelter and NFI response. Specifically, the Shelter Cluster will be responsible to facilitate and guide the following actions:

- **Planning and Strategy development:** The Shelter Cluster will provide guidance through the Cluster Strategy to enhance accountability and effectiveness of the interventions. Drawing from lessons learned and evidence-based actions, the Cluster response plan will be updated/revised through a consultative approach, according to the changing context in the country and will feed into the wider response strategies. A strong emphasis will be put on developing an exit-strategy (or transition strategy) to step away from care and maintenance and push towards more sustainable and durable shelter solutions. The following tasks will ensure effective and guided action:
 - ✓ Promote the use of existing standards, policies and guidelines (e.g., SPHERE, Good Enough Guide).
 - ✓ Standardize tools/guidance notes for better planning and implementation of Cluster responses.
 - ✓ Include cross cutting issues like Housing-Land-Property (HLP), Protection mainstreaming, integrated approaches, site planning and Environment.
 - ✓ Ensure both the cultural appropriateness and structural integrity of cluster responses.
 - ✓ Reinforce the use of robust evidence about needs, capacities, gaps, risks, etc. to inform planning and strategy development.
- **Coordinating and supporting service delivery:** The Shelter Cluster will establish and maintain effective coordination mechanisms through a platform of information sharing, both at national and Hub level, in close collaboration with government counterparts. The Lead agency and the wider cluster membership will share the tasks and responsibilities at field level and will work through agreed upon ToRs to ensure a standardized methodology of data capturing, data sharing and analysis. The coordination activities will strive to reduce duplication, to address gaps and to ensure that service delivery is driven by the agreed upon strategic priorities:

- ✓ Coordinate joint needs assessments and analysis.
 - ✓ Act as focal point for inquiries on emergency response plans and operations
 - ✓ Secure commitment of partners to respond to identified and prioritized needs and to fill gaps for emergency response, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary.
 - ✓ Encourage participants to work collectively, ensuring the complementarities of the various stakeholders' actions.
 - ✓ Include all humanitarian partners as well as national and local authorities who are able and willing to contribute expertise, knowledge and know-how.
 - ✓ Establish effective links with the Sub National Clusters and other relevant thematic working groups.
 - ✓ Establish Technical Working Groups (long or short-term) for specific issues.
- **Informing strategic decision-making:** The Shelter Cluster will represent the interests of its members in discussions with the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) at inter-cluster meetings, and with other stakeholders on the prioritization of cluster issues for humanitarian action and resource mobilization. The Shelter Cluster will provide clear concept-notes and inputs to policy documents to guide decision-making bodies on shelter-related concerns.
 - **Advocacy and resource mobilization:** The Shelter Cluster will identify advocacy concerns, including resources requirements, and contribute to broader advocacy initiatives. The Cluster will furthermore advocate for donors to fund participants to carry out priority cluster activities, while at the same time encouraging participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels. The key advocacy messages will include the following:
 - ✓ Promote utilizing of participatory and community-based approaches in the identification of needs, analysis, planning, monitoring and response.
 - ✓ Promote the use of local materials and construction techniques that are locally accepted and understood.
 - ✓ Increase the understanding of market systems and promote the use of voucher and cash-based systems with the development of appropriate SOPs to guide partners' interventions.
 - ✓ The Shelter Cluster will review all projects technically for the Yemen Humanitarian Pool Fund and other Emergency Fund allocations through the Shelter Cluster SAG or other members.
 - **Monitoring and reporting:** The Shelter Cluster will ensure that adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to review the impact of the Shelter Cluster member's activities and the progress against implementation plans. The Shelter Cluster will promote joint monitoring and the use of on-line platforms for the benefit of the wider community to track impact, to improve information sharing and to increase learning from successful programs. The Shelter Cluster Coordination Team (SCT) will follow up with partners to provide regular reporting on their responses through the Cluster online platform.
 - **Capacity building and emergency preparedness:** The Shelter Cluster will provide leadership in emergency and crisis preparedness by putting in place contingency plans in areas/situations where there is a high risk of recurring disasters/conflicts and where sufficient capacity exists within the Shelter Cluster including risk assessments/analysis and risk mapping. The Shelter Cluster will build the capacity of members, partner organizations and authorities through supporting trainings in the standardized tools, site planning, Protection and Gender mainstreaming, AAP commitments, Cash Based Programming, Monitoring and Evaluation, HLP and other crosscutting issues and through the dissemination of guidance notes, online learning programs, and organizing workshops and training programs by local or global experts.

III. SCOPE

The Shelter Cluster ensures the implementation of the six core functions as defined by the IASC¹ including accountability towards affected populations. The Shelter Cluster works to strengthen the country-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to a humanitarian emergency through improved coordination at national and Sub-National levels.

¹ IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level (2012)

The Shelter Cluster acknowledges that for the affected population the recovery process starts immediately, households initiating the process of re-building their lives as soon as they can. Consequently, the Shelter Cluster’s scope includes all aspects related to achieving the right to adequate housing with a humanitarian focus:

- Settlement planning
- Covered living space
- Construction
- Individual, general household & shelter support items²

The Shelter Cluster acknowledges the variety of methods that shelter actors use to provide support in these areas, some of which involve construction. Shelter options vary according to the context, the phase of the response (Emergency, Transitional, and Permanent), protection aspects, climate, and other issues. They are defined in collaboration with local governments and in line with local regulations. Furthermore, the Shelter Cluster acknowledges the invaluable contributions made by national-level stakeholders to response and recovery efforts and declare their commitment to actively include those stakeholders in the work of the Cluster at all levels.

Whilst the Shelter Cluster’s responsibilities range from supporting emergency, transitional and longer-term shelter. The concept of “provider of last resort”³ will only apply to meeting emergency needs and not to the provision of longer term shelter or housing or longer term settlement planning.

The Shelter Cluster acknowledges the need to ensure a comprehensive and integrated response and the essential role of shelter to ensure protection and early recovery. Thus, the Shelter Cluster works closely with the other clusters to ensure inter-cluster coordination, in particular with Protection, CCCM, WASH, Education, Food Security and Agriculture and other Clusters having early recovery activities also strengthen collaboration with the Cash and Voucher Working Group in Cash Based Programming. In the same perspective, contingency planning, preparedness and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) are integral parts of the cluster scope to mitigate future disasters.

To comply with its role and responsibilities the Shelter Cluster not only organizes coordination meetings but also develops strategies, plans, and takes decisions that are captured and recorded in different documents:

- Strategic framework
- Response plan
- Technical guidelines
- Assessments and reviews
- 5W matrix and gap analyses
- Factsheets, website updates

Detailed key deliverables of the Shelter Cluster are available in Annex I.

IV. LEADERSHIP AND STRUCTURE OF THE SHELTER CLUSTER

Under the leadership of the UNHCR, the Shelter Cluster is managed by the Shelter Cluster Coordinator and supported by the Deputy Shelter Cluster Coordinator.

National Shelter Cluster Team (SCT): Shelter Cluster Coordinator, Deputy Shelter Cluster Coordinator, Information Manager, Technical Advisor, Cash Expert and Site Planner. According to magnitude of crisis or context other experts can join the team (assessment, recovery, etc.).

National and Sub-National Cluster (SNC): The National Shelter Cluster is based in Sana’a and has Sub-Nationals in Aden, Al Hudaydah, Sa’adah, Sana’a and Ibb with regular meetings. Sub-National Clusters are based in official hubs that are endorsed by the HCT and integrating active stakeholders. The humanitarian community is in process of establishing sub-hubs which will be treated by the Shelter Cluster as an area coordination body reporting to the relevant Sub-Nationals in their area of responsibility. Currently Shelter Cluster has an area coordination in the southern part of Taizz Governorate and planning to establish another area coordination in Marib Governorate. SNC in consultation with the National SCT, can determine which working groups or task forces that it wishes to establish. Both the lead agency and Shelter Cluster members can take on board such a role on a volunteering basis with prior agreement of the Shelter Cluster Coordinator. If different organizations are applying for the same geographic area, the organization with the strongest capacity in the field will be appointed. The selection of Sub-National Cluster Coordinators can be regularly reviewed with the objective of periodic rotation when possible.

² As defined in The Sphere Project, chapter: Minimum standards in shelter, settlement and non-food items (<http://www.spherehandbook.org/>)

³ As per the agreed IASC definition of the Provider of Last Resort

Cluster Partners: Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) active in Shelter/NFIs (national and international), representatives of dedicated governmental bodies and local authorities, United Nations (UN), Donors, beneficiary community representatives.

Strategic Advisory Group (SAG): Comprises of Cluster Coordinator, Deputy Cluster Coordinator and 9 members representing UN, NNGOs and INGOs Partners of Shelter Cluster. SAG exists to ensure effective provision of shelter and NFIs support to affected populations in need. The SAG guides the larger Shelter Cluster membership with policy decisions, strategic direction, coordination mechanisms and other technical topics. The SAG ensures provision of guidance and technical comments during Humanitarian Planning Cycle (HPC) process and Yemen Humanitarian Pooled Fund (YHPF) allocations.

Technical Working Groups (TWiG): Selected members of the Cluster appointed to work on specific technical issues and produce guidelines and recommendations.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Shelter Cluster member will undertake its work in line with relevant international standards and the standards that will be agreed upon by the Shelter Cluster. The Cluster is accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator for facilitating a process at the cluster level aimed at ensuring the following:

- **Inclusion of key Humanitarian Partners:** Ensure inclusion of key humanitarian partners for the Shelter Cluster, respecting their respective mandates and program priorities.
- **Establishment and maintenance of appropriate humanitarian coordination mechanisms:**
 - ✓ Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian Partners including national and international NGOs, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, UN Agencies, and other international organizations, through the establishment/maintenance of appropriate cluster coordination mechanisms, including working groups at the national and, if necessary, Sub National Shelter Cluster level;
 - ✓ Secure commitments from humanitarian partners in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the Shelter Cluster, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary;
 - ✓ Ensure the complementarity of different humanitarian actors' actions;
 - ✓ Promote emergency response actions while at the same time considering the need for early recovery planning as well as prevention and risk reduction concerns;
 - ✓ Ensure effective linkages with other Clusters like Protection, WASH, CCCM;
 - ✓ Ensure that Cluster coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners;
 - ✓ Represent the interests of the Shelter Cluster in discussions with the Humanitarian Coordinator and other stakeholders on prioritization, resource mobilization and advocacy.
- **Coordination with national/local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors:**
 - ✓ Ensure that humanitarian responses build on local capacities;
 - ✓ Ensure appropriate links with national and local authorities, State institutions, local civil society and other relevant actors and ensure appropriate coordination and information exchange;
 - ✓ Identify and engage with non-traditional donors and the private sector to build relationships and collaborate for the benefit of the displaced populations.
- **Participatory and community-based approaches:** Ensure utilization of participatory and community-based approaches in Shelter Cluster needs assessments, analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring.
- **Attention to priority cross-cutting issues:** Ensure integration of agreed priority cross-cutting issues in cluster needs assessments, analysis, planning, monitoring and response (e.g., age, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights);
 - ✓ Contribute to the development of appropriate strategies to address these issues;
 - ✓ Ensure gender sensitive programming and promote gender equality;
 - ✓ Ensure that the needs, contributions and capacities of women and girls as well as men and boys are addressed;

- ✓ Ensure that the Shelter Cluster agrees on and develops a work plan for the systematic integration of Protection, AAP commitments and Gender in its work.
- **Needs assessment and analysis:** Ensure effective and coherent Shelter Cluster needs assessment and analysis, involving all relevant Partners. Shelter assessments provide the humanitarian community with an understanding of the needs, gaps and priorities related to the Shelter Cluster immediately after a rapid onset emergency or during a protracted emergency. A shelter assessment also establishes a baseline against which shelter humanitarian actors can measure progress and impact. Shelter Cluster assessments are conducted by inter-agency teams comprising staff seconded by members of the cluster. They vary in duration and methodology according to the context of implementation. Shelter Cluster assessments provide information to enable better planning, coordination and targeting for a shelter sector response immediately after and during an emergency.
- **Emergency preparedness:** Ensure adequate contingency planning and preparedness for new emergencies.
- **Planning and strategy development:** Ensure predictable action within the Shelter Cluster for the following:
 - ✓ Identification of gaps;
 - ✓ Developing/updating agreed response strategies and action plans for the Shelter Cluster and ensuring that these are adequately reflected in overall country strategies, such as the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP);
 - ✓ Drawing lessons learned from past activities and revising strategies accordingly;
 - ✓ Developing an exit, or transition strategy for the Shelter Cluster.
- **Application of standards:**
 - ✓ Ensure that Shelter Cluster participants are aware of relevant policy guidelines, technical standards and relevant commitments that the Government has undertaken under international human rights law;
 - ✓ Ensure that responses are in line with existing policy guidance, technical standards, and relevant Government human rights legal obligations such as the Yemen National IDPs Policy.
- **Monitoring and reporting:**
 - ✓ Ensure adequate monitoring mechanisms are in place to review the impact of the Shelter Cluster working groups and progress against implementation plans;
 - ✓ Ensure adequate reporting and effective information sharing, with due regard for age and gender disaggregation also aggregation by population group, e.g. IDPs, Returnees, Host Community, etc.
- **Advocacy and resource mobilization:**
 - ✓ Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and contribute key messages to broader advocacy initiatives of the HC and other actors;
 - ✓ Advocate for donors to fund humanitarian actors to carry out priority activities for the Shelter Cluster, while at the same time encouraging cluster participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels.
- **Training and capacity building:**
 - ✓ Promote/support training of staff and capacity building of humanitarian Partners;
 - ✓ Support efforts to strengthen the capacity of the national authorities and civil society;
 - ✓ Support Partners in designing and implementing capacity building initiatives for beneficiaries to impart the skills they need to manage their lives.
- **Provision of assistance or services as a last resort:** As agreed by the IASC Principals, Cluster leads are responsible for acting as the first port of call and provider of last resort (subject to access, security and availability of funding) to meet agreed priority needs and will be supported by the HC and the ERC in their resource mobilization efforts in this regard.

VI. PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP

The Shelter Cluster is open to all interested UN Agencies, National and International NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies that are active in Shelter/NFI activities and expressing willingness and demonstrating a commitment to carry out their accepted responsibilities within the cluster. Membership is as inclusive as possible, on a voluntary and self-nominated basis. Representatives of local and national authorities and other stakeholders, such as donors can participate in Shelter Cluster meetings. In general, the Cluster membership depends on the level of engagement.

Active membership in the cluster requires:

- 1) Partner has a dedicated and functional Office in the country through which they are engaged in implementing Shelter and/or NFI programmes.
- 2) Partner has been implementing Shelter and/or NFI programmes either directly or as an Implementing Partner of another organization for a defined period during the year.
- 3) Regular participation at the National and the Sub-National levels or working group meetings. Partners shall ensure their participation in the Sub-National coordination in the locations in which they are implementing Shelter and/or NFI programmes.
- 4) Mandatory completion of the Cluster online systems/5Ws (Who is doing What, Where, When and to Whom) requested by the SCT. The regularity of reporting is based on the activities implemented by the Partner and as defined by the Shelter Cluster.
- 5) Share responsibility for Shelter Cluster activities, including assessing needs, developing plans, policies, evaluations and guidelines.
- 6) Partner should have a Shelter Focal point in country not necessarily dedicated but S/he who is able to provide strategic and technical input in Shelter Cluster discussions.
- 7) Respect and adhere to agreed principles, policies, priorities, and standards.

When the situation and/or technology allows, the National SCT will participate in the Sub-National Cluster meetings and the Sub-National Cluster focal points will participate in the National Shelter Cluster or TWiG meetings at least twice a year either remotely or in person.

The Shelter Cluster members who participate in the development of the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan (YHRP) are expected to be proactive Partners in assessing needs, developing strategies and plans for the sector, and implementing agreed priority activities. Provisions should also be made in Cluster for those humanitarian actors who may wish to participate as observers, government authority mainly for information-sharing purposes.

VII. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Shelter Cluster at the National level agreed to meeting on a monthly basis (every second Sunday). The Shelter Cluster Coordinator or his deputy will chair the meetings and call for ad-hoc meetings when necessary. The meetings will be held in English and Arabic languages simultaneously. At the National level, the SC SAG will meet on quarterly basis and when needed on ad-hoc basis. At the Sub-National level, the SC will meet on monthly basis.

VIII. AGENDA AND ACTION POINTS

SCT will arrange the monthly Shelter Cluster meetings at the National level. A draft agenda will be circulated to cluster members at least 5 working days before the meeting. Active cluster members would be requested to comment on the meeting agenda. Draft minutes containing agreements and action points will be circulated within a week after the meeting. Final Minutes from the Shelter Cluster meeting (in English and Arabic) will be shared with the Cluster Membership through the Shelter Cluster website.

Action points from Shelter Sub-National Shelter Clusters or TWiGs that require action by the National Cluster must be sent to the SCT, which in turn, will table the action point for discussion at the next National Shelter Cluster/TWiG meetings. The National Shelter Cluster Coordinator will communicate feedback and decisions reached by the Cluster. Meetings by the Cluster and TWiGs at the National level will be arranged by the Cluster-Lead and will follow the process outlined above.

IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference will be periodically reviewed, particularly if there is a change in the situation on the ground or in the structure or activities of the Shelter Cluster.

Annex I: Key deliverables of the Shelter Cluster

Core Function	Service	Scope	Deliverables
1. <i>Supporting service delivery</i>	Coordination management	Coordination mechanism (Hubs, SAG, TWiG, YHF). Inter-cluster, HCT, OCHA, Government.	Minutes, ToR Cluster org chart
	Information management	Data collection, processing and analysis. Development of IM products that supports planning and decision making in the Cluster. Dissemination of information. Liaison with OCHA and other clusters.	5W matrixes Website update Factsheets Other IM databases and products
	Integration	Participation of national actors. Interaction with the private sector.	
2. <i>Informing HC/HCT strategic decision-making</i>	Coordinated assessments	Common/joint assessment. Needs, capacities, gaps, progress, impact Review of response plans.	Assessment reports IST / MCLA reports Gap analyses
3. <i>Planning and strategy development</i>	Strategic planning	Shelter needs priorities and response informed by evidence-based. Overall strategic objectives (HCT, Government) Cross-cutting issues, Recovery, hand-over, deactivation and exit	Strategic Framework Decision log
	Technical coordination	Technical standards, guidance and liaison with other clusters	Technical Guidelines
	Resource mobilization	Funding requirement for the sector response plan. Criteria and for fund allocation. Submissions to pooled funds (YHPF, CERF, etc.).	Cluster sections of appeals tables, maps, graphs
4. <i>Advocacy</i>	Coordinated communication and advocacy	Sector key messages and advocacy priorities. Communication/advocacy campaigns, liaison with stakeholders Beneficiary & communities communications.	Stakeholders mapping Advocacy worksheet Advocacy messages
	Legal and regulatory issues.	National policies, guidelines and standards. Legal & regulatory issues related to HLP, building codes, etc.	
5. <i>Monitoring and reporting</i>	Performance monitoring	Supervision, monitoring and evaluation. Corrective actions to address changes.	Cluster reviews (lessons learned, impact)
6. <i>Contingency planning / preparedness</i>	Contingency planning	Contingency plans (national, sector). Risk mapping and analysis, DRR	Cluster section of Contingency plan
	Exit-strategy	Remote support, transition, hand-over, exit.	
7. <i>Accountability to affected population</i>	Community liaison	Feedback from and to the affected population. Complaint and grievance committees. Participation of communities in the response.	Information leaflets (in Arabic language)