



GLOBAL
SHELTER CLUSTER

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements

SHELTER SECTOR

NEEDS OVERVIEW TIP SHEET FOR ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DRR MAINSTREAMING

This Tip Sheet is developed by the Global Shelter Cluster for Shelter Cluster Coordinators to guide them on environmental, climate change and DRR mainstreaming in preparation of the Shelter chapter of both HNOs or Shelter Needs Overviews. Despite this shelter focus, many of the suggested actions can also contribute to the overall environmental profiling of humanitarian needs, including other sectors. The guidance can also be used when developing Shelter Cluster strategies. Environment, climate change and DRR mainstreaming is required to ensure we meet the needs of affected populations, address and reduce disaster risks and mitigate the environmental impact of shelter and settlement responses in line with humanitarian standards and the “do no harm” principle.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (PROCESS)

- 1 INVOLVE ENVIRONMENTAL AND DRR EXPERT(S) IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE HNO SHELTER CHAPTER OR SHELTER NEEDS OVERVIEW where possible, for example an environmental and DRR advisor in-country or from the GSC support team.
- 2 ANALYSE WHAT CAPACITIES EXIST AT COMMUNITY, LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL TO IDENTIFY, ASSESS AND MANAGE DISASTER RISKS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CONCERNS AND WHAT OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ARE DOING (Government, Civil Protection/Defence, Military, UN, INGOs, local NGOs) and any coordination mechanisms in place, such as an Energy & Environment Working Group, DRR working group, or inter-organisational partnerships tackling climate change and environmental degradation.
- 3 CONSULT AND ENGAGE ENVIRONMENTAL AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT ACTORS ON RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH SHELTER RESPONSE and for potential partnership - this includes national and local government level disaster management and environmental agencies, actors, academia, private sector and environmental NGOs.
- 4 CLEARLY LINK ANY NATURAL HAZARD, DISASTER RISK, CLIMATE OR ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENTS OF THE SNFI ANALYSIS TO THE INTERSECTORAL ANALYSIS IN PART 1 OF THE HNO OR HNRP AND TO NEEDS IN OTHER SECTORS. This is particularly important as environmental issues and disaster risk concerns are almost always cross-cutting (e.g. waste, energy, natural resource management, land access, HLP). For example, if competition over natural resources due to climate change exacerbating the conflict is mentioned in part 1, any potential link or influence that the shelter response could have on this - and links with other sectors - should be included in the shelter chapter. *E.g the potential for the demand for shelter materials exacerbating an already acute situation of pressure on natural resources which could increase protection and GBV concerns.*
- 5 INDICATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND DRR RELATED SECTORAL AND INTERSECTORAL GAPS AND LIMITATIONS, and plans to overcome them, including when and by whom. Due to the cross-cutting nature of environmental issues and disaster risks, they can often fall through the “planning cracks”.
- 6 IF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS LINKED TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND/OR DISASTER RISKS ARE IDENTIFIED, INCLUDE ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS as part of the information that the sector will regularly collect and analyse and share for joint intersectoral monitoring.



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DEFINING CONTEXT AND NEEDS

1

INCLUDE ENVIRONMENTAL AND DISASTER RISK INFORMATION WHEN ANALYSING BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON IDENTIFIED EXISTING NATURAL HAZARDS, PRE-EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, VULNERABILITIES AND RISKS, that might have an impact on the humanitarian shelter consequences of the shock and unfolding crisis.

*Refer country and local hazard and risk profiles for disaster risk related data – e.g. World Bank Climate Risk Country Profiles
Consult the Environmental Performance Index for pre-crisis environmental data for the country/region. <https://epi.yale.edu/>*

2

IDENTIFY THE POTENTIAL DISASTER RISKS THAT CAN BE POSED BY SHELTER RESPONSES TO BOTH AFFECTED AND HOST COMMUNITIES. This includes: identifying existing natural hazards of the area (e.g. floods, landslides, understanding individual and community vulnerabilities (e.g. poverty, condition of women and children, differently-abled persons), and linking environmental issues and climate change with disaster risk.

3

IDENTIFY KEY UNDERLYING ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS/DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS THAT WILL NEED TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN PLANNING SHELTER RESPONSE. These could include deforestation and land degradation, degraded coastlines and wetland ecosystems, water, air and land pollution (for example due to improper waste management, emission of pollutants, intensive agriculture and soil salinization), climate change, and natural resource depletion.

4

IDENTIFY CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE-LINKED PROBLEMS LINKED TO HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES. Some examples include:

- ✓ Exposure to climatic and environmental hazards (e.g. people living with additional shelter needs due to hazard exposure)
- ✓ Negative impact of the crisis on natural resources (e.g. conflict over/competition for; depletion of)
- ✓ Impact of climate change on:
 - weather patterns and hazards (e.g. more severe flooding;)
 - displacement
- ✓ Protection/environment links (e.g. from scarcity of natural resources)

5

BASED ON THE CRITICAL PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED, HIGHLIGHT ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE INTEGRATED INTO THE RESPONSE PLANNING AND WHY THEY ARE NEEDED, for example:

- ✓ Climate change adaptation (e.g. to stop the cycle of displacement)
- ✓ DRR (e.g. linked to recurring hazards like flooding being exacerbated by climate change)
- ✓ Consider existing natural hazards and the risk of creating new hazards during shelter site selection (e.g. stability of slopes when locating collective emergency shelters)
- ✓ Shelter improvements for better protection from weather conditions (e.g. shelters at risk of flooding in rainy season; the need for cold/hot insulation/winterisation)
- ✓ Environmentally sustainable (durable) shelter solutions (e.g. with sustainably sourced materials)
- ✓ Natural resource management (e.g. replenishing natural resources for shelter construction)
- ✓ Links between HLP and environment (e.g. over contested land use and natural resource management that can be drivers of conflict)

6

ANTICIPATE HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS MIGHT CHANGE OVER TIME AND HOW THESE CHANGES COULD AFFECT SHELTER RESPONSE OPERATIONS OR NEEDS.

E.g. Is it expected that pressure on natural resources from the response will increase?

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IDENTIFY ANY MAJOR DISASTER RISKS AND PRE-CRISIS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES NEGATIVELY IMPACTING THE SHELTER SITUATION OF AFFECTED COMMUNITIES. Consider:

- ✓ The gender and inclusion implications of these environmental issues and how women, girls, men, boys, excluded and vulnerable groups are affected differently.
- ✓ Geographical implications of the humanitarian setting, e.g. which ecosystems or protected areas are affected and how?
- ✓ Availability and access to natural resources

8

INCLUDE ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE RISKS WHEN CONSIDERING DISASTER RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES. Consider risks stemming from the environment (e.g. natural hazards) and risks to the environment (e.g. environmental impacts of humanitarian response activities). Environment-related known or anticipated risks could include:

- ✓ Environmental degradation
- ✓ Pollution, including chemical contamination, waste and pollution from industry, and critical infrastructure such as water or energy sites that contain hazardous/toxic materials
- ✓ Natural hazards
- ✓ Technological or industrial hazards
- ✓ Debris and waste generated by the crisis, that can pose public health risks and impede relief or recovery activities, for example, asbestos in shelter debris.
- ✓ Unsustainable rates of natural resource extraction for shelter materials (including forecasted impact of the response on this)
- ✓ High dependency of the local community on natural resource extraction
- ✓ Climate change (increases hazard risk)
- ✓ Risks from environmental impacts of humanitarian shelter response activities (e.g. deforestation for timber, water depletion for brick production, river sand extraction for concrete)

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CONSIDER ENVIRONMENT/HAZARD/VULNERABILITY LINKS: IS THE LOCATION OF AFFECTED PEOPLE SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE HAZARDS (including flooding, landslides, municipal waste dumps, mining areas, industrial storage, contamination, pollution)? What are these hazards? Who is affected, where and in what way? What groups of people are most affected? How will this impact shelter and settlement siting?

10

ANALYSE THE LINKS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND PROTECTION LINKED TO THE SHELTER RESPONSE. Consider how protection risks are caused or exacerbated by environmental concerns.

For example:

- ✓ Communities may have low self-sufficiency as a result of environmental degradation. This could include the vulnerability of socially excluded and vulnerable groups, who may have compromised access to scarce resources like clean water or energy.
- ✓ The impacts of the crisis could result in women and children having to travel further to collect firewood or water, resulting in higher risk of exposure for these groups. This can be exacerbated by deforestation caused by increased need for resources for shelter/energy or overuse of water resources.
- ✓ Discriminatory social norms may lead to certain groups not having access to information or being excluded from decision-making processes, which in turn may compromise their access to environmental services.

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CONSIDER IF MEETING BASIC NEEDS IS TAKING PLACE IN A WAY WHICH COULD SERIOUSLY DEplete ESSENTIAL RESOURCES DURING THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE - DEFINING RESOURCE AVAILABILITY THROUGHOUT THE INITIAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PERIOD IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF MINIMISING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DISASTERS. Excessive use will affect future supplies and the quality of the resource. A resource may meet minimum needs at one point during the response, but needs will become unmet as the resource is depleted. This can cause problems with the response and may result in avoidable environmental damage. When basic needs are unmet this can result in environmental damage from efforts to cover basic needs. These impacts can be direct (e.g. cutting wood for cooking or shelter materials) or indirect (e.g., cutting and selling wood to buy water).

12

COPING MECHANISMS: Consider:

- ✓ How have people's access to natural resources (e.g. water, forest resources and agricultural land) for fuel, food, livelihoods and shelter been affected?
- ✓ Is the rate of natural resource use sustainable (depletion vs. replenishment)? Are humanitarian programmes contributing to resource depletion or are they supporting replenishment?
- ✓ Is excessive natural resource extraction causing or exacerbating hazards in the area (e.g. excessive gravel extraction from unstable slopes).

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CONSIDER HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND DISASTER RISKS MIGHT IMPACT ON THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF AFFECTED POPULATIONS. E.g. Increased pressure on natural resources, protection concerns over access to resources for shelter, direct injury and protracted health issues due to disasters etc.

CONTACTS & RESOURCES



GSC ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT TEAM

EnvironmentOperations@sheltercluster.org

GSC ENVIRONMENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (ECOP)

For resources see: <https://sheltercluster.org/community-practice/environment-community-practice>.

Contact the ECOP via the co-chairs: Anita.VanBreda@WWFUS.ORG and havedisastercallkelly@gmail.com

VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMANITARIAN ADVISER (VEHA) TOOL

An online resource for practitioners and professionals working in the response, planning and management teams. It has two sections: Sector Planning guidance to environmentally align project strategy design and Field Implementation guidance for the design and execution of humanitarian activities in the field. <https://ehaconnect.org/veha-tool/>

SHELTER CLUSTER CHECKLIST

For a full checklist of environmental issues to consider in shelter programming, consult the [checklist on Identifying Critical Environmental Considerations in Shelter Site Selection, Construction, Management and Decommissioning](#) of the Global Shelter Cluster.

THE SPHERE HANDBOOK

Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response has a specific standard on Environmental Sustainability in Shelter and Settlements Programming (Standard 7) <https://www.spherestandards.org/handbook-2018/>

EHA CONNECT

A toolkit bringing the humanitarian and environmental communities together to support environmentally sustainable disaster management. Guidance is arranged by topic/cluster/sector and by programme cycle phase, including a section on shelter: <https://ehaconnect.org/clusters/shelter-and-settlements/>

DRR IN HUMANITARIAN SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

Global Shelter Cluster and UNDRR guidance on entry points to include DRR, considering also ecosystem-based DRR, into conflict and non-conflict humanitarian operations, with a focus on shelter and settlement assistance. <https://sheltercluster.org/environment-community-practice/documents/drr-humanitarian-shelter-and-settlements>

SCALING UP DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION - CHECKLIST

A concrete set of recommendations and accompanying Checklist outlining specific actions for integrating DRR into humanitarian response, including identifying disaster risks and incorporating disaster risk reduction through the phases of the humanitarian programme cycle: <https://www.undrr.org/publication/scaling-disaster-risk-reduction-humanitarian-action>

HOW TO APPLY THE CHECKLIST ON SCALING UP DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

A guide outlining key steps for applying the checklist effectively. Following these steps enables actors to bolster risk reduction efforts, enhance response capabilities, and foster resilience in humanitarian contexts: <https://www.undrr.org/publication/how-apply-checklist-scaling-disaster-risk-reduction-humanitarian-action>

UNDRR WORDS INTO ACTION GUIDELINES - IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR LOCAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND RESILIENCE STRATEGIES

Advice to local governments (authorities, planners and managers at city or other sub-national levels) on developing and implementing integrated local DRR strategy and building resilience at the local scale: <https://www.undrr.org/publication/words-action-guidelines-implementation-guide-local-disaster-risk-reduction-and>



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