

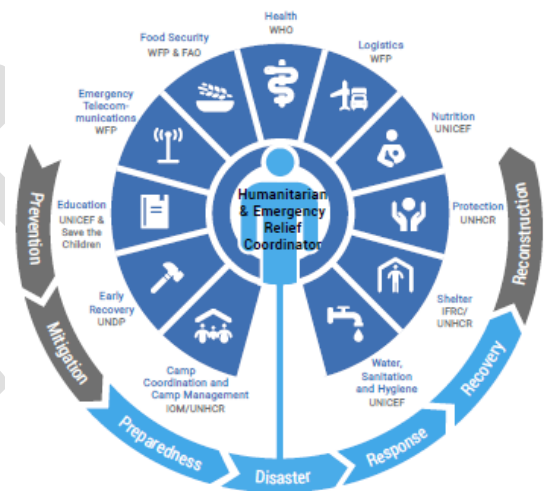


What is the cluster approach?

The cluster approach is a set of structures, processes, principles, and commitments to coordinate humanitarian action when a national government requests international support. It aims to make the humanitarian community better organized and more accountable to crisis-affected people.

What are clusters?

Clusters are voluntary groups of humanitarian organizations working in specific technical sectors of humanitarian action e.g., Shelter, Health, Protection (shown in the dark blue segments in the in figure 1). Cluster members can include NGOs, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and government bodies involved in humanitarian response. They coordinate action to ensure the best outcomes for people affected by crises, at all the stages shown in the arrows in the diagram. Clusters promote, coordinated and common strategies, good practices, avoidance of duplication, and address gaps and share information. They build national capacity to prepare for emergencies, and advocate for more effective and accountable humanitarian action. All clusters are responsible for upholding protection principles and preventing sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. There are 11 clusters globally. The same clusters can be activated at a national level and occasionally at a subnational level in response to a particular emergency. Each global cluster is led by one or two United Nations agencies or a United Nations agency and an international NGO. At the country level, clusters are usually co-led by a United Nations agency and an NGO. The cluster leads must be ready to provide services to affected people where other organizations cannot.



Why should your organization join the cluster system?

While it has some practical limitations, the cluster system can enable your organization to better serve affected people through:

1. Increased influence, visibility, and understanding of procedures
2. Funding opportunities
3. Access to technical guidance and support
4. Access to information about what others are doing and any gaps
5. Partnership opportunities with other organizations

ES/NFI Cluster Afghanistan

The aim of the ES/NFI Cluster Afghanistan is **to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies** and provide clear leadership and accountability in the main areas of Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items. Realizing importance of cluster coordination, ES/NFI Cluster **promotes a common strategy and good practices**, avoids duplication, addresses gaps, and shares information. It builds national capacity to prepare for emergencies, and advocates for more effective and accountable humanitarian action.

ES/NFI Cluster is open to:



1. Academia/research institutions
2. Donors
3. Red cross/Red Crescent Movement (IFRC, ICRC, National Society)
4. Private Sector
5. International Financial institutions (IFIs)
6. UN agencies
7. National/Local NGOs
8. National/regional/local authorities
9. Donors
10. Other (Those that do not fall into any of the above)

How to apply for ES/NFI Cluster Membership?

1. Submit relevant documents as evidence of meeting the eligibility criteria below to afghanistan@sheltercluster.org
 - a. Cluster membership Eligibility Criteria:
 - i. Should have the relevant valid an up-to-date Government Registration Documents
 - ii. Should have office presence and staffing in the Region of operation
 - iii. Should commit in writing that the organization will adhere to the 12 minimum commitments for participation in clusters as prescribed in the IASC Guidelines
2. Once Eligibility is confirmed as per above, the Organization should:
 - i. Fill the Cluster Capacity mapping tool
 - ii. Sign up to ES/NFI Cluster mailing list with Focal Points
3. To join the Core Cluster Partners that provide ES/NFI Cluster Humanitarian responses the organization should submit documents and references for evaluation of the organization's capacity as per the criteria below which will be undertaken by the **Cluster Strategic Advisory Group (SAG)**:
 - i. Participation in Cluster meetings at Sub-National and National Level
 - ii. Office presence at area of operation
 - iii. Staffing capacity
 - iv. Previous experience providing Emergency shelter & NFI support to people in need

Note: If the organizations capacity is considered low and is unable to join the Core Cluster Partners based on the evaluation, then the cluster will support in capacity building activities and encourage the organizations to work with other established cluster members. This can include consultation with ACBAR in regards the Twinning Program for NGOs.

ESNFI Cluster membership commitments:

The organization, willing to join ES/NFI Cluster Afghanistan, should abide by 12 minimum commitments for participation in clusters as prescribed in the IASC Guidelines for Cluster Coordination at Country Level:

1. Commitment to humanitarian principles, the Principles of Partnership, cluster-specific guidance, and internationally recognized programme standards, including the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.
2. Commitment to mainstream protection in programme delivery (including respect for principles of non-discrimination, do no harm, etc.).



https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/reference_module_for_custer_coordination_at_country_level_2015.pdf

3. Readiness to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the IASC Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations and the related Operational Framework.
4. A demonstrated understanding of the duties and responsibilities associated with membership of the cluster, as defined by IASC ToRs and guidance notes, any cluster-specific guidance, and country cluster ToRs, where available.
5. Active participation in the cluster and a commitment to consistently engage in the cluster's collective work.
6. Capacity and willingness to contribute to the cluster's response plan and activities, which must include inter-cluster coordination.
7. Commitment to mainstream key programmatic cross-cutting issues (including age, gender, environment and HIV/AIDs).
8. Commitment by a relevant senior staff member to work consistently with the cluster to fulfil its mission.
9. Commitment to work cooperatively with other cluster partners to ensure an optimal and strategic use of available resources and share information on organizational resources.
10. Willingness to take on leadership responsibilities in sub-national or working groups as needed, subject to capacity and mandate.
11. Undertake advocacy, and disseminate advocacy messages to affected communities, the host Government, donors, the HCT, CLAs, the media and other audiences.
12. Ensure that the cluster provides interpretation (in an appropriate language) so that all cluster partners can participate, including local organizations (and national and local authorities where appropriate)

Contextual to Afghanistan,

1. Regular participation at the national and/or Sub-national clusters or working group meetings (Partners shall ensure their participation in the Sub-national clusters which are covering their project locations) and contribution to the adhoc information requests and Cluster flash updates and situation reports.
2. Mandatory completion of the Cluster Standard Reporting Form (Reporhub)/ 4W when requested by the Cluster team.
3. Share responsibility for cluster activities, including assessing needs, developing strategy, plans, policies, evaluations, and guidelines.
4. Respect and adhere to agreed principles, policies, priorities, and internationally accepted standards.
5. Participate and contribute to the Cluster relevant technical working groups (TWiGs), availability to participate in Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) and to the strategic and technical review committees for reviewing of the country based pooled funds (SRC/TRC).
6. Availability to take the lead at the provincial level as the Cluster provincial focal points.

Discontinuation of the membership:

1. Organizations failing to abide by the IASC minimum commitments will have their cluster membership revoked.
2. Organizations that will have stopped their operations in Afghanistan can inform the cluster of their discontinuation of membership



3. Cluster membership is discontinued if the cluster is de-activated

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Key coordination acronyms

- CBPF - Country Based Pooled Fund
- CERF - Central Emergency Response Fund
- CLA - Cluster Lead Agency
- ERC - Emergency Relief Coordinator
- HC - Humanitarian Coordinator
- HCT - Humanitarian Country Team
- HNO - Humanitarian Needs Overview
- HPC - Humanitarian Programme Cycle
- HRP - Humanitarian Response Plan
- IASC - Inter-Agency Standing Committee
- IM - Information Management
- IMO - Information Management Officer
- SAG - Strategic Advisory Group
- TWG / TWiG - Technical Working Group

ESNFI Cluster Coordination

ES/NFI Cluster Coordination Team afghanistan@sheltercluster.org

URL: [ES/NFI Cluster Afghanistan Website](#)



Shelter Cluster Afghanistan
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter



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