Shelter Cluster NWSW Cameroon
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

Assessing Shelter Vulnerability and Severity of Household Needs in Cameroon's Northwest and Southwest Regions

A Scorecard and Ranking System

Overview

On the 21st-22rd June in Bamenda and on the 24th-25th in Buea, the Shelter Cluster in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon met to agree on a standard shelter cluster household needs assessment tool and to create a qualitative ranking to be used in a Shelter scorecard to assess levels of shelter adequacy and vulnerability based on shelter household needs. The starting point for the brainstorming was the household assessment tool that had been used by Plan International from funding from UNHCR's global priority allocation for internal displacement. This version of the tool is found in Annex 2 of the Shelter Cluster Analysis Plan.

One of the missed opportunities during the implementation of the household assessment was that Shelter Cluster partners were never consulted on the household tool. The workshop sought to rectify that missed opportunity by enabling the partners to review the tool and to make any modifications for future shelter household assessments.

The workshops also sought to enhance the Shelter Cluster partners' analytical capacity by establishing a ranking of shelter adequacies into 5 categories to be in line with the Humanitarian Needs Overview.

This note explains how the Northwest and Southwest Cameroon Shelter Cluster's ranking of shelter household needs in the main areas of shelter, NFI, and energy works. It provides an explanation of how the various needs indicators were ranked and then categorized into 5 classifications of adequacy. A brief description of those levels of adequacy is also provided. The note then introduces the new standardized household tool and explains the calculation for classifying the severity of needs with a new list of indicators. Lastly, the note outlines the next steps to continue to operationalize this analysis in the response of Shelter Cluster partners.

To understand the following pages, it will be essential to read it in collaboration with the tools linked to in the hyper-links.

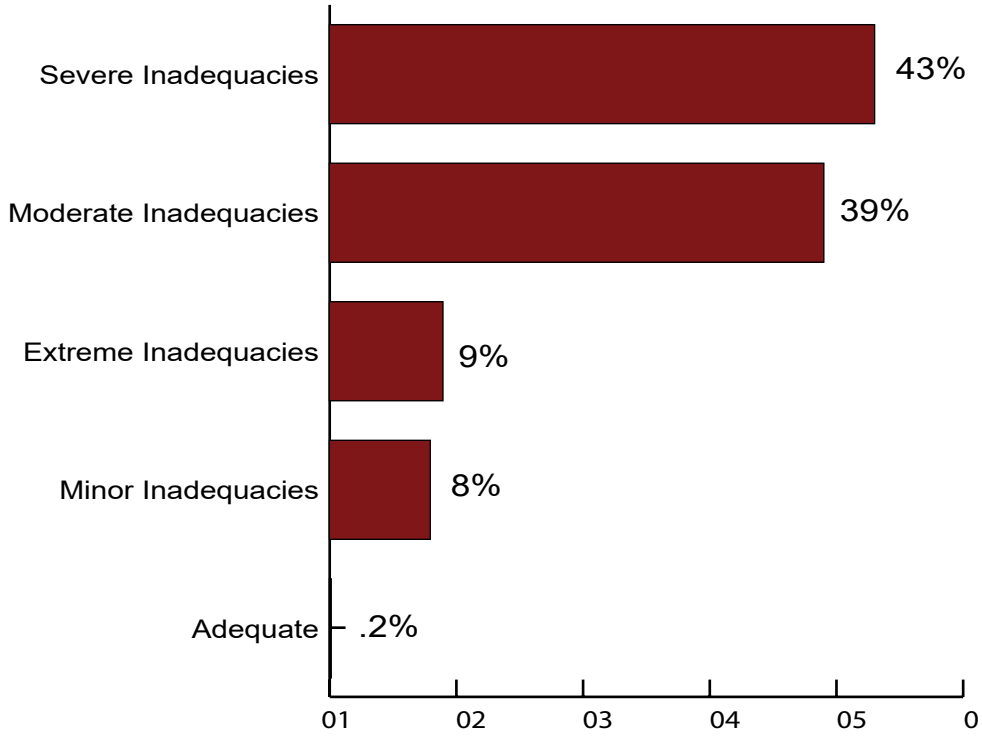
Results of the Scoring: 2021-2022 Tool

The categories of needs are the following:

- Extreme Inadequacies
- Severe Inadquacies
- Moderate Inadequacies
- Minor Inadequacies
- Adequate

The following indicators in the areas of Shelter, Energy, and NFI from the first round of the Plan Assessment were summed together to score each household in the assessment. Some factors were weighted and are shown in parentheses (method described p.4 of how sub-indicators interact with main indciators):

- (Shelter type *Makeshift Shelter Material *Shelter Structure Material)
- (Shelter Damage*Category Damage*Challenges to Repair)
- Tenure Type - (% of Income Spent on Rent if applicable)
- Distance to Nearest Functional Market
- Risk of Eviction
- Access to Functional Latrine
- Access to Functional WASH Facility
- Type of Bedding
- Source of Lighting
- Where household prepares food
- Source of cooking fuel
- Has sufficient Pots - simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Bowls- simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Plates -simple Yes= 1; No=0



- Has Sufficient Spoons- simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Forks - simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Knives- simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Buckets -simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Bedding- simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Cooking Items - simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Water Containers- simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Mosquito Nets- simple Yes= 1; No=0
- Has sufficient Soap- simple Yes= 1; No=0

Description of the Categories

The following is a description of some of the main indicators as a result of the assessment conducted earlier this year.

- **Extreme Inadequacies**- (N=393 both regions; 95% +/-5) This category corresponds with 9% of households with 11% of households in the Southwest and 6% of households in the Northwest. The majority (60%) of those impacted by extreme inadequacies are internally displaced people. 41% of households live in mud-brick homes, and 25% live in houses made of timber. These households also rely on makeshift shelters and collective centers and in extreme cases have no shelter. 59% of these shelters have been damaged with the majority of them in the Northwest. 34% of these households are renting with a formal agreement, while 18% are hosted for free by a host family. 22% of these households are facing a risk of eviction. 47% of these households also pay over 40% of their income on renting their current shelter. These households lack essential houeshold items and have to rely on infeior sources of energy.
- **Severe Inadquacies-** (N=1891 both regions; 99% +/-3) This was the largest category corresponding with 43% of households. 39% of the household are internally displaced; 33% are non-displaced, and 27% are returnees. 54% of these households are living in mud-brick shelters while 19% of households living in concrete and timber structured houses respectively. These households also rely on makeshift shelters and collective centers. 24% of these households do not have any formal agreement for staying in their current shetler. 23% are renting with a formal agreement; 15% are renting without a formal agreement; while 19% of these households are hosted for free by a host family. 49% of these households are living in damaged shelters with 21% of these damages described as significant and 14% of these damages being described as severe. 20% of these houesholds are facing the risk of eviction. 98% use wood for their main source of cooking fuel. These households also lack essential household items.
- **Moderate Inadequacies-** (N=1718 both regions; 99% +/-3) This was the second largest category as the result of the first household assessment tool. 39% of households are found in this category. The majority of households in this category are non-displaced people (43%), followed by internally displaced people (30%), and then returnees (27%). Similar to the trends in the entire assessment the majority of shelter types are houses with the majority of their structures being mud-brick houses (46%), timber wooden houses (23%), and concrete (17%). 42% of these households have reported damage to their current shelter, with 44% of these households report that the damages to their shelter is significant while 39% of households report minor damages. A few of these houesholds rely on makeshift shelters and collective centers for shelter. As the majority of these households are non-displaced, most of these houesholds (31%) own their own shelter including the plot with a formal agreement, while 14% own the entire dwelling including the plot with an informal agreement. 15% of these households are hosted for free and 15% of these households are renting. 95% rely on wood for cooking.
- **Minor Inadequacies-** (N= 343 both regions 95% +/- 6) 66% of these households are non-displaced and all in this category either live in an house or apartment. 65% of these households are mud-brick shelters, 28% are concrete, and 4% are timber. 33% of these households have reported damage and if they report damage, the damages are mostly minor in nature. 75% of the population in this category are owners of their entire dwelling and have a formal agreement. 67% of households are connected to the electrical network.
- **Adequate-** This cateogry only corresponds to .2% of households. This population is composed exclusively of non-displaced and returnees living in concrete houses. They have good tenure arrangements. Only 14% of these households report damage.

New Standardized Shelter Cluster HH Tool

The workshops held in June 2022 with the Shelter Cluster partners in the Northwest and Southwest regions sought to review the existing household tool and to make some improvements on it. Shelter Cluster partners made recommendations on where to shorten the questionnaire, where to improve previous questions, and more properly classify some of the question categories. The new Shelter Cluster Standardized tool is available through the Shelter Cluster website.

After the Shelter Cluster tool was reviewed, Shelter Cluster partners ranked the categories of shelter needs from best condition to least condition and provided a qualitative ranking so that the Cluster . Following the ranking of the components, the Shelter Cluster team established a formula to score each household per their conditions. The sub-indicators of the main indicators would be multipled by their related main indicators. The main indicators use whole numbers, whereas the sub-indicators use fractions of the whole numbers. Where a sub-indicator response should not influence the score, the cluster team assigned it a score of 1, so that it would not reduce from the household's existing shelter score (which would make that household score less adequate). In the case of severity of damages, 1 was not made to be the best score for a minor damage as that would not indicate any issue with the shelter, so there was a need to ensure that all severities of damages received a score that corresponded to a fraction to show that the shelter condition was less adequate by nature of its type of damages.

To see the full list of main indicators and sub-indicators and the justifications for their inclusion on the ranking of Shelter severity conditions, please visit the excel document through the Shelter Cluster website.

Shelter type		
Main indicator	Makeshift shelter	2.000
	House (compound)	6.000
	Collective center (Public or private building)	4.000
	No shelter/open air	1.000
	Apartment (can be multi-room, single room, studio)	5.000
	Farm/Agricultural House or Infrastructure	3.000
If makeshift, type of material employed:		
Sub-indicator	Bamboo	0.167
	Wood	0.667
	Tarpaulin	0.500
	CGI sheets (Corrugated Galvinized Iron)	1.167
	Thatch	0.833
	Plywood	0.333
	Other	1.000
If house or apartment what is the roof material made of?		
Sub-indicator	CGI (Corrugated Galvinized Iron) sheets	0.85714
	Bamboo	0.14286
	Thatch	0.57143
	Plywood (ceiling part)	0.28571
	Wood	0.71429
	Tarpaulin	0.42857
	Clay (as seen in roofing tiles)	1.14286
	Other	1
If house or apartment what is the structure made of?		
Sub-indicator	Timber (wood)	0.500
	Concrete	1.167
	Mud bricks	0.667
	Bamboo	0.167
	Plywood	0.333
	Cement	1.000
	Stone	0.833

Next Steps and Applications

1. Share the new system with the Protection Cluster partners to agree on a common score card approach and ensure that vulnerabilities are being taken into account.
2. Establish a common post distribution monitoring system with the Shelter Cluster partners to better be able to evaluate how various Shelter Cluster activities can assist households can improve the cateogires in which their shelter needs place them.
3. Advocacy to Development actors for those households that are in more severe levels of inadequacy that may be beyond humanitarian shelter interventions.
4. Operationalize the implementation of the new Shelter Cluster Household tool to improve the classification of needs based on improved indicators as recommended by the Shelter Cluster.
5. Ensure that Shelter Cluster partners are able to use the new standardized tool indicators in their needs assessments.