



*Photo Courtesy: UNHCR Yemen

This document outlines a summary of ongoing deliberations within the Shelter Implementing Partners in Yemen to support conflict-affected families, preserve life, health, safety and well-being, and to live in dignity. It has been produced with significant input from Shelter Technical Working Group.

Overview

Shelter is a basic human need and a critical determinant for survival and coping in most crises. It is enshrined in human rights law under the right to adequate housing, which includes sufficient space and protection as well as appropriate siting of settlements and availability of services. In most cases, people consider shelter their most important asset or their highest living cost, meaning that shelter is also essential in promoting economic well-being and securing livelihoods. It is also important to note that in many contexts, the majority of shelter solutions are undertaken by affected households themselves.

Shelter and the larger concept of settlement are inextricably linked and should be addressed as a whole rather than separately. Safe and secure settlements are needed to provide crisis-affected communities with protected and healthy living spaces and environments, while ensuring sufficient privacy and dignity to the groups, families, and individuals within them.

Shelter design and construction in Yemen differ depending on the geographical location of residences and availability or provision of construction materials; as a result, there are many types of construction. Common construction materials include stonework, mud, thatch, or composite construction from concrete and stones. In the mountainous areas construction materials mainly consist of stones because these materials are cheaper than others, while in the leveled areas, the construction materials consist of mud or cement blocks with wooden roofs or concrete roofs. Additionally, the climate has an effect on these types, for example, in the wet and warm areas like Haradh and Malaheet, most people prefer living in houses made of thatch rather than other types because this type provides more temperate climate.

The central importance of shelter and settlements in protection, health and livelihoods, as well as the growing and complex needs, can mean that humanitarian responses are often too limited. To ensure the greatest impact of these funds and to help meet the growing needs, the following guidelines set out best practice, seek to advance consolidated approaches across the sector. In a context of increasing needs, and very limited funding opportunities for follow-up, promoting effective practice is crucial.

In this guideline we shall emphasize the Transitional Shelters. T-shelters are required to bridge the gaps between the emergency and durable housing (Permanent shelters) and can consist of upgrading or construction. Assessments will be undertaken to determine the appropriate assistance needed.

YEMEN SHELTER TYPOLOGIES

The Shelter Technical Working group (TWiG) collected the different Shelter typologies implemented by the Shelter partners in Yemen. The information collected include the background, shelter description, bill of quantities, technical drawings, photos, challenges and lessons learnt. The aim of this exercise was to review and produce final draft for shelter options for the whole country putting into consideration the different contexts implemented. This production is harmonized to allow for quick reference, comparative analysis and contextual assessment.

By presenting a diverse range of shelter options and development practice in a one document, shelter practitioners and other stakeholders may now easily access information on shelter types to inform their work. Future revision will allow for further inclusion of new designs and these options should be considered as a 'live' resource. The Yemen Shelter typologies can be found [here](#).

TRANSITIONAL SHELTERS

Transitional shelter is an incremental process which supports the shelter of families affected by conflicts and disasters, as they seek to maintain alternative options for their recovery. Its life span ranges from 1 to 3 years with minor renovations.

Through its five characteristics, transitional shelter can be:

a) UPGRADABLE

While being inhabited, transitional shelter may be upgraded over time. Components may be replaced or improved to achieve a more durable solution.

b) REUSABLE

Transitional shelter may be reused for different purposes once a durable solution is achieved. This may include reuse as a barn, workshop or an external kitchen. Transitional shelter is inhabited while parallel reconstruction activities are taking place. Once reconstruction is complete, the transitional shelter may be used for an alternative function, for example as an external kitchen, barn or shop. It can also be dismantled and use it as a fencing for the plot. The percentage of the reuse depends on the type of T-Shelters and the age, the percentage varies from 60% to 80% depends on the intended use of the material as well.

c) RELOCATABLE

Relocation distinguishes transitional shelter from other shelter approaches. A transitional shelter may be relocated to cope with insecure land tenure situations.

d) RESALEABLE

Components of a transitional shelter may be dismantled and resold. These resources can contribute to permanent reconstruction.

e) RECYCLABLE

Transitional shelter is inhabited while parallel reconstruction activities are taking place. The transitional shelter may be partly dismantled to contribute to the permanent house.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of transitional shelter is to cover the shelter need of the affected population for a period of 1-3 years and give more cost effective and durable solution once the displacement takes longer than expected and the repeated distribution of emergency shelter become more expensive and laborious.

TYPES OF TRANSITIONAL SHELTERS

The main T Shelters that are in practice are as per the below:

- Earth or so called Mud Shelter
- Thatch House made of *Khazaf*
- Wooden T-Shelters

The different T Shelter typologies including other typologies in Yemen can be found [here](#).

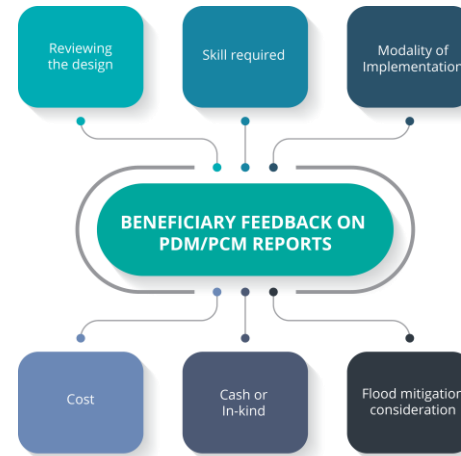
Transitional Shelters are an intermediate solution for HH in need until durable-long term housing solution is achieved. It also implies the gradual transition from emergency shelter assistance to more suitable shelter solution.

In Yemen context, access to land and the chronic nature of the armed conflict are real obstacles to the implementation of durable housing solution. Besides, the Cluster Partners should be able to identify and/or evaluate main possibilities to assist people in need of transitional shelter support: by upgrading their current dwelling, by the construction of transitional shelters.

The process starts with the first support offered to families and extends over the period of securing land rights and reconstruction, which may take several years. For tenants, the process is appropriate only when land rights and safe shelter close to their livelihoods cannot be achieved immediately. For owners, the process should be considered only when repairs or reconstruction cannot start immediately. The process should only be considered as part of the ongoing development and maintenance of a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive inter-sector strategy for shelter, settlement and reconstruction.

STRATEGY CRITERIA FOR REVIEWING ESK

- 1) Settlement Planning, 2) Security and Safety 3) Implementation Modality
- 4) Land Tenure. 5) Flood Mitigation Measure
- 6) Cash or In-kind. 7) Beneficiary Feedback



SUMMARY OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS

SETTLEMENT AND SHELTER

Flood Mitigation measure- Providing empty Sandbags to the beneficiaries, the sandbags will be placed around the shelter for Preventing flash flooding. Guideline on the Sandbags solutions please see the [annex](#).

Settlement Planning - Consideration should be given when settlements do need to be built or upgraded, re-planning can vastly improve the health, security, privacy and dignity of those people living within them. Site planning also contributes the protection of women and girls, men and boys, is deeply rooted in universal human rights, and is expressed as such in key resources for humanitarian response, Minimum sphere standard should be considered while developing the master site plan. Site planning guideline can be found [herein](#).

Consideration of Gender Based Violence (GBV): The GBV can affect women, girls, men and boys, although the overwhelming majority of survivors worldwide are women and girls. As well as having an impact upon safety, while much GBV takes place within the home or, – in a settlement or site context – within the shelter or shelter plot, there are also significant risks for attack or threat of attack upon women and girls outside the shelter. There is no part of a settlement, or the site surroundings, where this risk may not be present. Therefore, to reduce the risk of the GBV with in the shelter and in the settlement; the TWiG members recommended the below activities:

Solar Light poles - Consideration should be given at settlement level, specially near the Latrines, health center and Water points.

Privacy within the T-Shelters- Plastic tarpaulin should be used for partition inside the Shelter, to separate adult and children. Also, for men and women. Many agencies already practicing this method for privacy within the shelter. Depends on the fund availability it is also highly recommended to consider latrines at household level in the transitional phase to avoid female beneficiaries going out specially at night.

Lockable doors/Windows – The T-Shelters door should have lockable from inside and outside; Windows should have locks from inside.

Implementation Modality – Contractor driven approach is the preferred modality over the beneficiary driven approach, due to limited availability skill workers in the IDP settlements, also the experience shown that the IDPs are not interested in participatory approach, therefore, the quality of the contractor driven approach was much better and faster.

Plot Size for T-Shelters – For the T-shelters there has to be space for cooking, eating and toilet, etc.

Minimum 4.5 m2 to 5.5 m2 covered living space per person in cold climates, including kitchen facilities as more time will be spent inside the shelter (cooking, eating, and livelihoods). As per the sphere standard.

Minimum Space for space should be 31.5 Sqm for a family of 7 members.

Ventilations– Adequate ventilation shall be provided within the shelter design to maintain a healthy internal environment and limit the risk of transmission of diseases, such as tuberculosis, etc. Ventilation should be maximized in hot climates to reduce inside temperature and minimized in cold climates to retain heat within the shelter. For better aeration the new T- Shelters should have minimum 2 windows with a Size 60x60cm and not facing to each other in addition to the door.

Site Selection Criteria - The Site Selection criteria are available in the shelter cluster website, See the last page [herein](#).

RELOCATION CRITERIA FOR T-SHELTERS

Relocation is a process whereby people are moved, temporarily or permanently, to another location, or whereby a community's housing assets and public infrastructure are rebuilt in another location. Below criteria should be fulfilled if re-location is considered as a viable option:

- Enhance coordination with all stakeholders and agree on unified approach to target shelters
- Clear commitment of all agencies to present unified messaging should be outlined and reinforced by Cluster Members
- Implementing partners should work with cluster and landlords to develop clear-concise contracts with mandatory quality indicators to diminish risk of tenant abuse and guarantee quality shelter standards
- Need of clear standard operating procedures when working with marginalized communities, specifically with regards to shelter and relocation assistance
- Vulnerability criteria must be adhered.
- Site Selection criteria must be adhered.

Beneficiaries/Vulnerability Selection Criteria:

The rapid assessment should state clearly who of the target district/area population meet the following criteria in order for the INGO to be able to make the appropriate shelter intervention.

- 1) Single female-headed households;
- 2) Single headed households;
- 3) Child-headed households (head of household is below 18 yrs. old);
- 4) Families with small children (equal or below 5 years);
- 5) Families with pregnant and lactating mothers;

- 6) Surrogate parents of orphaned children living in evacuation centers who are equally situated e.g. with totally damaged shelter units;
- 7) Families with damaged houses whose head of household died or were incapacitated as a result of the disaster;
- 8) Families with seriously ill members or persons with disabilities or with special needs. (Persons are considered with special needs if they have physical, mental, sensory, behavioral, cognitive or emotional impairment or limiting conditions that require medical management, health care interventions, and /or use of specialized services or programs);
- 9) Households with members older than 60 years old;
- 10) Families with equal to or more than five members;
- 11) Families still living in evacuation centers/community-based centers;
- 12) Households that live in poor conditions (Lack of services, hazardous shelter, poor quality and quantity of household materials).

COST

Cost of the Transitional shelters are between 600\$- 800\$.

REHABILITATION OF TRANSITIONAL SHELTERS

Process

Technical Assessment

Field visits by engineers and technical teams are to be paid to the transitional shelters site to decide which transitional shelters need rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation works are required for sub-standard shelters that are not fit-for-purpose such as:

- Shelters that cannot withstand the monsoon (rain & wind), high winds.
- Shelters that do not have adequate foundations or floor slab to meet agreed standards.
- Shelters that have structural deficiencies (unsafe).
- Shelters that are prone to flooding, or
- Shelters that do not have access to adequate water and sanitation.

Bill of Quantities

The following construction materials may be included in the assistance distribution:

Construction kits including the following items:

- 1) One Shovel (29.5 x 22.5 cm), with wooden handle length 1.0m and diameter 36-40 mm
- 2) Claw Hammer by weight approximately 0.75 kg.
- 3) Axe with its Handel
- 4) Handsaw – Crosscut 40 cm.
- 5) Ropes 30 m and 12mm diameter.
- 6) Trowel Cement
- 7) Bucket oil
- 8) Roofs (wooden roof local or external, Zinc with metal beams and girders)
- 9) Doors (wooden or metal doors)
- 10) Windows (wooden or metal)
- 11) Other items identified through the analysis of assessments.

COST

Cost of the Transitional shelters are between 300\$- 500\$.

UPGRADING OF A TRANSITIONAL SHELTER

Due to the durability feature of transitional shelters, they can be upgraded to be permanent shelters as long as pieces of land are free from dispute and ownership of the land is thoroughly verified.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY

Contractor driven approach is the preferred modality over the beneficiary driven approach, due to limited availability skill workers in the IDP settlements, also the experience shown that the IDPs are less interested in participatory approach. therefore, the quality of the contractor driven approach was much better and faster. Community driven approach should also be encouraged depends on the target community skill level and their willingness to participate, Cash should also be used when the market are accessible, and community are well engaged.

FIRE SAFETY

Agencies should develop Fire Safety awareness messages for which samples are available from CCCM, as well as training / awareness raising measures to accompany distributions of cookers/stoves and heaters. This should be undertaken in conjunction with any site management authorities, fire services, and CCCM where relevant to ensure that messages are consistent, reflect best practice and correspond with available firefighting and fire safety measures on site.

While it is difficult to allocate space for firebreaks in the settlements. Fire in settlements is the most deadly and destructive risk. Whilst they cannot stop smaller fires, fire-breaks can prevent fires from spreading and becoming catastrophic, and can save lives. Consideration should be given to the firebreaks specially in the formation of new settlements and in the event of re-location of IDPs.

It is worth noting that the largest cause of fires in the IDP settlements in Yemen has been poor unsafe, environmentally unfriendly cooking modalities. Safe cooking habits should be promoted including Mud and lay stoves which provides better flow of air and hot gases. Likewise, site planning, distances between shelters and fire breaks should be integrated into an overall strategy for fire risk reduction.

HLP issues

In order to maximize impact and avoid community tensions, beneficiaries of Transitional shelter must prove ownership of the settlement, show intention to reside there and not have any other place where to live. Verification of proof of ownership or right to stay in that land is an essential action required before starting a technical assessment. The verification process should be considered as a preventive measure against falsified/fraudulent documents, potential illegal occupation and secondary occupations or forced eviction. If the verification is not completed, shelter actors should refer the case to HLP specialists and put on hold the implementing of shelter activities, as they may result to HLP violations. At the same time, as many families lack such official documentation, alternative solutions should be sought for those who are unable to prove property ownership (combined with letter from the local authorities/Tribal elders/Sheiks).

Minimum +5years right to stay the land should be granted for the IDPs in case of relocation to a new land, and/or if they are protracted IDPs and illegible to receiving T-Shelters. HLP issue should be done in close collaboration with the local authority.

TWiG MEMBERS

Members: The list of members is annexed [herein](#).

CONCLUSION

From the deliberations, members were consistent in the view that the Transitional Shelters needs continues review and upgrades as well as the need to find best value for money proposition for partners in the cluster. It is expected that reaching a consensus within and between cluster members will provide a standard framework for intervention for all shelter practitioners in Yemen.