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Shelter Repair and Upgrade Guidelines



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Acknowledgement

The Shelter Repair and Upgrade Guidelines was developed by the ESNFI Cluster to guide cluster partners on how to implement shelter repair and upgrade support in Afghanistan. The ESNFI Cluster would like to thank the Technical Working Group (TWiG) that worked on the updates to this document as well as the cluster partners that contributed to the development of these guidelines.

The Technical Working Group (TWiG) comprised of representatives from ADRA, Afghanaid, CRDSA, DRC, NRC, IOM, UNHABITAT and UNHCR.

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1. Introduction

A number of IDPs and returnees live in substandard shelters that provide limited or no protection from the elements and expose them to heightening protection risks. Some of the most vulnerable families live under these shelter conditions as a coping strategy upon return, immediate displacement due to armed conflict or following a natural disaster while others remain for a longer time. While most of these shelter conditions can be found in Informal Settlements, conflict affected areas and areas prone to natural disasters, assessments have shown that those in the communities also live in similar conditions.

While the Cluster continues to provide short-term immediate shelter response in the form of cash for rent and the standard emergency shelter kit (tent +2 tarps) to respond to the shock, minimum support is being provided to those living in poor shelter conditions until a medium term or durable solution is found. Families living in these conditions are very vulnerable: often insufficiently protected from the physical and environmental elements, with no privacy due to overcrowding and no ability to close a door to keep the family safe at night. This is a particular protection concern especially for vulnerable families should be addressed with shelter action. The cluster will exert efforts to support the upgrading of these shelters as part of its emergency response to ensure a safer and dignified living condition until a durable solution is found.

The purpose of this document is provide guidance on the types and conditions of shelters that require upgrading or repairs to address the poor living conditions and ensure due diligence of HLP principles. No attempt of repair or upgrade will be undertaken if the actions will worsen the situation of the families falling into further risk or will not meet the objective.

Shelter upgrade or repairs do not apply to tents. Any tent in poor conditions should be replaced or families assisted to construct transitional shelter considering land tenure issues and availability of funds. Shelter upgrade or repairs are intended to improve self-made shelters, permanent shelters which are disproportionately overcrowded or damaged, partially damaged shelters and shelters that require flood mitigations measures and require further repair feasibility assessment to ensure that the repair/upgrade will not put the vulnerable families to further risk.

2. Definition

Types of shelter associated with damage that can be upgraded or repaired:

- **Partially damaged**
 - Collapsing of surrounding wall (fence) and damaged gate
 - Cracking of walls or ceiling
 - One side of wall or part of wall collapsed
 - Serious leakage of roof (entire roof may need to be replaced if funds are available. This would be in addition to cluster minimum package)
 - Damage of roof beams
- **Minor damages**
 - Damage of door, windows and their glass
 - Absence of doors and windows
 - Damage of roof drains,
 - Minimum leakage of roof
- **Self-made make shift shelters**
 - Make shift shelter built using poor local materials (sticks), clothes and other scrap materials
 - Living under bridges
- **Flooding mitigation measures** including drainages around the shelter, raising the floor and as per needs assessment. This is key minimal efforts for disaster risk management.

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

- Shelters that cannot withstand strong rain and winds (including rainstorms and landslides)
- 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/landslides, or
- Shelters that do not have access to adequate water and sanitation.

The upgrade works should be closely supervised by trained personnel of the involved organization/s and the assistance should always be accompanied of construction items in the shelter tool kit. Repairing costs assistance per HH should never exceed the cost of a transitional shelter construction; otherwise the latter should be the option. Construction of transitional shelter should respect local accepted building practices and safety regulations. Land permits should be obtained before submitting any project proposal. In general terms, there are few variations of transitional shelters that are prevalent and culturally accepted in Afghanistan:

- Houses made of mix of blocks, bricks and mud with combination of wood walls and straw roofs
- Houses made of stones with wood and straw roofs
- Mud Brick houses with mud plastering (round or square)

It's important to highlight the respect of the minimum covered space per person of 3.5 square meters (without counting latrines or kitchens). This means that a family of 7 people will not be provided with less than 24.5 m² (living + room space). The aim of these technical guidelines is to set up a common agreed minimum standards.

The shelter cluster recommends that implementing organizations should strive to provide more space than the minimum SPHERE standards as they are a bare minimum.

3. Scope of intervention

The purpose of the upgrade or repair is to enable a safer and dignified living conditions through providing privacy and increased perceived safety, protection from elements, space to live and store belongings, facilitate access to essential household services and mitigate further protection risks.

Shelter upgrade or repair is applicable to mostly Cat C and partially with Cat B depending on the type of damages. Shelter upgrade also takes into consideration areas that are prone to harsh winter and will also target the most vulnerable host community.

Do No Harm Principle: All upgrading including repair works must ensure that the support or interventions do not cause further harm to the families. No attempt of upgrading including repairs must be done if shelters are in the following state:

- Shelter is in very bad condition and will collapse if upgraded or repaired
- Shelter is located in a disaster prone area and will get destroy
- Shelter with poor foundation will collapse even if the roof is repaired
- Creating additional space would damage or weaken the shelter
- Imminent risks of eviction due to lack of security of tenure related to land, rented accommodation, etc following an upgrade or repair
- If the walls are badly cracked and regardless of upgrade, it will fall
- No security of tenure and temporary security is not feasible

Cluster partners should consider the following maximum amounts for shelter repairs and upgrades based on the state of shelter:

- **Sever Damage - USD 550:** These are Category B beneficiaries. Individuals with shelters that are severely damaged but still can be repaired in order to offer protection from further harm to the family. This includes with: At least one room standing which with manageable repairs will be inhabitable and ensure dignity and privacy for the affected family.
- **Minor Damage - USD 330.** These are Category C beneficiaries. Individuals with shelters that have suffered minor damage due to disaster. This includes shelters with; damage to e.g. windows. and doors and boundary walls.

Consideration of transportation cost of materials and equipment (whether transfer is in-kind or cash) should be made including providing a cash amount for transportation where necessary.

Also in line with the do-no-harm principle and protection mainstreaming, the capacity of households to conduct repairs themselves should be considered when determining the final transfer package. It is recommended to include a cash transfer amount for households with members unable to conduct works themselves (for example, women-headed households, elderly-headed households, and child headed households) to hire local labourers to implement works; or make alternate arrangements with communities to ensure the works are feasible to implement without exposing beneficiaries to additional risks.

Critical basic needs gaps of the target households should also be addressed where possible, to ensure that beneficiaries have capacity to engage in the shelter repair and upgrade activities and that engagement in the shelter activities does not expose them to harm. This can include, for example, providing multi-purpose cash assistance or food assistance to households facing acute hunger gaps or other basic needs, in addition to the shelter repair and upgrade assistance.

Some activities that can be considered for the shelter upgrade or repair:

- Repairing or adding permanent doors
- Repairs of leaking roof or replacement of roof where needed. Recommended to include plastic sheeting within roof to increase water resistance in line with Build Back Better principle.
- Depending on the needs, sealing broken/missing windows or adding permanent windows can be provided
- Disaster Risk mitigations measures could include creating drainage to mitigate flooding of shelter, support for corner wall bracing, support to slope the roof
- Insulation (roof, door and windows)
- Creating areas additional living space to improve privacy and to create warmer living area, by installing internal doors or lightweight partitions and repairing of damaged chimneys
- Repairing the doors and windows locks, hinges, joints, glasses...
- If possible create windows toward the south to get more sun light during the winter for having warmer shelter with less fuel consumption in line with the “Do no harm” principle
- Repairing of lighting system
- Providing of items for the lightening of shelter

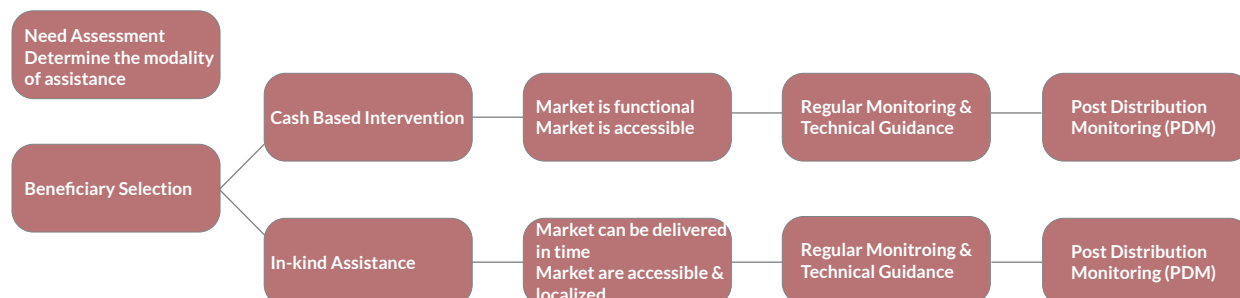
- Doors to provide access, security and privacy. This intervention may also include the replacement of damaged doors or installation of new doors only if necessary for safety, privacy, or technical reasons. A door should include a frame, handle, lock and hinges.
- Windows to provide natural light and ventilation. A window should include a frame, lock, mesh and glass.
- Ceilings and roofs free from significant cracks, mold and/or any other defects and impervious to water.
- Finished floors free of significant cracks and other defects.
- Walls free of significant cracks, mold and any other defects that provide privacy, security and optimize available space. This might include installing permanent or temporary partitions for the subdivision of rooms.

In addition to the materials for shelter upgrade or repair, any of the following tools can be provided based on needs to support the upgrading or repairs of shelters.

No.	Item	Description	Minimum quantity
1	Sisal Rope (100 m)	(100m/6-10mm diameter)	1
2	Plastic Rope roll	(30m/6-10mm diameter)	1
3	Hoe	(iron made, with wood handle)	1
4	Shovel	(iron made with wood handle)	1
5	Axe	(iron made with wood handle)	1
6	Mason's Bucket	(15 liters reinforced)	1
7	Plastering Trowel	(10' with wood handler)	1
8	Claw Hammer	(4', steel magnetic head)	1
9	Pick digger	(with wooden handle)	1
10	Hand-held Saw	(blade of 1mm thickness and 60 cm length)	1
11	Wheelbarrow/Zambil	(sufficient resistance to move construction materials)	1
12	*Water storage tank	(min 100 Liters)	1

**If needed coordination with WASH cluster to provide the items or can be provided by the shelter partner*

4. Modality of assistance and targeting



Shelter repair and upgrade can be provided in cash of **USD 330 for minor repairs** and maximum transfer value for severe damage of **USD 550** as per the damage assesment or in-kind, based on the market capacity and functionality, accessibility and transportation cost. Cash could be provided in two or three installments depending on the level of upgrade or repair needed. As the primary objective is to improve the living condition of the family or household, technical support and training are integrating compulsory part for any shelter programme including shelter repair and upgrade. While community participation is required provision should be made to support the most vulnerable families without any community support to ensure safety and proper upgrade or repair of shelters.

Targeting will be based on the agreed vulnerability selection criteria for shelters identified to be repaired or upgraded.

5. Inter-cluster collaboration

WASH:

Shelter upgrade should consider Wash needs as well in coordination with wash cluster partners. Some shelter upgrade or repair might require the use of water to do so. In some cases, latrines would need to be repaired. Therefore, it is important to coordinate with WASH partners to ensure a holistic approach and avoid the use of shelter support to be used to meet WASH needs. This will still leave a gap for the shelter response.

- If additional water is required for upgrade or repair works, discussed with WASH partners or make provisions for this
- In case of need to repair or upgrade latrines, coordinate with WASH partner or support the family as the last resort.

Protection mainstreaming and HLP considerations:

Upgrade or repairs should provide the following: (Also refer to the Global Shelter HLP Due Diligence)

- Improve security and privacy
- Mitigate further health risks and protection from the elements

- Create additional living space to improve privacy and reduce overcrowded conditions, especially when women and girls are exposed to protection risks
- Include repair of external walls creating yard space and include repair or replacement of secure gate (Iron or similar metal; or solid wood) for privacy and security of women and girls
- Proper agreement is in place to prevent eviction for rented shelters that are found to be eligible for upgrade or repair or shelter situated on land with temporary arrangements or security of tenure

On-site and Post distribution monitoring:

While shelter upgrade or repair is ongoing, daily monitoring and supervision is highly recommended to ensure the quality of work being done according to the standards and specifications of upgrade or repairs.

Post distribution monitoring of shelters following one month of upgrade is essential to determine the impact of upgrade or repair, solicit feedback and lessons learned. This will also provide an understanding to know if there are disputes with the landlord for rented accommodation or land being used illegally or with verbal agreement. The cluster will develop a specific PDM for shelter upgrade and repair.

Upgrade or repair framework:

Shelter condition	Description	Can shelter be upgraded/re-paired	Recommendation
Totally damaged	Completely destroyed	No	Refer for Transitional or E shelters
Partially damaged	Collapsing of surrounding fence, cracks of shelter walls, Serious leakage of roof	Yes	Provide trainings, tools, construction materials or cash for upgrade <i>Support for surrounding walls should target female headed households to enhance safety and privacy</i>
Minimal damage	Broken/missing doors, windows, damaged roof drains	Yes	Provide trainings, tools, construction materials or cash for upgrade
Makeshift shelter	Roof is covered with cloth, shelter walls is made of cloth but foundation is solid, no doors, doors have no locks, no windows, etc	Yes	Provide trainings, tools, construction materials or cash for upgrade
Overcrowded shelter	Additional space available to attach one room (not T-shelter) using local materials, large room can be divided to create additional living space	Yes	Provide trainings, tools, construction materials or cash for upgrade
DRR	Broken walls are not corner braced, the roofs are not well sloped and the shelter surrounding area is not well drained	Yes	Provide training, tools, construction materials or cash for upgrade

6. Annex: Shelter damage assessment form (under development)

¹ DEFINITION OF SHELTER AND NFI BENEFICIARIES

In an attempt to define the beneficiaries eligible for shelter and NFI assistance the shelter cluster has developed best practices in shelter and NFI programming when identifying beneficiaries. As an overall concept beneficiaries can be divided into three categories;

Category A beneficiaries: *Individuals who have lost their shelter and NFIs due to a disaster. The shelter is completely destroyed and no longer inhabitable.*

This includes shelters with: No walls left standing, shelter with unrepairable foundations and which need to be demolished in order to build new.

Category B beneficiaries: *Individuals with shelters that are severely damaged but still can be repaired in order to offer protection from further harm to the family. This includes shelters with: At least one room standing which with manageable repairs will be inhabitable and ensure dignity and privacy for the affected family.*

Category C beneficiaries: *Individuals with shelters that have suffered minor damage due to a disaster. This includes shelters with; damage to e.g. windows and doors and boundary walls.*

*It is very important to **include a shelter engineer** in assessment teams in order to successfully categorise the beneficiaries in the field. Cracks in walls can seem minor but can in fact have eroded the overall construction making it extremely vulnerable to future shocks even after minor repairs have been made.*



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