



**AFGHANISTAN
SHELTER CLUSTER**

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements



AFGHANISTAN SHELTER & NON FOOD ITEMS CLUSTER

2025-2026 STRATEGY

COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

The Afghanistan Shelter Cluster is pleased to launch its 2025-26 strategy, which sets forth a visionary agenda to enhance shelter and settlement interventions crucial for effective humanitarian responses in Afghanistan. Developed collaboratively with partners and guided by the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), this strategy builds on past performance and aligns with the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan, and the Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG) Framework.

Since its activation in 2008, the Shelter Cluster has grown into a robust collective of over 66 operational partners and 81 members, committed to coordinated approaches, resource sharing, and best practices. The evolving humanitarian context necessitates continuous innovation and adaptation to address chronic vulnerabilities alongside emergency responses. Emphasizing accountability to affected populations, the strategy incorporates robust monitoring, evaluation, and evidence-based programming, focusing on inclusive and localized efforts to empower crisis-affected individuals. The need for effective, timely, and efficient emergency shelter and settlements responses requires synchronized development and humanitarian efforts to achieve sustainable, people-centered outcomes.

The Afghanistan Shelter Cluster is positioned at the center of coordinating information, knowledge, and processes to meet this need. Reflecting this, the Afghanistan SC has prioritized three main pillars under which activities and processes will be structured:

- To provide timely, equitable, and safe life-saving emergency shelter, NFI, and seasonal winter support to individuals of all genders, ages, and diversities.
- To provide timely transitional shelter support to displaced and vulnerable people, enhancing their capacity to recover and rebuild, while facilitating their access to secure tenure, essential services, and sustainable living conditions.
- Ensure the integration of protection principles into shelter and NFI activities by designing and delivering support that upholds the safety, dignity, and rights of affected populations, while addressing the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including women, girls, children, elderly, and other at-risk individuals.

Confronted with limited humanitarian financing, novel approaches are needed to:

- Appropriately use cash.
- Provide evidence of need and impact.
- Promote participation and inclusion of women, girls and other with specific needs.
- Foster deep and genuine collaboration with communities, donors, de-facto authorities, the private sector, and civil society.

The ability of the Shelter Cluster to implement the strategic priorities outlined depends partly on external factors, notably actions by the de facto authorities and donor support. The Shelter Cluster expects to be deeply engaged in maintaining and expanding the access and operational space necessary for implementation.

Together, we are committed to further advancing the effectiveness of emergency shelter and settlement work for those in need. We look forward to striving with partners to fulfill this mission and collaborating with all those who share our vision.



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**COORDINATION
ARCHITECTURE**

1. Coordination Structure

The Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items (ES-NFI) Cluster in Afghanistan, led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as the cochair agency plays a critical role in addressing Shelter and non-food items (NFI) needs of people affected by conflict, natural and other manmade disasters.

It coordinates the emergency shelter and NFI response in consultation with 8 subnational clusters and more than 66 operational partners working across the country. These efforts are integral to the broader humanitarian response, ensuring that emergency shelter/NFI assistance aligns with Humanitarian Country Team's action plan and the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP).

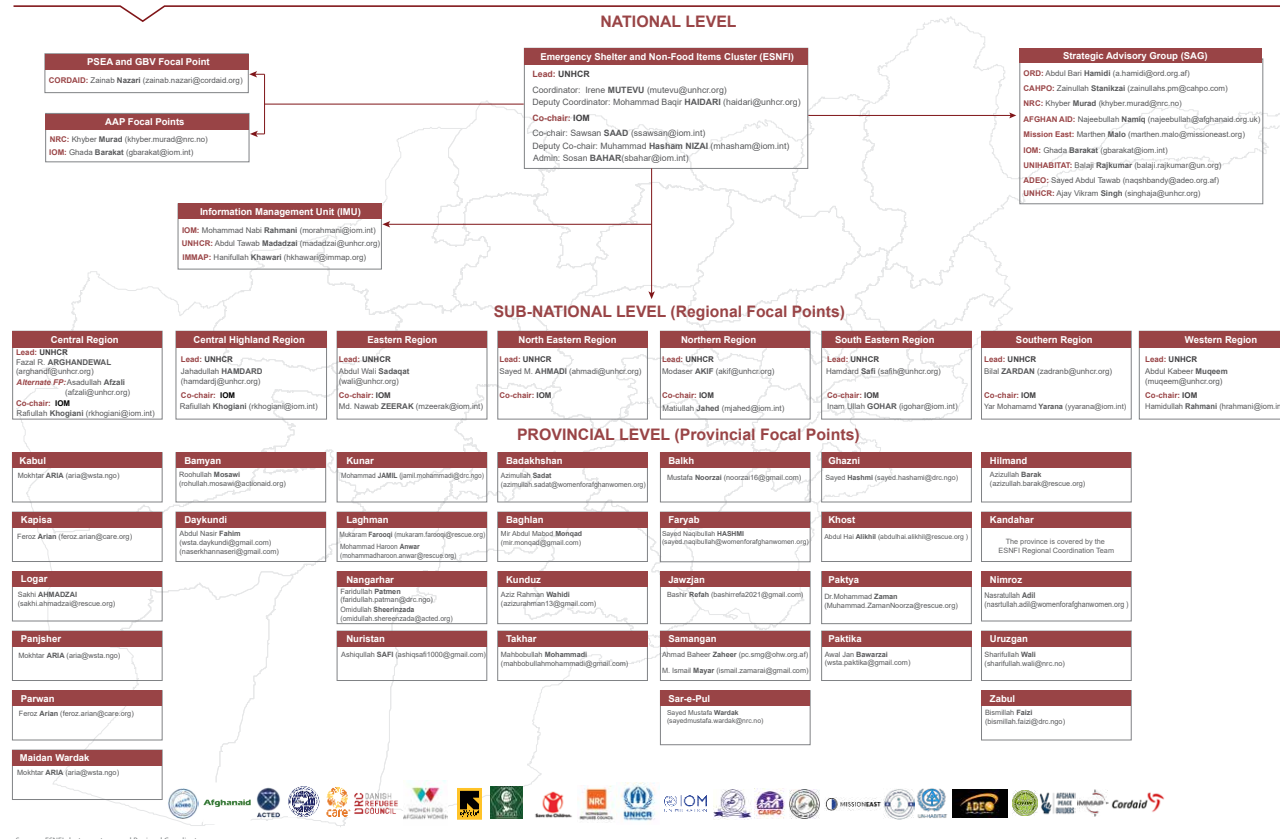


Figure 1: Organizational Structure of Shelter Cluster Coordination in Afghanistan

The shelter cluster comprises eight subnational clusters, covering the North (N), Northeast (NE), Central (C), Central Highlands (CH), West (W), South (S), East (E), and Southeast (SE) regions. Each region consists of 3-5 provinces. In total, the subnational cluster architecture constitutes of 34 provincial focal points that support the regional coordination mechanism. The cluster is represented nationally, regionally by UNHCR and IOM and at the province level by operational partners volunteered to support the regional coordination mechanism.

At the regional level, humanitarian coordination is facilitated through several mechanisms including subnational clusters, humanitarian regional teams (HRT), operational coordination teams (OCT), and technical working groups. OCHA leads the overall inter-cluster coordination mechanism in the regions through the Humanitarian Response Team (HRT), the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) at the regional level and the Operational Coordination Team (OCT) at the provincial level respectively. The OCT is supported by de facto authorities through the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR). Similarly, de facto authorities, via the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), lead the Provincial Disaster Management Committee (PDMC) for natural disaster response at the provincial level. The subnational cluster teams represent all partners operating across the regions in all ICCGs, PDMC and OCT forums.



At the national level, the Inter Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT) is the operational arm of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Chaired by OCHA, it sees standing membership from the six Clusters including the Shelter Cluster. The ICCT further oversees the Cash and Voucher Working Group (CVWG); the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Working Group; Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group; and Disability Inclusion Working Group (DIWG), while the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group and the COVID-19 Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE) Sub-Working Groups are placed under the umbrella of the Health Cluster and AAP Working Group, respectively.

1.1 Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) – Agencies

Active members: UNHCR, IOM, UNHABITAT | NRC, Mission East, Afghanaid | CAHPO, ORD & ADEO

The SAG plays a vital role in ensuring that the cluster operates effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with humanitarian principles. By providing strategic guidance, facilitating coordination, making informed decisions, and advocating for resources and support, the SAG helps to enhance the overall impact of the cluster's activities in responding to humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. It is also a reference body to support the consolidation of common operational strategy, technical guidelines, work plan, preparedness/response plan, reporting, M&E, and fund seeking approaches. The SAG is chaired by the Shelter Cluster Coordinator and provides regular updates during Cluster Meetings. The frequency of meetings is on a need basis. Membership in the SAG is determined through a competitive process, with selected agencies serving a term of two years.

1.2 Task Forces & Technical Working Groups (Twigs)

Technical Working Groups (TWIGs) are established and provided with Terms of Reference by the Shelter Cluster Team and relevant partners on an ad-hoc basis, as deemed necessary. The Cluster Coordinator appoints a designated Focal Point to facilitate discussions. These groups have a limited lifespan and are disbanded once the outputs outlined in the TORs have been achieved.

Currently Active TWIGs:

- i. Shelter Technical Working Group: Review, update and diversify for repair, upgrade, retrofit and transitional shelter solutions to align with local realities and contexts, taking into account market dynamics, available resources, vernacular practices, and localized risks while incorporating Build Back Safer approaches to ensure more resilient and sustainable shelter interventions.

Some new technical groups and task forces to be launched in 2025/2026 include:-

- ii. Information Management Technical Working Group: Review and Standardization of ES/NFI Assessment and Beneficiary Selection Tools for Shelter Repair, Transitional Shelter, and Winterization activities.
- iii. Market Assessment and Inclusion Review Working Group: Evaluating Market Assessment Results, Integrating Gender-Inclusive Recommendations, and Reassessing Assistance Package Transfer Values.
- iv. Guidelines Development Technical Working Group: Establishing Best Practices for Area-Based Settlement Approaches.
- v. Shelter Cluster Accountability, Protection, and Gender Working Group: Focus on AAP, PSEA, and Gender Integration in Shelter Activities.

1.3 Cluster Partners & Members

66

Operational
Partners



94

Cluster
Members

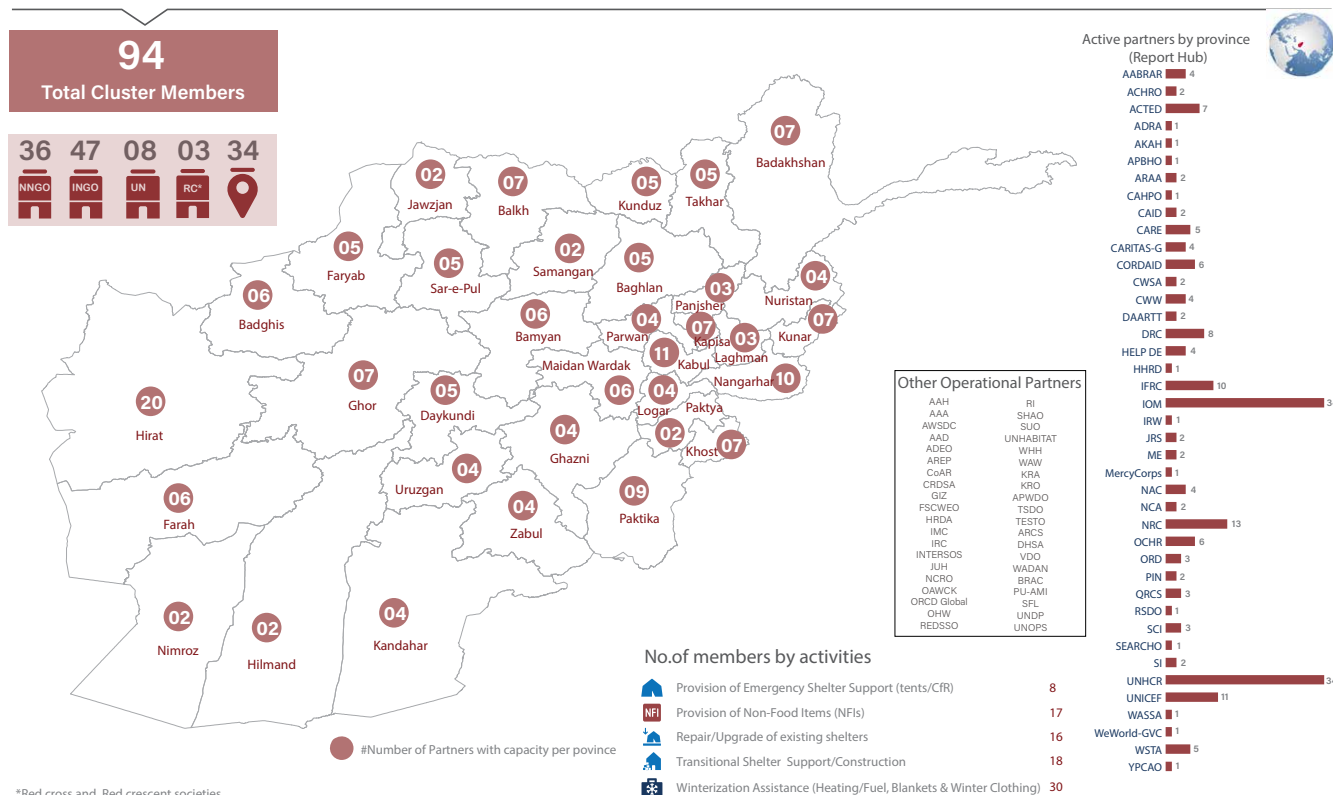


Figure 2: Map of Operational Partners and Members of the Shelter Cluster in Afghanistan



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SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW



2. Situational Overview

2.1 Protection Context

Afghanistan continues to face significant challenges that undermine recovery from over 40 years of conflict. According to OCHA Humanitarian Needs Response Plan (HNRP) 2025, shrinking protection space, fragile economy, insufficient access to basic services, natural hazards, and climate-induced shocks, compounded by regional political dynamics, have left 22.9 million people—nearly half the population—in need of humanitarian assistance in 2025. The capacity to address both chronic and acute needs remains critically limited.

The ongoing imposition of rights-related restrictions by the Taliban de facto authorities (DfA) has heightened protection risks, particularly for women, girls, boys, young people, and other vulnerable groups. These restrictions have limited access to essential services, curtailed livelihood opportunities, deepened disparities, and humanitarian need. Afghanistan remains fundamentally a protection crisis, with continued restrictions on basic rights, freedom of movement, and access to services, especially for women and girls.

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) Protection Strategy identifies three key protection risks for 2025:

- 1. Discrimination and Stigmatization:** DfA restrictions on women and girls, including participation in public life, education, employment, and freedom of movement, continue to impede access to opportunities and essential services, such as healthcare and gender-based violence (GBV) support. The PVPV law's mahram requirements further exacerbate these barriers.
- 2. Unlawful Bureaucratic Impediments and Human Rights Violations:** Bureaucratic challenges limit the operations of humanitarian agencies, while lack of civil documentation prevents the most vulnerable from accessing services and justice.
- 3. Forced Displacement:** Threats of eviction, lack of secure land tenure, and natural disasters contribute to displacement risks, further marginalizing affected populations.

These risks disproportionately impact women, widows, girls, youth, persons with disabilities, and ethnic and religious minorities. For adolescent girls, child marriage, GBV, and limited access to education, skills development, and employment opportunities have left many vulnerable to child labor and economic exploitation, with high rates of child labor (19%) and marriage (39%). Restricted access to sexual and reproductive health services exacerbates early pregnancy risks, while many girls continue to suffer the psychosocial impacts of violence and displacement. Protection Cluster monitoring indicates that 57% of households report at least one member experiencing psychological distress. Women, female-headed households, and returnees face significant challenges in obtaining civil documentation due to information gaps, access barriers, and financial constraints, which impact their housing, land, and property rights.

Decades of conflict in Afghanistan have resulted in high levels of injury, trauma, and psychological distress, compounded by widespread explosive ordnance contamination, poor healthcare access, and the prevalence of polio. Disability rates are likely well above the global average of 16%, with significant socioeconomic challenges faced by households headed by persons with disabilities. According to the WoAA, these households experience higher unemployment (10% compared to 2% nationally), increased child labor (31% vs. 15%), and higher debt levels (\$783 vs. \$558).

2.2 Protracted IDPs & Returnees

Forced displacement remains a pressing issue, driven by cross-border returns and evictions. Political dynamics in neighboring Pakistan and Iran continue to pose a significant risk of triggering a renewed returnee crisis for Afghanistan. Following the introduction of a new policy by the Government of Pakistan in October 2023 targeting undocumented Afghans, approximately 500,000 returned from Pakistan in the last quarter of 2023, with these needs spilling over into 2024. While a second wave of returnees was put on hold as Pakistan extended its deadline for Afghan Proof of Registration card holders until June 2025, almost 80,000 undocumented and 53,000 documented returnees returned to Afghanistan in 2024 and another 1.1 million undocumented and about 950,000 documented Afghans returned from Iran. The



high numbers of returnees placed immense strain on the already vulnerable host communities, increasing competition for scarce resources.

Similarly, while conflict-related displacement has drastically decreased since 2021 from 60 percent in 2021 to 2 percent in 2023, an estimated 6.3 million individuals roughly 1 in 7 Afghans are experiencing long-term displacement, many having left their homes as early as 2012. This is the largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in South Asia and the second largest worldwide. With an estimated 6.3 million people experiencing protracted displacement and 191,500 households in informal settlements facing eviction risks, the situation remains critical. Protracted IDP households often live in Informal Settlements (ISETs) without legal agreements for land use, mainly in or near major urban centers, facing eviction threats. In 2024, multiple incidents of threatened and actual forced evictions were reported in urban informal settlements, underscoring the need for durable solutions like voluntary return, local integration, or resettlement. Durable solutions and basic human needs investments in communities that are receiving returnees will be required to ensure longer-term assistance and service provision and to facilitate the prospect of reintegration at a minimum.

2.3 Climate Change & Natural Disasters

Afghanistan faces severe risks from climate change and natural disasters, ranking among the top countries at risk – notably fourth on the list of countries most at risk of a crisis, and sixth on the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index of countries most vulnerable and least prepared to adapt to climate change. Between 1951 and 2010, the country’s mean annual temperature increased by 1.8°C—nearly double the global average.

Afghanistan is increasingly experiencing the effects of rising temperatures, resulting in hotter summers and warmer winters, which worsen water shortages and strain agricultural productivity. Accelerated glacial melting in the Hindu Kush and other mountain ranges has heightened flooding risks in the short term while threatening long-term water availability as glaciers diminish. Extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and heatwaves have become more frequent and severe, causing widespread damage to homes, displacement, and loss of life. Among these hazards, flooding remains the most prevalent, causing significant annual destruction to housing across the country.

With La Niña conditions expected in 2025, flooding risks are anticipated to intensify, especially during the spring months when rising temperatures trigger rapid snowmelt, compounded by seasonal rains. Provinces like Baghlan, Balkh, Kunduz, Takhar, Bamyan, and Daikundi are among the most affected, where floods severely damage homes, infrastructure, disrupt livelihoods, and heighten food insecurity. In 2024, flash floods affected over 152,000 people across Afghanistan, impacting 33 out of 34 provinces. The floods resulted in 449 fatalities, 600 injuries, and damage to more than 18,500 homes. Similarly, harsh winter conditions, from December to February, heavily impact Afghanistan’s mountainous regions, including Badakhshan, Bamyan, Daikundi, Ghazni, Nuristan, Panjshir, and Wardak provinces. Heavy snowfall leads to extreme cold, road closures, avalanches, and the isolation of remote villages, cutting residents off from essential services, markets, and basic supplies. Vulnerable populations, including older persons, pregnant and lactating women, children, and displaced individuals living in poorly insulated shelters, face increased risks of hypothermia, respiratory illnesses, roof collapses, and food insecurity during these months. These seasonal challenges further compounding the vulnerabilities of already struggling communities.

Additionally, Afghanistan remains highly vulnerable to earthquakes, as evidenced by recent seismic events in Herat province in 2023 and in Khost and Paktika in 2022, which caused extensive destruction and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. According to probabilistic seismic hazard maps produced by the Seismic Hazard Mapping group of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in collaboration with USAID, the country faces a significant risk of future large earthquakes. These earthquakes, driven by ongoing geologic activity, are likely to occur near densely populated areas and critical infrastructure, posing severe risks of high casualties and widespread damage. In Kabul and other urban areas, where adobe and masonry buildings dominate, approximately 30% of structures could collapse during severe shaking, with another 60% suffering varying degrees of damage. This structural vulnerability further



heightens the risk to life and property in the event of a major earthquake.

Limited state capacity to manage sudden disasters, compounded by insufficient infrastructure investment following Afghanistan's political transition and reduced international development assistance, exacerbates the challenges of addressing these risks and complicates efforts by humanitarian and non-humanitarian actors to meet diverse population needs. Humanitarian actors project that natural disasters, including floods, landslides, and earthquakes, will continue to drive significant humanitarian needs across the country.

2.4 Fragile Economic Recovery

Afghanistan's economic growth in 2023-24 marks a positive development but remains insufficient to significantly improve social indicators. Persistent challenges such as widespread poverty, high unemployment, limited resources, and weak purchasing power continue to leave millions vulnerable. The economic outlook remains fragile, undermined by policy uncertainty, financial isolation, and a lack of human and physical capital. Compounding these issues are restrictions on women's education and socio-economic participation, which further hinder sustainable development and long-term progress. According to the World Bank's Macro Poverty Outlook for Afghanistan, nearly half of the population remains in poverty. Unemployment rates have doubled, and underemployment has risen by 25 per cent compared to the period before the political transition.

The WoAA 2024 highlights that Afghan households—especially those headed by women—are in increasingly precarious positions. Recent returnees and long-term displaced families are more reliant on unsustainable income sources, at 50 per cent and 43 per cent respectively, compared to the national average of 33 per cent. While there has been a 21 per cent reduction in average household debt—from roughly \$716 (AFN 48,527) in 2023 to \$564 (AFN 38,233) in 2024—this has been overshadowed by declining household incomes. Urban areas saw a 3% income drop, while rural areas experienced a sharp 23 per cent decrease. Women-headed households have been disproportionately affected, with a 40 per cent decline in income per household member, compared to a 16% decrease in male-headed households. These economic pressures have forced many households to adopt extreme coping mechanisms. According to WoAA 2024, 29% of women-headed households and 30% of households headed by a person with a disability now rely on emergency strategies like begging or charity, compared to a national average of 17%.

The compounded impact of these challenges continues to strain Afghanistan's already fragile humanitarian sector. Gaps in sustainable development, limited livelihood opportunities, and weak healthcare and education systems perpetuate recurring humanitarian crises, leaving vulnerable communities in an ongoing state of need.

2.5 Access and Operational Space

The operational environment in Afghanistan continues to present significant challenges for delivering humanitarian assistance to those most in need. Since the 2021 takeover, the de facto authorities (DfA) have issued 408 directives impacting humanitarian operations. Among these, 72 specifically restrict Afghan women's participation in humanitarian efforts, including nine issued in 2024. These restrictions not only hinder the delivery of aid to vulnerable populations but also require constant engagement and coordination at national, regional, and provincial levels to navigate these complexities.

The challenges are further compounded by the inconsistent application of various DfA procedures and directives. For example, the "Procedure for Coordination of Humanitarian Response" and the directive banning Afghan women from working with national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) - later extended to include UN agencies in April 2023 - have complicated humanitarian operations. While these directives contravene core humanitarian principles, some degree of practical cooperation with the DfA has allowed Afghan women to participate in the response, albeit with geographic disparities, increased costs, and extensive negotiations to secure local authorizations.

Partners face a range of access challenges, including difficulties in obtaining long-term exemptions for



Afghan women's participation in humanitarian activities. DfA's willingness to grant authorizations for specific activities, coupled with short-term project funding, interference from various DfA departments in matters like beneficiary selection and project locations, and protracted registration processes, adds to the operational burden. Frequent negotiations with regional and provincial authorities further escalate financial and human resource costs, diverting staff attention and time from programmatic priorities to address these bureaucratic hurdles. These persistent obstacles significantly strain the capacity of humanitarian actors to respond effectively to the needs of Afghanistan's most vulnerable populations.

2.6 Impact on Women and Girls

The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is unfolding amid a backdrop of increasingly restrictive policies that have severely impacted the rights of women and girls. Women face stringent movement restrictions that limit their access to essential services, while systemic barriers and cultural norms further marginalize their participation in public life and exacerbate the challenges they face.

In August 2024, the de facto authorities (DfA) introduced the PVPV law, codifying numerous pre-existing restrictions previously issued through decrees and edicts. These include mandates for women to wear a hijab and cover their faces outside the home, as well as the requirement to be accompanied by a mahram when traveling. The law also introduced additional restrictions, such as requiring women to conceal their voices, faces, and bodies. DfA policies also continued to marginalize women and girls in education, exemplified by the ongoing ban on female secondary school attendance and a December 2024 directive from the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) prohibiting women and girls from attending medical institutions. Women-led organizations, which had been a lifeline for women, continue to face significant administrative hurdles, restricting their ability to deliver gender-specific services. This is particularly concerning in a context where women and girls often rely on other women for assistance and access to essential services. In contrast, these policies not only exclude women from economic participation, hindering recovery efforts, but also adversely affect global engagement and reduce donor contributions to critical life-saving initiatives.

As a result, women are becoming more dependent on humanitarian support due to limited opportunities to participate in the workforce and economy, creating a cycle of escalating needs and further diminishing their economic capacities. According to the WoAA 2024, female-headed households saw a 40% drop in income per household member (from \$26 to \$16), compared to a 16% decrease in male-headed households, resulting in greater reliance on emergency coping strategies, poorer shelter conditions, and heightened eviction risks. Shelter conditions were notably poorer for female-headed households compared to male-headed households, with a higher incidence of inadequate or non-functional shelters—11% for women versus 7% for men—indicating a more vulnerable profile. Additionally, the absence of secure occupancy agreements heightened the risk of eviction, affecting 29% of female-headed households compared to 25% of male-headed ones. Furthermore, 16% of female-headed households were reported to rely on wastepaper, cardboard, plastic, or having no heating source for winter, compared to only 4% of male-headed households. Additionally, 34% of women were reported being unable or struggling to perform personal hygiene within their homes, with particularly high rates in Nangarhar (76%) and Paktika (78%) – all collectively impacting the adequacy of shelter and overall living condition. Women-led organizations, once a critical support system, faced significant administrative barriers, further limiting the delivery of gender-specific services.



3

ANALYSIS OF HUMANITARIAN SHELTER NEEDS



3. Analysis of Humanitarian Shelter Needs

Afghanistan's humanitarian shelter needs are deeply rooted in a combination of recurring natural disasters, economic fragility, prolonged displacement, and systemic inequalities, which collectively exacerbate the vulnerabilities of affected communities. The 2024 Whole of Afghanistan assessment revealed a sharp rise in the proportion of households reporting shelter as a priority need in self-reported shelter needs, from 4 per cent in 2023 to 12 per cent in 2024, along with a concerning surge in households lacking adequate winter clothing, up from 39 per cent in 2023 to 57 per cent in 2024. These needs are particularly critical for female-headed households, returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs), who face systemic barriers to accessing adequate shelter and essential services.

3.1 Natural Disasters:

Afghanistan is highly prone to natural disasters, including earthquakes, floods, landslides, heavy snowfall, and droughts, which have a devastating impact on housing and shelter. In 2024, heavy rainfall and flash floods affected 33 of 34 provinces, displacing over 18,400 families and destroying or damaging 20,000 homes. Earthquake activity remains a significant threat, as evidenced by the Herat earthquake in 2023, which left nearly 23,000 families in unsafe or damaged shelters more than a year later. Compounding these issues, the anticipated onset of La Niña in 2025 is expected to bring drought conditions, particularly in the northeastern, northern, and western regions, further straining shelter resources. Harsh winters in high-altitude areas, such as Nuristan, Badakhshan, Bamiyan, and Ghazni provinces, exacerbate shelter vulnerabilities. Many families in these regions lack adequate housing and essential items such as heaters, blankets, and winter clothing, increasing their risk of hypothermia, respiratory infections, and preventable deaths.

3.2 Protracted Displacement and Returnees:

Afghanistan hosts the largest internally displaced population in South Asia, with approximately 6.3 million people experiencing long-term displacement. A significant portion of these IDPs live in nearly 900 informal settlements (ISETs) spread across 24 provinces, where they face inadequate shelter, limited access to essential services, and insecure land tenure. Many are at risk of eviction and have little to no legal protections, further compounding their challenges. In Kabul, and urban cities across the country, approximately 30,000 families remain at risk of eviction, many of whom have expressed intentions to return to their places of origin but lack the necessary reintegration support.

Furthermore following the introduction of a new policy by the Government of Pakistan in October 2023 targeting undocumented Afghans, approximately 500,000 individuals returned to Afghanistan during the last quarter of 2023, with the resulting needs extending into 2024. Although a second wave of returnees was temporarily delayed as Pakistan extended the deadline for Afghan Proof of Registration card holders until June 2025, the return of over 1.1 million undocumented individuals and 950,000 documented individuals from Iran and Pakistan in 2024 has further strained the country's already overstretched shelter resources.

In 2025, large-scale cross-border returns are anticipated, with Iran potentially deporting up to two million undocumented Afghans following Nowruz, though no official government decree has been issued. Similarly, Pakistan is expected to begin returning up to 1.6 million Afghans starting in April, including 791,836 undocumented individuals and 815,776 ACC cardholders. Based on previous return trends, shelter and housing are consistently identified as the top priority need by 87 percent of arriving families. These projected returns highlight the urgent need to strengthen shelter preparedness and response capacities to ensure dignified, safe, and adequate housing solutions for returnees.

3.3 Economic Hardships and Barriers to Shelter:

Afghanistan's economic challenges severely undermine shelter access for vulnerable populations. High unemployment, widespread poverty, and rising construction costs have left many families unable to afford safe and dignified housing. This has forced a significant number of people into substandard, overcrowded, or unsafe shelters. Economic instability also hampers reconstruction efforts, leaving those



affected by natural disasters and conflict in damaged homes or makeshift shelters for prolonged periods. The economic strain is particularly acute for female-headed households, who face systemic barriers to income generation, land ownership, and shelter access. Additionally, displaced families in urban areas face inflated rental markets, compounding their inability to secure stable housing.

3.4 Impact of Underfunding on Shelter Assistance:

Severe underfunding of shelter programs has greatly hindered humanitarian actors' ability to address the growing shelter needs in Afghanistan. In 2024, only 47,499 beneficiaries received repair or upgrade support, while 21,600 beneficiaries were assisted in constructing transitional shelters. However, these efforts fell significantly short, with unmet needs reaching 81% for repairs and upgrades and 78% for transitional shelter construction.

Thousands of disaster-affected and displaced families were left without critical support, such as transitional shelters, repair assistance, or cash-for-rent programs. In regions like the North and South, partner capacity to provide repair or transitional shelter assistance to families impacted by floods was nearly nonexistent, leaving many without safe and adequate housing. As a result, countless families remain in precarious conditions, forced to live in tents, makeshift shelters, or damaged homes that offer little protection from harsh weather and fail to provide privacy or dignity. This not only compromises the safety and dignity of people with specific needs including women and girls, but also restricts their access to essential services and economic opportunities, further entrenching existing gender disparities.

Core shelter solutions - such as repair and upgrade programs or transitional shelter construction are vital to providing affected families with dignified living conditions. These solutions not only address immediate needs but also protect families from ongoing risks, reduce vulnerabilities, and strengthen resilience against recurring disasters. Moreover, they serve as a critical bridge toward achieving long-term housing solutions. This is particularly essential in Afghanistan's protracted crisis, where basic emergency shelters are insufficient to meet the long-term shelter needs of vulnerable populations.

Underfunding has also constrained the Cluster's capacity to pre-position and replenish emergency shelter stockpiles, a critical requirement given the country's exposure to sudden-onset disasters. Notably, in 2024, IMMAP recorded 302 earthquake events, with 72 events above 4.5 MMI, underscoring the need for anticipatory planning, prepositioning and adequate resource allocation.

3.5 Gender Inequalities and Shelter Vulnerabilities:

Women and girls in Afghanistan face unique shelter-related vulnerabilities due to cultural, economic, and social barriers. Female-headed households often struggle to access secure housing, as they are disproportionately affected by economic constraints and lack legal rights to land or property. Qualitative assessments have highlighted that these gender disparities not only exacerbate shelter vulnerabilities but also reinforce dependence on humanitarian aid, as women and girls remain excluded from decision-making processes related to shelter and housing. Additionally, cultural norms, lack of training, and restricted mobility hinder women's participation in shelter repair, reinforcing their dependence on male labor and leaving them in inadequate conditions for longer periods. Without male guardians, women are also more vulnerable to exploitation and face limited access to essential items including heating materials. Providing transitional shelter addresses these challenges as it serves as a foundational step, offering "a start to home" that improves security and supports women's dignity.

3.6 Seasonal and Emergency Needs

Seasonal winter needs remain a critical concern, especially in high-altitude and mountainous areas. The winter months increase families' reliance on negative coping mechanisms, such as accumulating debt, to purchase essential items like fuel, heaters, and winter clothing. In 2024, 86% of low-income households reported lacking winter clothing for their children, further underscoring the urgent need for seasonal assistance to prevent loss of life and mitigate health risks.



3.7 Climate Change and Long-Term Shelter Challenges:

Climate change has significantly intensified shelter vulnerabilities in Afghanistan, amplifying both immediate and long-term housing challenges. The country's reliance on climate-sensitive livelihoods and traditional building practices makes it particularly susceptible to these impacts. Droughts, intensified by climate change, have reduced the availability of essential construction materials like water, mud and clay, potentially delaying reconstruction efforts and leaving families in inadequate housing for extended periods. Drought also drives rural populations to migrate to urban areas, increasing demand for shelter in already overcrowded cities with limited infrastructure.

Rising temperatures and extreme weather conditions accelerate the degradation of traditional building materials, shortening the lifespan of shelters and creating a need for frequent maintenance, and the adoption of expensive, resilient materials. Additionally, higher temperatures and intense sunlight create an urgent need for improved thermal regulation in shelters, particularly in low-cost and transitional housing. Seasonal shifts caused by climate change, including harsher winters, further amplify vulnerabilities, particularly for families in high-altitude areas who lack adequate heating, insulation, and winter clothing, increasing their risk of hypothermia and respiratory infections. The economic consequences of climate change, such as reduced agricultural yields and disrupted livelihoods, further limit families' ability to afford safe housing, while repeated destruction of homes imposes a significant financial burden and reduces resilience. Additionally, deforestation, soil erosion, and land degradation heighten the risks of landslides and flooding, threatening the safety of homes, villages, and underscoring the urgent need for sustainable construction practices and disaster-resilient planning.

Critical Drivers

- **Inadequate Shelter:** Increase in households prioritizing shelter as a critical need, rising from 4 per cent in 2023 to 12 per cent in 2024.
- **Population Profile:** High shelter needs among female-headed households, returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees
- **Climate induced natural disasters:** Over 18,400 families affected by flash floods in 2024, remained in tents or damaged homes due to inadequate resources for repairs. In 2025, climate forecasts predicting an imminent La Niña episode, likely to intensify seasonal challenges, including flooding.
- **Returnees from Pakistan:** 1.1 million undocumented individuals and 950,000 documented individuals from Iran and Pakistan in 2024 respectively - with 87 percent of arriving families reporting shelter/housing as the top priority need.
- **Winterization Needs:** Persistent winter-related shelter needs - households lacking adequate winter clothing rose sharply from 39 per cent to 57 per cent respectively in 2024.
- **Impact of recurrent earthquakes:** Residual needs from three powerful earthquakes in Herat Province remain critical. More than 23,000 families remain unassisted.
- **IDP and Informal Settlements:** In Kabul, and urban cities across the country, approximately 30,000 families remain at risk of eviction, many of whom have expressed intentions to return to their places of origin but lack the necessary reintegration support.
- **Protracted Displacement:** 6.3 million individuals, or 1 in 7 Afghans, face long-term displacement and lack access to adequate shelter.
- **Emergency preparedness:** Need for anticipatory action, adequate prepositioning of stock and cash capacities to address unforeseen and sudden displacements.



A home destroyed by the earthquake in Herat Province, Western Afghanistan, October 2023 © UNHCR/A. Sadiqi



Families returning to Afghanistan from Pakistan, November 2023 © IOM.



A beneficiary in front of his house, Loy Bagh Village, Nad Ali District, Helmand Province, 2023 © Shelter Cluster



Northeastern Floods, Baghlan Province, 2024 © IOM

A photograph of two young girls in a refugee camp. The girl in the foreground is wearing a purple knit hat and a blue cardigan over a white shirt. She is smiling slightly. Another girl is partially visible behind her, also smiling. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other people and structures.

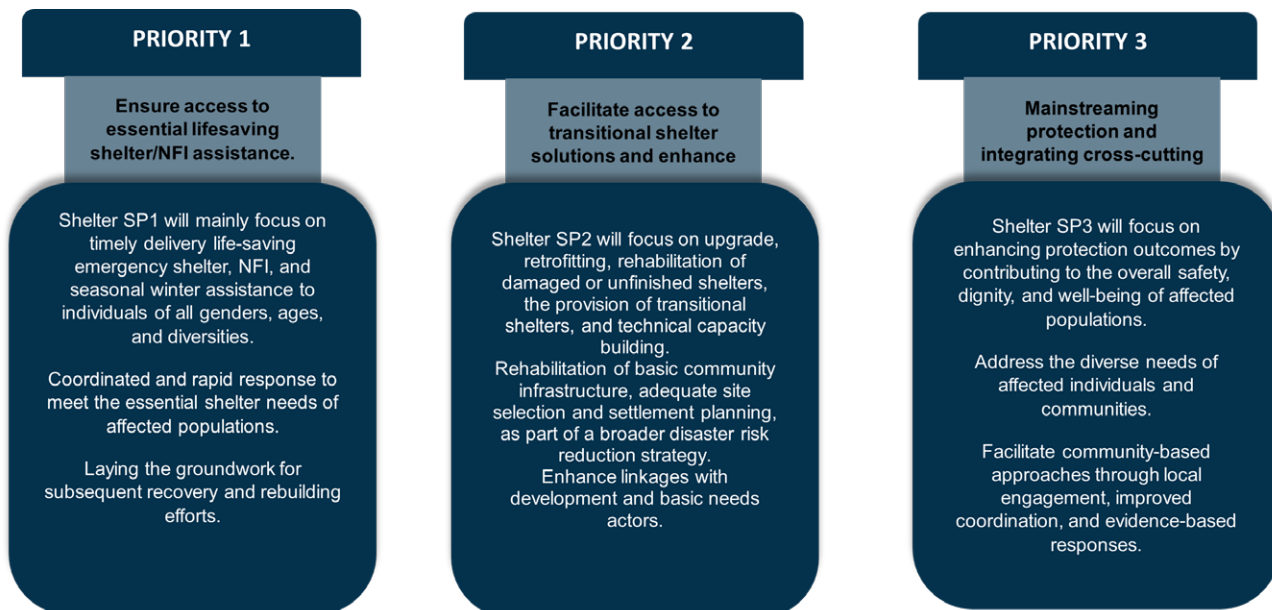
4

CLUSTER OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIC RESPONSE

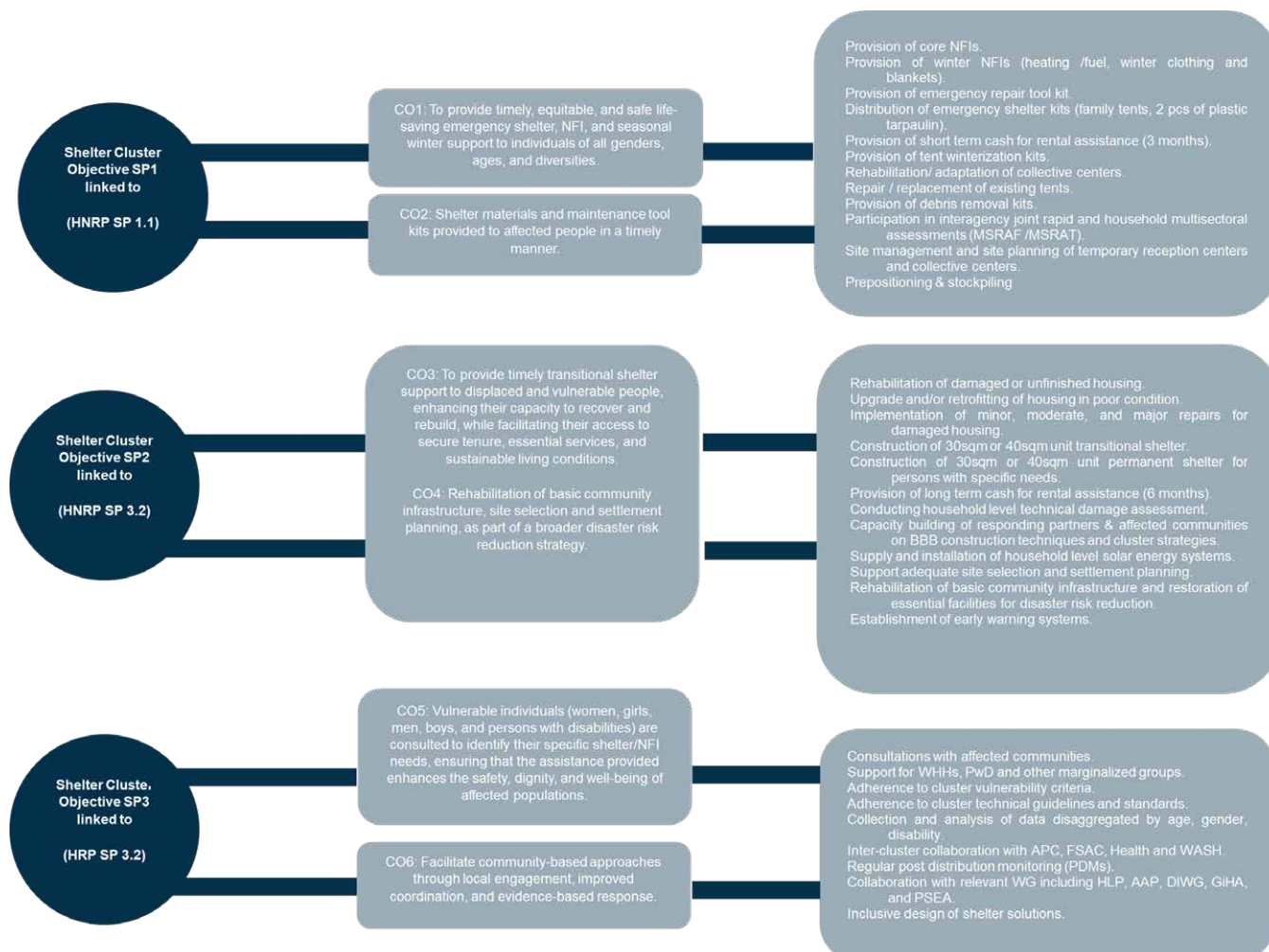


4. CLUSTER OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIC RESPONSE

4.1 Cluster Objectives



4.2 Cluster Strategic Response





Children seated in front of their completed shelter in PD 21, Daag Tarakhil District, Kabul Province, 2023 © UNHABITAT

Guiding Principles

Humanitarian Principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

The Principles of Partnership (Equality, Transparency, Responsibility, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility and Complementarity) between affected populations, local authorities, and response actors. Embedded within this is accountability to affected populations.

The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action. The Afghanistan Shelter Cluster aims to ensure that the rights of affected persons and the obligations of duty bearers under international law are understood, respected, protected and fulfilled without discrimination throughout the duration of humanitarian response and beyond.



Strategic Approaches

As part of achieving a more predictable, effective, and accountable response, the Shelter Cluster promotes several key strategic approaches in shelter programming:

People-centered humanitarian shelter response:

Shelter responses must support and complement the efforts of affected populations, who are often the first and main responders. The Shelter Cluster and its partners will focus on scaling up consultations with affected families, and local engagement with women led organization, civil society in humanitarian shelter action to better address the needs of affected populations.

Coordination for scale, speed, and equity:

To ensure assistance reaches the maximum number of households and individuals in need without compromising quality, it is essential to coordinate closely with authorities, partners, other Clusters, and stakeholders, including non-humanitarian actors. This coordination aims for maximum coverage, consistency in identifying gaps and priority needs, prompt response, and, where feasible, authorities' ownership of the response. The Shelter Cluster will facilitate the availability of information, training, and technical support as early as possible to help partners and communities make informed decisions, thereby accelerating activities that reduce the impact of temporary living conditions.

Coverage, equity, and coordination of diverse inputs: The principle of achieving maximum coverage and equitable assistance encourages agencies to plan and work together, utilizing diverse specialist inputs while accommodating specific mandates and activities cohesively. This approach includes adopting common tools, curricula, information materials, and pooled finance, agreed upon through a consultative process to ensure consistency and quality in all Shelter/NFI response activities. Collective development of technical assistance resources will optimize expertise and funding, benefiting all agencies and the broader shelter response.

Build upon partners experience, optimize capacities and resources: The Cluster leverages partners' extensive experience and expertise on shelter, disaster risk reduction strategies, and deep knowledge of the local context, culture, and geography to guide the shelter response effectively.

Sustainability and resilience: The Shelter Cluster views shelter as more than just providing tents or materials; it is crucial for creating a safe, dignified environment where people can rebuild their lives. This approach involves strengthening local building practices, integrating hazard-resistant and environmentally conscious methods, and transferring knowledge from local communities. Recognizing that recovery begins immediately post-disaster, the Shelter Cluster emphasizes the need for early coordination of recovery efforts - bridging the humanitarian-development gap.

Technical assistance and capacity building: The Shelter Cluster underscores the importance of technical assistance to be planned and implemented in time, and that goes hand in hand with the assistance; at a proper scale, to support the needs of the affected population with due considerations of specific needs for vulnerable persons and communities. This includes developing tailored training modules, and capacity building of responding partners, affected communities contributing to the response, particularly for repair and transitional shelter responses.

Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues: (Or good shelter programming) is essential for an effective and accountable shelter response, ensuring that the needs of different groups are met and preventing the exclusion of those most in need. Responses should also consider their impact on long-term community recovery and the supporting environments. Prioritizing the most vulnerable involves planning high-impact interventions that address their diverse needs and capacities.

Enabling the role of women: Women play a critical role to play during throughout the emergency-transitional phase of Shelter/NFI assistance and should be supported in this and other roles through knowledge and skills development. Women's participation in Shelter and NFI activities, including quality assurance of construction should be supported with consideration of timing, childcare and other context specific gender roles.



A beneficiary receiving standard NFI kit in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar Province, 2023 © Shelter Cluster

Strategic AREA

Access to lifesaving assistance

SO1: Ensure access to essential lifesaving services by providing emergency shelter, non-food items (NFIs), and seasonal winter assistance.

- Coordinated delivery of emergency shelter and NFI assistance:** The Shelter Cluster strategically prioritizes the delivery of humanitarian emergency shelter and non-food items (NFIs) to provide immediate relief and ensure the safety and dignity of affected populations. Immediate protection will be provided through emergency shelter solutions, such as tents and tarpaulins, repair toolkits while critical NFIs, including blankets, kitchen sets, and hygiene kits, will meet essential needs and support overall well-being of affected populations. Efficient logistics, the pre-positioning of supplies and relief items in strategic locations will enable swift deployment and minimize delays especially in challenging terrains and hard to reach areas. The Shelter Cluster will ensure collaborative engagement with local authorities, international organizations, and NGOs to optimize distribution efficiency, prevent duplication, while optimizing complementary intersectorial support. The implementation of cash-based interventions will empower beneficiaries, allowing them to make choices best suited to their circumstances, thereby promoting autonomy and stimulating local economies. The Shelter Cluster will prioritize continuous monitoring and evaluation to adapt and refine responses, ensuring that humanitarian efforts effectively address the evolving needs and vulnerabilities of affected communities.
- Provision of seasonal winter assistance:** Freezing winter temperatures, aggravated by poor shelter conditions, limited financial capability to purchase fuel and heaters, road blockages during winter



months, has a direct impact on the cluster response and notably, potentially drives women and girls into negative coping mechanisms including increased debt, and heightened risk of coerced sexual exploitation and trafficking during the winter season. The lack of warm clothing, insulation, heating heightens the risk of respiratory infections particularly among children U-5, hypothermia, limb amputation and preventable mortality among women, children, and elderly. According to Whole of Afghanistan Assessment (WoAA) 2024, households lacking adequate winter clothing rose sharply from 39 per cent to 57 per cent compared to 2023. Furthermore, 16 per cent of female-headed households were reported to rely on wastepaper, cardboard, plastic, or having no heating source for winter, compared to only 4 per cent of male-headed households. The cluster will therefore continue to prioritize the provision of winter clothing, blankets, heating support & shelter repair support for vulnerable households residing especially in high altitude locations, exposed to extreme & severe cold temperatures. High altitude areas and priority provinces which witness cold winters will continue to be prioritized for winterization support. This includes Nuristan, Badakhshan, Parwan, Baghlan, Bamyān, Daykundi, Kabul, Wardak, Ghor, Panjsher, Ghazni and other high priority provinces.

- **Preparedness & Contingency Planning:** The Shelter Cluster will continue to prioritize anticipatory preparedness actions, contingency planning, and the replenishment of relief items, ensuring that the cluster, partners, and communities are ready to respond swiftly and efficiently to sudden onset emergencies, thereby minimizing the impact on affected populations. Community-focused anticipatory preparedness actions, such as hazard mapping to identify high-risk areas like flood zones and earthquake-prone regions, along with the strengthening of early warning systems, will establish a solid foundation for efficient and inclusive emergency responses. Contingency planning at both the national and subnational levels will facilitate the anticipation of various disaster scenarios, enabling the development of tailored response plans that address specific needs and challenges. Regular replenishment of relief items, including tents, NFI kits, and repair toolkits, will ensure that essential supplies are readily available when sudden emergencies occur. This proactive approach aligns with the ICCT anticipatory planning for 2025 and aims to reduce response times, enhance coordination among actors, and ensure that lifesaving emergency assistance promptly reaches those in need.

OUTCOME AREA 1: Our enabling actions in collaboration with stakeholders

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue monthly and ad-hoc national and subnational meetings. ✓ Ensure regular sharing of presentations and wider distribution of meeting minutes. ✓ Convene coordination meetings at the onset of emergencies to assess needs, capacities, and allocate response locations to minimize duplication. ✓ Establish a buffer stock of emergency shelter kits and NFIs (both in-kind and cash). ✓ Regularly update national and regional WhatsApp groups and mailing lists. ✓ Track the Cluster's adherence to emergency response timelines (e.g., 72-hour response window). ✓ Conduct regular RAM/joint assessments | <p>at the regional level with participation from partners and facilitation from authorities to assess shelter needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Advocate for funding to support replenishment and stockpiling efforts. ✓ Update the Cluster's selection criteria and vulnerability scoring system. ✓ Increase engagement with the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) to communicate cluster priorities to donors and de facto authorities, especially during emergencies. ✓ Develop a data-sharing hub for beneficiary lists and referrals, accessible to operational partners during emergency response. ✓ Ensure proactive contingency planning within the cluster strategy and develop both national and regional contingency plans. |
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- ✓ Map risk areas and locations of interference, incorporating lessons learned from partners.
- ✓ Strategic and anticipatory engagement with DfA at the national and provincial level on the cluster approach, facilitation of MoUs and emergency response.
- ✓ Enhance collaboration with other clusters,

MoEC, ANDMA, MoRR, and relevant line ministries on AHF activities, including organising more briefings with authorities on upcoming and ongoing projects.

- ✓ Conduct training on preparedness, assign focal points at the provincial level for emergency response, and maintain a Joint Assessment Team (JAT) roster for the Cluster.



A completed transitional shelter in Loy Bagh Villag, Nad Ali District, Helmand Province, 2023 © Shelter Cluster

Strategic AREA 2

Facilitate access to **dignified shelter solutions**

SO2: To provide timely transitional shelter support to displaced and vulnerable people, enhancing their capacity to recover and rebuild, while facilitating their access to secure tenure, essential services, and sustainable living conditions.

- Provision of dignified shelter solutions: The Shelter Cluster views shelter as more than just providing tents, materials, or constructing physical structures; it is a critical process in creating an environment where people can rebuild their lives in safety, and with dignity. Beyond emergency shelter and NFI assistance, the Cluster will continue its progressive shifting towards more dignified shelter solutions, with greater investment in repair, upgrade, retrofitting, and transitional shelter, particularly for women-headed households and other vulnerable groups. This strategy aims to reduce the duration of emergencies and the adverse impact of temporary living conditions on vulnerable families, mitigate the development of tented camps, and prevent the displacement of affected people to urban areas. This approach is expected to have a multiplier effect on households by fostering a sense of normalcy, providing physical and legal protection, and improving



psychological and socio-economic conditions. It also contributes to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and increases access to essential services such as health, water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH), and education. - Enhancing the right to adequate housing is a human right recognized in international human rights law. Where applicable, shelter projects will be implemented through owner-driven approaches that encourage community participation and offer flexibility and choice to beneficiaries. The shelter response will be adapted to the local context, focused on investing in the knowledge, skills, and capacities of affected families, and building on local practices. It will be equitable and inclusive, ensuring equal rights to land and property, and safeguarding due diligence particularly for women. The Cluster seeks to balance building back better and safer while preserving local construction practices, ensuring that the solutions provided can withstand future shocks and recurrent natural disasters while aligning with the cultural heritage of affected communities.

Key components underpinning this strategic priority include:

- **Evidence Based Responses:** To enhance shelter decision-making and strategy development, the Shelter Cluster has significantly increased the number of needs assessments conducted at the country level. Building on this progress, the Cluster aims to further strengthen its capacity to gather and analyze evidence to support shelter and settlement response planning and decision-making. This will be achieved by ensuring greater consistency and predictability in needs assessments and analysis, supporting shelter actors in evaluating various response modalities, and promoting cash or market-based responses when feasible. Additionally, the Cluster will pilot and implement outcome-level evaluations at the country level to measure the wider impact of shelter responses against cluster strategy objectives, promote and participate in inter-sectoral assessments and analysis.
- **Development of shelter technical guidelines:** The Shelter Cluster will seek to update and develop a robust framework of regional technical guidelines that can be readily accessed by all partners in the event of large-scale emergencies such as earthquakes, floods, and avalanches. The revised technical guidelines will draw upon established construction methods, local expertise, available materials, experience from previous responses, incorporating regional variances and prioritizing multi-hazard risk reduction and community involvement in the planning process. The Technical Guidelines will be developed using a participatory approach, led through national-level technical working group, shelter partners from subnational clusters, and community input, incorporating their experiences in shelter programming and knowledge of the local context.
- **In addition, prototype of the identified typologies will be carried across the main regions to incorporate feedback from beneficiaries, masons, artisans, field engineers, and to collate videos for illustrations and development of training modules.** By having clear, actionable plans in place, partners will be empowered to act swiftly and effectively, minimizing the loss of life and recurrent structural damage. These guidelines will be designed to be comprehensive yet flexible, allowing for quick adaptation to the specific circumstances of each emergency, ensuring the most effective response possible. In addition, the Cluster will seek to collaborate with the private sector where feasible, to develop the detailed drawings, comprehensive training, and IEC materials for communication campaigns with communities leveraging on their vast experience in capacity building, adult learning techniques, and extensive network of pro bono engineers and architects.
- **Facilitating transition to recovery coordination, enhancing engagement with authorities and development actors:** The Shelter Cluster is dedicated to supporting the transition to recovery coordination and strengthening collaboration with authorities and basic human needs actors through the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (UNSF-A). The Shelter Cluster will play a crucial role in enabling the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus by addressing immediate shelter needs while laying the foundation for long-term recovery, sustainable development, and social cohesion. It will bridge the gap between emergency response and recovery by promoting transitional shelters, that serve as a foundational step, offering "a start to home"



that improves security and dignity. This approach is foreseen to reduce the need for frequent emergency shelter replacements, optimizing resources in a context of reduced funding.

- The cluster will prioritize the use of locally sourced materials, employ local labor, and provide skill development opportunities to stimulate economic recovery and livelihoods. By incorporating disaster-resilient designs and risk reduction measures, it will enhance community resilience to future hazards. Inclusive programming will ensure the needs of displaced persons, returnees, and host communities are met, fostering social cohesion and minimizing tensions. The cluster will also advocate for secure land tenure and actively engage communities in planning and implementation to promote ownership, sustainability, and peacebuilding. Efforts will be made to strengthen local systems by building the capacities of authorities, NGOs, and communities to manage shelter solutions and integrate them into broader development frameworks. Shelter interventions will be aligned with other sectors such as health, education, and livelihoods to create holistic recovery strategies. Collaboration between humanitarian, and basic needs actors will be fostered to ensure shelter programs contribute to HDP goals. Additionally, the cluster will advocate for multi-year, flexible funding to bridge the gap between emergency shelter response and long-term housing needs empowering communities to build resilience against recurrent climate disasters and achieve long-term stability.
- The Cluster will also continue to advocate for the formation of Shelter and Housing Sectoral Technical Working Groups (STWGs) focused on long-term housing, reconstruction, and settlement planning, and will work to ensure consistency and synergy in shelter methodologies within these groups. Additionally, the Cluster will advocate for the inclusion of shelter and housing outputs and indicators in the UNSF-A during the next CCA update, aligning with cross-cutting priorities such as disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change, and access to housing, land, and property rights. The Cluster will also aim to identify and appoint an official government counterpart to facilitate a smooth transition, establish durable solutions, and initiate capacity-building for relevant institutions. This multifaceted approach aligns with the broader goals of humanitarian aid, which aim to provide immediate relief while promoting the long-term autonomy and resilience of communities, in accordance with the IASC Guidance on Advancing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Approach through Global Clusters.
- **Strengthen Advocacy & Resource Mobilisation:** Effective advocacy will focus on emphasizing the wider impact and contribution of shelter and settlements activities on protection, health, livelihoods, and water and sanitation sectoral outcomes. While there has been progress in recognizing the importance of the shelter sector and its critical lifesaving and life-enabling impact on the achievement of other sectors' objectives, there is a need to consolidate this awareness among key policy and funding decision-makers at both national and subnational and global levels. To support these efforts, a comprehensive tracking of shelter funding at the country level will be conducted regularly, backed by a review of donor policies, priorities, and funding practices in the shelter sector. This will inform an overall donor engagement strategy. Donor briefing sessions will be conducted annually, bilateral consultations will continue regularly, and advocacy and engagement will be tailored to specific donors' shelter policies to ensure maximum support and influence for the sector. Advocacy will not only aim to increase the resources available for shelter and settlements programming but will also emphasize the importance of responses that are fit-for-purpose, adherence to cluster standards, to safeguard equity in assistance among beneficiaries. In addition to intensified advocacy with donors, efforts will also target key shelter actors to scale up quality responses and encourage more local NGOs to become involved in shelter-related programming.
- **Shelter partners apply cash and markets modalities appropriately:** Shelter partners in Afghanistan are increasingly utilizing cash and market-based modalities to improve the effectiveness, flexibility, and sustainability of shelter interventions. These approaches empower affected families by providing financial resources to procure shelter materials, hire local labor, and make decisions



aligned with their needs and preferences. The Shelter Cluster will actively advocate for the effective implementation of these modalities, emphasizing the importance of robust technical measures to ensure program quality, accountability, and meaningful impact. Technical monitoring will be emphasized to ensure materials purchased and shelters constructed meet safety and quality standards, with regular field assessments and expert oversight to promptly address issues. An installment approach will be encouraged, disbursing funds in phases tied to construction milestones to maintain accountability and support families in systematically building or improving their shelters. The cluster will promote prototyping encouraging partners to construct models that beneficiaries can replicate using local materials, ensuring solutions are cost-effective and contextually appropriate. Ongoing program monitoring will be prioritized to track progress, verify proper use of funds, assess the quality of materials, and gauge beneficiary satisfaction, with adjustments made based on findings. Efforts will also involve conducting assessments and sharing existing knowledge on Shelter and NFI programming, with a focus on:

1. Analyzing rental markets in key urban areas.
2. Regularly monitoring market trends and fluctuations in Cluster-standard packages and items.
3. Development of technical guidelines to optimize various cash and market-based response modalities for achieving effective shelter and winterization outcomes.
4. Contributing to the development of sectoral components within the Afghanistan Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB).

Energy and Environment:

The integration of energy and environmental considerations into shelter and settlement operations in Afghanistan is crucial to ensuring that humanitarian responses not only address immediate needs but also contribute to long-term sustainability and resilience. Afghanistan's fragile environment, marked by deforestation, soil erosion, water scarcity, and increasing vulnerability to natural disasters, presents significant challenges for displaced populations. Shelter construction, energy demands for heating and cooking, and land use for settlements often exacerbate environmental degradation, leading to further vulnerabilities.

To address these challenges, the Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items (ES/NFI) Cluster aims to mainstream sustainable practices into all phases of shelter and settlement planning and implementation. The strategy focuses on addressing suggested actions from Environment Profile for Afghanistan, completed in 2024 - promoting environmentally responsible shelter solutions that minimize ecological impacts while enhancing living conditions. This includes using locally sourced and renewable construction materials, adopting energy-efficient shelter designs with passive heating and insulation, and prioritizing the rehabilitation of existing shelters to reduce resource consumption. Access to clean and reliable energy is another critical component, with initiatives to distribute clean cookstoves, introduce renewable energy sources like solar lighting and heating, and implement energy-saving technologies.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate adaptation are integral to shelter planning. The strategy emphasizes incorporating hazard risk mapping into settlement planning, avoiding high-risk areas prone to floods, landslides, or earthquakes. Climate-resilient site planning, proper drainage systems, and green spaces are prioritized to reduce vulnerability to environmental hazards. Collaborative efforts with agencies such as iMMAP will ensure that risk mapping and climate impact data inform planning and decision-making processes.

- Environmental protection and natural resource management are also central to this strategy. Initiatives include reforestation programs around settlements, sustainable water management through rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling, and the implementation of waste management systems that promote recycling and composting. Engaging communities in these efforts is key, with training programs on sustainable construction, clean energy use, and



environmental stewardship aimed at building local capacity and fostering long-term resilience.

- Coordination among stakeholders is critical for successful implementation. The establishment of an Environment and Climate Change Working Group (ECCWG) under the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team, potentially co-chaired by the ES/NFI Cluster, will lead efforts to integrate environmental considerations across humanitarian and basic human partners. Strong collaboration with clusters such as CCCM, WASH, and Protection, Food Security as well as the Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) Taskforce, will ensure a cohesive approach. Engagement with environmental organizations, technical experts, and local authorities, including the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, will further strengthen the strategy's implementation.
- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning frameworks will incorporate environmental performance indicators to track progress, including metrics on energy consumption, deforestation reduction, adoption of clean energy solutions, and waste management practices. The Cluster will advocate for regular environmental impact assessments that will ensure compliance with environmental safeguards, while community feedback mechanisms will provide valuable insights to refine and improve interventions. Documenting lessons learned and sharing best practices will foster continuous improvement and knowledge exchange among partners.

Key Actions and Interventions

- Use of environmentally friendly construction materials: Promote the use of locally sourced, renewable, and low-carbon materials such as stabilized earth blocks or bamboo, reducing dependency on timber and imported resources.
- Energy-efficient shelter designs: Incorporate passive solar heating, natural ventilation, and insulation techniques to minimize energy needs for heating and cooling.
- Rehabilitate existing shelters: Prioritize the repair and retrofitting of existing shelters where feasible to reduce environmental impact and resource consumption.
- Promote clean cooking solutions: Distribute clean cookstoves and alternative fuels (e.g., LPG, biogas) to reduce deforestation and improve indoor air quality.
- Introduce renewable energy sources: Install solar lighting, solar water heaters, and microgrid systems in settlements to ensure safe, reliable, and sustainable energy access.
- Integrate hazard risk mapping into settlement planning: Collaborate with agencies like iMMAP to overlay flood, landslide, and earthquake risk maps onto proposed settlement sites, avoiding high-risk areas.
- Promote climate-resilient site planning: Design settlements with proper drainage, waste management systems, and green spaces to mitigate environmental impacts and reduce vulnerability to climate-related hazards.
- Engage communities in planning and implementation: Involve displaced populations in decision-making processes to ensure shelter and energy solutions meet their needs and are culturally appropriate.

OUTCOME AREA 2: Our enabling actions in collaboration with stakeholders

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| ✓ Develop a resource mobilisation strategy including an annual project portfolio in consultation with the SAG. | for the development, testing, prototyping and development of IEC CWCs material for the technical guidelines. |
| ✓ Create and publish technical documents (designs, BoQs, community mobilization packages or IEC material) for transitional shelter/core housing solutions, repair and retrofitting solutions recommended across the 8 regions. | ✓ Conduct bilateral and bi-annual donor briefings on shelter priorities, response efforts, and existing gaps. |
| ✓ Continue engagement with partners & private sector to provide pro bono support | ✓ Strengthen synergy between shelter partners and BNF actors on shelter designs proposed across both spectrums. |
| | ✓ Develop a data-sharing protocol between |



shelter partners and BNF actors to support durable shelter solutions.

- ✓ Enhance capacity building through knowledge exchange sessions during cluster meetings, with partners continuing to present findings from their shelter programs as a standing agenda item.
- ✓ Widely share and disseminate cluster shelter standards at regional levels to harmonize understanding.
- ✓ Develop a paper on the cultural aspects of shelter and settlement in Afghanistan.
- ✓ Develop shelter cluster standards on alternative energy solutions for lighting, thermal insulation, and cooking.
- ✓ Enhance the Shelter Cluster's role in DSWG and ICCG at the subnational level as the humanitarian architecture transitions to BHN.
- ✓ Develop a template for technical monitoring of shelter projects implemented by partners through AHF.
- ✓ Continue the rollout of RAM and associated tools supported by national & subnational clusters.
- ✓ Conduct Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) on the impact of shelter activities on the environment.
- ✓ Translate the environment profile and implement the prioritised suggested actions on environmental considerations outlined in the profile.
- ✓ Expand localization efforts through continued advocacy for funding and technical capacity-building initiatives for national NGOs (NNGOs) and women led organisations.
- ✓ Advocate for the inclusion of Shelter/Housing outputs during next revision of UN-SFA & the formation of relevant STWGs.
- ✓ Develop technical note on implementation of cash for shelter programs.
- ✓ Conduct biannual rental market assessment in key urban areas.



A beneficiary painting his home (minor repairs) in Zawa Village, Khogyani District, Nangarhar Province, 2023 © Shelter Cluster.



Strategic AREA 3

Mainstreaming protection and integrating cross-cutting issues

SO3: Enhancing protection outcomes by contributing to the overall safety, dignity, and well-being of affected populations.

- Mainstreaming Protection and Integrating Cross-Cutting Issues:** The Shelter Cluster will continue to ensure that protection principles, promoting meaningful access, safety, and dignity in humanitarian aid, are mainstreamed within the shelter/NFI response. It will prioritize the differentiated needs of various groups, with special attention to vulnerable persons. The Cluster will ensure that protection is mainstreamed throughout all stages of the humanitarian program cycle, facilitated by a coordination structure at the national, subnational, and provincial levels. The Cluster will contribute to ICCT and HCT strategic and technical documents, ensuring that shelter needs are clearly outlined with due consideration for age, gender, and diversity (AGD). This will include the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, the IASC Framework and Concept for Operations on the ban on women working for NGOs, the Collective AAP Strategy for Afghanistan, the Afghanistan Accountability Index (AAI), the Humanitarian Access Strategy (2024), the Afghanistan Information Sharing Protocol (ISP), and other documents developed to ensure principled humanitarian assistance. Additionally, the Cluster will continue to engage with de facto authorities through technical-level meetings held at national and provincial levels to resolve technical and operational issues, thereby facilitating more efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected people across Afghanistan.

Affected communities will be fully consulted in the implementation of shelter and NFI activities. Beneficiary selection will be done through the careful application of pre-agreed selection criteria, with vulnerability scoring to determine eligibility for assistance. All assistance packages will be tailored in line with cluster standards to ensure equal access and mitigate tensions within communities. The Cluster will work to ensure meaningful access for groups who often face barriers to receiving humanitarian assistance, including women-headed households, people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

The Cluster will actively advocate for partners to implement appropriate operational measures that ensure the meaningful inclusion of women and girls in programs. This will involve promoting practices such as providing financial compensation for Mahram (male guardians) when required, covering transportation costs for women traveling to distribution sites, and arranging transportation for female staff traveling to field locations. To support female staff working remotely, the Cluster will encourage the provision of necessary equipment and resources to facilitate remote work effectively. Additionally, partners will be urged to establish separate workspaces and schedule distinct distribution times and spaces for women and men to ensure safe and dignified access according to cultural norms.

The Cluster will also advocate for engagement with women community volunteers to enhance outreach and service delivery, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. Efforts will be made to secure one-off exemptions for Afghan women staff to facilitate their participation in field activities, especially during emergencies. In parallel, the Cluster will coordinate with local authorities to minimize interference and ensure the smooth implementation of programs that prioritize the safety, dignity, and inclusion of women and girls. These measures aim to create an enabling environment that respects cultural sensitivities while promoting gender equity and access to essential services.

This will be facilitated by encouraging the presence of women on assessment teams, raising



awareness of socio-cultural sensitivities, and designing culturally appropriate housing modalities, including the provision of doors, windows, partitions, ramps, compound walls etc. Distribution sites will be selected with consideration of safety risks and access constraints faced by specific groups, such as women heads of households, elderly heads of households, and people living with disabilities. Cluster and agency-led Post Distribution Monitoring (PDMs) will incorporate feedback from all Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) groups, with results informing future programming.

The Shelter Cluster will continue to collaborate with various groups, including the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Disability, and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG), Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA), and the PSEA Network, to ensure inclusive and quality programming for vulnerable populations through the dedicated focal points appointed to support these areas.

AAP: The ES-NFI Cluster will integrate AAP principles and actions into its programming through independent Complaint Feedback and Response Mechanisms (CFRMs) set up by partners and through the inter-agency Awaaz Afghanistan channel. All partners will be required to establish channels for community feedback and complaints to ensure that community concerns are heard and addressed promptly. Similarly, the Cluster will continue to work with Awaaz to respond to ES-NFI-related referral calls, ensuring that communities' concerns are heard and acted upon swiftly. The Cluster will also encourage partners to establish MOUs with organizations working in the same locations to enhance accountability and protect personal data

GIHA: The Cluster will continue to work with the Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA), to reach marginalized women and girls, including women with disabilities, elderly women, and women headed households and others with intersecting vulnerabilities. In line with IASC Framework for Operations, and informed by the Collective AAP Strategy for Afghanistan, the Cluster has adopted a three-tier approach to safeguard and demonstrate adequate inclusion of women and girls guided by the nine commitments on Core Humanitarian Standards. The Cluster will monitor reach to women and girls through:

- Reporting on two cluster specific IASC indicators on reach of women, girls, and women headed households via Report Hub.
- Adopting three new non HRP activity indicators tailored to measure women inclusion during NFI distributions and their receipt of adequate technical support during construction/rehabilitation work.
- Advocating and ensuring, where possible, that all S/NFI projects adhere to the minimum threshold of 10-15 per cent allocated for - women headed households and /or women with other intersecting vulnerabilities during selection & targeting phase.
- Monitoring and reporting on the level of the engagement, working modalities for female UN, NGO and NNGO staff workers in needs assessment and other S/NFI field activities.
- Lastly, the Cluster has developed a Guidance Note on Operational Adaptation Measures 2024 aimed at supporting shelter frontline practitioners on inclusion of women & girls during the main program cycles (assessment, distribution & monitoring). The tool provides some examples on alternative adaptation strategies.

In addition to the above, the Shelter Cluster will provide operational support to partners through capacity-building initiatives. In collaboration with GiHA, AAP, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and the Disability Inclusion Working Group (DIWG), the Cluster will continue to participate in joint missions and deliver various tailor-made trainings sessions on Gender and GAM in shelter proposals, Gender, and AAP in shelter programming, GBV and shelter, and Disability inclusion in shelter programming.

PSEA: To safeguard the rights and dignity of affected populations and ensure Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Mechanism, all partners will be required to sign a zero-tolerance policy in line with Cluster Participation and Membership, IASC Minimum Commitments



for Participation in Clusters. During implementation, partners will be expected to establish reporting channels (hotlines, in-person reporting, suggestion boxes) that are easy to access and use, provide mandatory training on PSEA for their staff, and to disseminate culturally sensitive PSEA communication materials (posters, flyers, radio messages) in local languages on PSEA and how to report incidents. Working with PSEA WG and APC, the cluster will continue to support the adoption of unified approaches across all humanitarian organizations and the delivery of PSEA modules induction training for new partners and refresher courses for existing partners.

HLP: Security of tenure and broader housing, land, and property (HLP) considerations are fundamental to ensuring due diligence and access to adequate housing and remain critical areas of engagement for the Shelter Cluster. To strengthen this focus, the Cluster will enhance its collaboration with the Protection Cluster and intensify advocacy efforts around shelter and settlement issues, aligning with the Guidance Note on Integrating Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) and Shelter Support. developed in partnership with the HLP Taskforce (TF).

At the national level, Shelter Coordination teams will actively engage with key stakeholders, to promote sustainable, rights-based approaches to housing and settlements, ensuring that tenure security is prioritized in both policy and practice. At the subnational level, strategies will emphasize the inclusion of tenure security as a key vulnerability criterion in needs assessments and response planning and integrating due diligence processes during the implementation of shelter program. This approach will help mitigate risks of eviction, displacement, and land disputes, while promoting protection, safety and more stable living conditions for vulnerable communities.

- **Needs Assessments, Selection & Targeting Criteria:** All ES/NFI responses will be guided and informed by rapid or sectoral in-depth needs assessments. Comprehensive needs assessments will be guided by a common set of indicators, and tools coordinated through the interagency framework in close coordination with the Assessment and Analysis Working Group (AAWG). Furthermore, the cluster will conduct independent national and subnational assessments to understand the specific shelter needs and risks of vulnerable populations. Key protection questions will be integrated into both ICCT led and Cluster-specific multisector needs assessments prioritizing aspects on household composition and vulnerabilities, safety and security concerns, access to services, adequacy of shelter in terms of space, privacy, and protection from the elements among others. Attention will be devoted to the collection, and analysis of disaggregated data by age, gender, and disability, allowing for a deeper understanding of the unique needs and vulnerabilities of different groups within a community. The Shelter Cluster will continue to conduct independent national and subnational assessments to understand the specific shelter needs and risks of vulnerable populations. These include Cluster-specific assessment tools focused on shelter and seasonal support, as well as multi-sectoral assessment tools like the Multisectoral Rapid Assessment Form (MSRAF) and the Multisectoral Returnee Assessment Tool (MRAT), the Annual Whole of Afghanistan Assessment and quarterly Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) reports. Collaborations with partners such as REACH and ACTED (funded by UNHCR) will facilitate rapid assessment mechanisms, quantitative and qualitative assessments. Additionally, partners within the cluster will conduct technical assessments that complement existing data, offering a more detailed view of shelter conditions and population vulnerabilities.

To enhance the relevance, sustainability, and impact of its interventions, the Shelter Cluster will ensure the involvement of affected communities, including women, children, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, in the design shelter/NFI activities. Partners will continue to conduct regular consultations with these groups throughout the humanitarian program cycle. Shelter interventions will be targeted at those most in need, with partners adhering to the Cluster Vulnerability Criteria. Both quantitative and qualitative methods, such as household surveys, community assessments, and key informant interviews, will be used to identify and prioritize assistance for families with multiple vulnerabilities. Shelter designs will incorporate measures such as lockable doors, adequate lighting, compound walls, and accessible features for



people with disabilities to address specific protection concerns. Where possible, implementation will be done through owner-driven or neighborhood approaches, encouraging community participation and offering flexibility and choice to beneficiaries.

- **Setting Standards and Guidelines:** The Shelter Cluster will maintain a robust set of technical guidelines and standards designed to ensure that shelter interventions address the immediate physical needs of affected populations while also enhancing their safety, dignity, and rights. ES/NFI assistance (whether cash or in-kind) will be provided based on accurately identified needs, in accordance with the Cluster's minimum standards. To ensure equitable assistance, efforts will be made to standardize distributions according to agreed-upon packages. When distributions are coordinated with the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) and/or WASH interventions, joint assessments and distributions will be carried out using cross-sectoral vulnerability criteria to encourage integrated responses. All partners will be expected through close engagement to adhere to the established technical guidelines and minimum standards in their ES/NFI Cluster activities. The cluster will work in partnership with local authorities and communities to provide shelter and NFIs support to the most vulnerable affected population through standardized approaches including standards on Emergency Shelter, NFI and Seasonal winter packages, Guidelines on Shelter Repair and Upgrade, Rental Subsidy and Transitional Shelter among others. The guidelines are intended to be evolving, continuously adapted to the evolving operational landscape. They will help standardize shelter interventions across various organizations and enhance coordination efforts. Similarly, they will provide a benchmark for monitoring and evaluating the impact, quality and effectiveness of shelter interventions, ensuring accountability to affected people and donors.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** The Shelter Cluster's response will be systematically monitored through monthly reports submitted by partners via Report Hub. This process will emphasize the collection and analysis of data disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and women-headed households (WHH), providing a comprehensive understanding of the response across various groups. Monthly national and subnational dashboards will be published to highlight the response by partners and track gaps relative to the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP). Monitoring of stock levels and funding will be conducted monthly via Report Hub and the Financial Tracking Service (FTS) respectively. Additionally, Interactive dashboard on our response, stock capacities and winterization will be regularly updated to offer real-time information on funding gaps, achievements, and coverage by partners at by location, population group and activity at district and province levels.
- **PDM and feedback mechanisms:** Impact monitoring will include post-distribution monitoring (PDMs) to inform and enhance future programming. Both partners and the Cluster will conduct independent PDMs to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of activities, which will contribute to future planning. The Cluster will continue to conduct PDMs, such as the recent ones on the earthquake response in Khost and a nationwide PDM on various types and modalities of assistance provided by shelter partners.

Four technical working groups will be established on an ad-hoc basis to review and adapt Cluster packages, including NFIs and seasonal winter assistance. They will also develop technical guidelines on shelter typologies, area-based settlement approaches, and strengthen Cluster efforts in addressing Accountability, Protection, and Gender, incorporating community feedback to improve the relevance and effectiveness of interventions.

- **Inter-Cluster Collaboration:** The cluster will continue to collaborate with other clusters (e.g., Protection, Food Security, Health, WASH) to ensure a holistic approach to addressing protection concerns. This includes with:
 - With protection cluster and related working groups specifically AAP & GIHA, to unpack new



- vulnerabilities and address emerging needs in an integrated approach.
 - WASH, Protection and FSAC in coordinated assessments, targeting of beneficiaries and joint distribution of emergency relief items at onset of emergencies.
 - With Nutrition Cluster in prioritization of seasonal support to pregnant and lactating women.
 - With the WASH Cluster in mainstreaming both shelter and WASH core competencies in transitional shelter programs, supporting beneficiaries' access to adequate shelter and sanitation facilities.
 - With the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster and the Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) Task Force to address a range of issues related to displacement, eviction prevention and response, solutions in return areas, site selection and settlement planning.
- **Enable coordination architecture:** The Shelter Cluster will continue to advocate for allocation of resources for the staffing of national, subnational, and provincial focal points strengthening core functions on coordination, information management, assessment, preparedness, rapid surge support, and technical standard setting for the cluster and its partners. These capacities will ensure effective day-to-day coordination of shelter and NFI responses, but beyond, promote evidence-based interventions through direct engagement with partners and affected communities on the ground. Moreover they will also facilitate active participation in interagency Joint Assessment Teams (JATs), ICCT/ICCG, and other humanitarian coordination platforms, providing strong technical expertise and guidance to shape shelter and NFI responses. Additionally, they will strengthen engagement with de facto authorities at both national and provincial levels.

These capacities will enhance collaboration with national and provincial line authorities, including ANDMA, MoRR, MoE, and MuDL, to ensure the timely delivery of emergency shelter relief items at the onset of crises. They will also promote greater synergy between shelter solutions provided by humanitarian partners and de facto authorities. The Cluster coordination team will support core functions, including advocating for one-off exemptions to ensure the inclusion of women and girls during emergencies. Additionally, the coordination team will act as a liaison with authorities on behalf of partners, helping to resolve operational challenges such as interferences, delays in registrations, and bureaucratic hurdles during project registration and MoU processing among others.

A robust information management system will be maintained to collect, analyze, monitor, and disseminate data related to shelter activities, while ensuring that protection principles—such as gender, age, disability, and cultural sensitivity—are integrated into all shelter interventions. The Afghanistan SC website will remain the key knowledge management hub, with ongoing improvements and additional tools to better meet field needs. The Shelter Cluster will prioritize sub-national coordination, ensuring that sub-national teams, and provincial focal points are systematically involved at the onset of each response. Coordination training and workshops for subnational and provincial focal points will continue, with a focus on addressing language barriers and offering 'on-the-job' exposure, mentoring, and shadowing opportunities to strengthen field cluster coordination roles. Information management gaps at both national and subnational levels will be assessed, and strategies and tools will be developed to address these gaps.



OUTCOME AREA 3: Our enabling actions in collaboration with stakeholders

- ✓ Conduct partner capacity assessments to identify training needs.
- ✓ Conduct regular Rapid Gender Analyses (RGAs).
- ✓ Continue disseminating outcomes from cluster-independent assessments and research studies during monthly cluster meetings.
- ✓ Strengthen engagement and advocacy frameworks on behalf of partners with de facto authorities, particularly with the Ministry of Economy (MoE), Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), ANDMA, and MRRD, to address bureaucratic hurdles.
- ✓ Enhance consultations on Cluster Strategic priorities with various working groups and clusters, including WASH, Protection, CCCM, GIHA, AAP, and CvWG.
- ✓ Ensure the translation of the strategy summary into Dari and Pashto and share it with authorities and partners at the regional and provincial levels.
- ✓ Continue monthly meetings with regional focal points and co-chairs to address regional needs and provide technical support.
- ✓ Continue quarterly SAG reviews of membership requests and expressions of interest from NGOs.
- ✓ Conduct biannual technical meetings with new partners joining the cluster, NGOs, and ACBAR to brief them on cluster priorities and standards.
- ✓ Maintain regular follow-ups on the CFMs received from Awaaz.
- ✓ Request and consolidate partners' independent Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) data to inform cluster technical solutions.
- ✓ Develop Communication with Communities (CWC) packages on PSEA, Fraud, and AAP for partners.
- ✓ Continue annual training of RPFs/PFPs.
- ✓ Advocate and identification of resources for a technical coordinator to support the development, dissemination of technical guidelines, standards, and protocols for shelter and NFI interventions.
- ✓ Advocate for the identification of resources to recruit a Protection Specialist to support partners on AAP, PSEA, Gender, and Safe and Accountable Programming, and to further develop relevant training modules and outreach materials.
- ✓ Evaluate partners' adherence to IASC principles and the concept of operations, including an in-depth analysis of RH indicators on the inclusion of women in the Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC).
- ✓ Support subnational clusters in conducting regular spot checks using the protection observation tool.
- ✓ Advocate for resources for procuring tablets and developing Kobo forms for field monitoring.
- ✓ Support ACBAR in twinning/mentoring efforts for NGOs.
- ✓ Ensure cluster participation in ACBAR meetings.
- ✓ Conduct regular briefings on minutes from ICCG/HCT forums.
- ✓ Map leadership arrangements and focal points for MoE, MoRR, and ANDMA to influence decision-making.
- ✓ Advocate for partners to enhance resource mobilisation efforts towards core shelter activities.
- ✓ Roll out training and capacity-building initiatives for partners on Gender, Disability, and AAP through collaboration with GIHA, AAP, and DiWG.
- ✓ The Cluster coordination team to conduct more regular missions to field locations.
- ✓ Advocate for resource allocation towards GSC HSCT training for subnational cluster coordinators and co-chairs



ANNEX I

Humanitarian Needs & Response Plan (HNRP) Budget (2025)

Cluster Objective (CO)	Indicator	In Need	Target	Total families	cost/ family	Total cost
CO1	# of people receiving emergency shelter assistance, including through cash-for-rent support.	5,778,337	479,394	68,484	\$ 438 \$165	\$ 26,272,866
CO1	# of people receiving basic household items/ NFIs to meet their immediate needs.		503,239	71,891	\$ 200 \$ 74 \$ 57	\$ 12,713,974
CO1	# of people receiving standard winterization package including through heaters and fuel, winter clothing, blankets, or quilts		903,697	129,009	\$131	\$ 58,808,678
CO1	# of people whose shelter was upgraded allowing for safer and more dignified living conditions.		206,958	29,565	\$ 330 \$ 550 \$ 50	\$ 17,414,218
CO3	# of people receiving support to construct transitional shelters		121,786	17,398	\$ 2,000	\$ 46,974,078
CO2	# of people with specific needs, including women-headed households and people with disabilities, receiving tailored technical support for shelter repair and construction activities.		98,623	14,089	-	-
CO2	# of people with disabilities receiving emergency shelter and NFI assistance after consultations to meet their specific needs.		163,156	23,308	-	-
CO5	# of IDPs living in ISETs provided with care and maintenance.		264,696	37,813	10\$	\$ 2,646,960
CO5	# of multipurpose community spaces (MCC) or Community Resource Centers (CRC) established and made operational in sites serving ISET inhabitants.		14	-		\$ 1,348,998
CO6	# of IDPs living in ISETs voluntarily relocated to their place of origin.		100,800	14,400		\$ 12,959,856
Total (USD)						\$ 179,139,629



AFGHANISTAN SHELTER CLUSTER

Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements



Afghanistan Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster is grateful for contributions from all our donors, including governments, foundations, private donors, and country-based pooled funds.



AFGHANISTAN SHELTER & NON-FOOD ITEMS CLUSTER

- As Afghanistan continues to face complex humanitarian challenges, the Emergency Shelter & Non-Food Items (ESNFI) Cluster remains at the forefront of coordinated efforts to provide life-saving shelter, essential non-food items, and long-term housing solutions.
- With 66 operational partners and 94 members, the Cluster continues to evolve, ensuring that humanitarian efforts remain responsive, efficient, and inclusive.

For more information:

Afghanistan Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster, go to www.sheltercluster.org/response/afghanistan

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