

## CLUSTER POLICIES AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS 2017

### Technical Guidelines for Shelter & NFIs interventions in Afghanistan (2017)

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## INTRODUCTION

The present guidelines are aimed to **provide a common operational framework for Shelter and NFIs practitioners** in Afghanistan who are committed to ensure the best standards of assistance to population in need of this basic life-saving assistance.

As a **self-imposed mandatory document it will be the basis for the technical review** of project proposals that need the Cluster Technical Review. These guidelines have to be read in conjunction with the Cluster Technical Reference Documents (uploaded in the Afghanistan Shelter website <https://www.sheltercluster.org/response/afghanistan>) and are not pretending to replace them but to complement with a commonly agreed approach.

This document **is not** (and **shouldn't be taken as**) **a summary of the whole array of rich Global shelter reference bibliography** but a complement of these. Thus, the complete read of the recommended technical references is fundamental for Cluster Partners who are seriously engaged in developing proper Shelter and NFIs assistance.

**The present document should be complemented by specific training supported by the Cluster**, particularly in emergency and transitional shelter and the selection and use of NFIs in relief operations.

## CLUSTER TECHNICAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

### 1: Global Cluster Shelter Technical Resources

<https://www.sheltercluster.org/resources>

### 2: NFIs Global Cluster References

<https://www.sheltercluster.org/References/Pages/Non-FoodItems.aspx>

### 3: Selecting NFIs for shelter

<https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/Selecting%20NFIs%20for%20Shelter%202009.pdf>

### 4: Transitional Settlement, displaced Populations

<https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/Selecting-NFIs-for-Shelter-2008.pdf>

### 5: SPHERE standards Shelter & NFIs

<https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/Shelter%20-%20NFI%20SPHERE.pdf>

### 6: Do not harm principles

First defined by Mary B. Anderson in 1999's book: "Do not Harm, How Aid can support Peace or War" has been a reference for humanitarian practitioners. Although there is no official website for downloading copyrighted material a simple search with: "Anderson Do Not Harm principle" will give access to many resources. It worth reading them!

### 7: Supporting Principled Humanitarian Action

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/9662774.pdf>

### 8: The IFRC Shelter Kit

<http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/95526/publications/D.03.a.07.%20IFRC%20shelter-kit-guidelines-EN-LR.pdf>

**9: Shelter case Studies**, a compilation of studies, best practices and worldwide relief lessons learned <http://www.sheltercasestudies.org/references.html>

**10: The Shelter Center Library**, a comprehensive compilation of more than 2,000 related guidelines and documents for shelter practitioners <http://www.sheltercentre.org/library>

**11: Shelter and cash interventions**. A complete reference guide of tools and documents for programming cash interventions: <https://www.sheltercluster.org/library/shelter-and-cash>

**12: Shelter interventions of IFRC** <https://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/disaster-management/responding/services-for-the-disaster-affected/shelter-and-settlement/>

### 13: Mandatory Guidelines for ECHO Partners

[https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/echo\\_afghanistan\\_-\\_cash-for-shelter\\_guidelines\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.sheltercluster.org/sites/default/files/docs/echo_afghanistan_-_cash-for-shelter_guidelines_-_final.pdf)

**14: NRC Shelter projects**  
<http://www.nrc.no/?aid=9137056>

# ORGANIZATIONAL TECHNICAL CAPACITY, ASSESSMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

## *Technical Capacity*

Organizations working under the Shelter and NFIs Cluster coordination scheme and presenting project proposals under the CHF, ERF, CERF, UFE, Flash Appeals, CAP, CHAP, SRP or any other funding for what the Cluster Review is necessary, must fulfil the minimum requirements:

- Have record of participation in both cluster and technical cluster meetings.
- Strive to recruit dedicated technical staff with adequate knowledge in emergency shelter, transitional shelter and humanitarian assistance.
- Have proved record of operational capacity in relief assistance.
- Actively participate in peer reviews of cluster fellows' proposals.
- Have demonstrated capacity in the integration of cross cutting issues into Shelter & NFIs proposals.
- Have operational capacity/presence in the area of proposed intervention.

## *Assessments*

- Actively report ongoing projects and assessments
- Undertake need assessments based in common approach (use HEAT and/or ES/NFI sectoral assessment tools)
- Coordinate with Sub-clusters and actively participate in joint assessments
- Do not use for project proposals assessments that have not been shared with national Cluster, Regional Sub-Clusters and OCHA.
- Use participatory approach during assessments and include the particular needs of different gender and age groups
- Pay particular attention of people request for assistance in terms of what items, type of shelter, dignity spaces/items, timeframe, etc.
- Evaluate environmental impact of any proposed shelter intervention, in particular the use of water, wood, competition for scarce resources, and long term presence of new settlements
- Always ensure the adequate arrangements on land ownership and access to land for shelter assistance projects. In this regard, the Local Authorities, traditional leaders, community leaders (including Imams, Shuras and elders) should be consulted to confirm land access prior to any shelter intervention.

## *Implementation*

- All cluster interventions should be based in the "do-not-harm" principle<sup>1</sup> and respect SPHERE<sup>2</sup> minimum standards.
- Implementation should always engage/include the beneficiaries (shared ownership) and aimed to provide dignified income and boost their affected self-confidence. It's not a proper approach to sub-lease construction contractors to provide humanitarian shelter assistance.
- There should be a skill transference/training to most of the beneficiaries Heads of Household (HoH) and whenever possible basic construction tools (for construction and future repair/maintenance) should be provided.
- All shelter designs should be accompanied of Bill of Quantity (BoQs) and a detailed estimation of the construction labor/hours per each part of the shelter and the estimated total construction time per unit.
- Designs should be discussed previously with beneficiaries and there should be an open possibility for small modifications to respond to special needs. Beneficiaries' own contribution should be encouraged and welcomed.

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<sup>1</sup> See this critical review of the University of Sussex that define Do Not Harm as a cornerstone of good Humanitarian Practice <http://hwc.gtc.ox.ac.uk/documents/Shivji%202012.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/Shelter%20-%20NFI%20SPHERE.pdf>

- People with special needs and vulnerable women should receive additional support to avoid cases of abuse and/or harassment. Communities should be actively engaged to support most vulnerable people.
- Shelter interventions should always include the provision of latrines (in coordination with WASH Cluster and according its standards) unless other joint/coordinated projects will be providing this assistance.
- Shelter interventions should be sustainable and whenever possible include initiatives to improve protection and harsh beneficiaries' living conditions.
- Maximize the use of local materials, local designs, local procurement and beneficiary's engagement.

### ***Reporting***

- All implementation issues (i.e. advances, delays, constraints, best practices, lessons learned) should be reported both at sub-cluster and cluster level.
- CHF, ERF and CERF projects should be not only routinely report to OCHA but permanently report to ESNFI cluster and sub-clusters.
- Maintain the use of standard Monthly and Quarterly reporting forms and other cluster developed reporting standards.
- Cluster requests for information should be always respond within the requested timeframe.

### ***Protection Issues***

All Cluster activities should take into consideration and adhere to the Gender Guidelines for Shelter<sup>3</sup>, the Shelter and NFIs Gender marker Tip Sheet<sup>4</sup> and the ESNFIs Protection Check List<sup>5</sup>

### ***Vulnerability Criteria***

The cluster has adopted seven specific vulnerability criteria for identifying the extremely vulnerable among the affected population:

- ❖ Female Headed Household;
- ❖ Child Headed Household;
- ❖ Disabled Headed Household;
- ❖ Elderly Headed Household;
- ❖ Very Large Family (8 members or more);
- ❖ Very Poor Families;
- ❖ Families with Chronically-ill members or having other pressing vulnerability.

In addition, it is necessary to take into account the potential beneficiaries assessed capacities to overcome the critical situation they are facing. In other terms, if they have sufficient material, monetary of labour resources or other coping mechanisms.

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3 <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/SHELTER%20AND%20NFIs%202012%20Tip%20Sheet.pdf>

4 [http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/SHELTER\\_AND\\_NFIs\\_2012\\_Tip\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/SHELTER_AND_NFIs_2012_Tip_Sheet.pdf)

5 <http://www.sheltercluster.org/response/afghanistan>

## DEFINITION OF SHELTER AND NFI BENEFICIARIES

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

**Category A beneficiaries:** Individuals who have lost their shelter and NFIs due to a disaster. The shelter is completely destroyed and no longer inhabitable.  
This includes shelters with: No walls left standing, shelter with unrepairable foundations and which need to be demolished in order to build new.

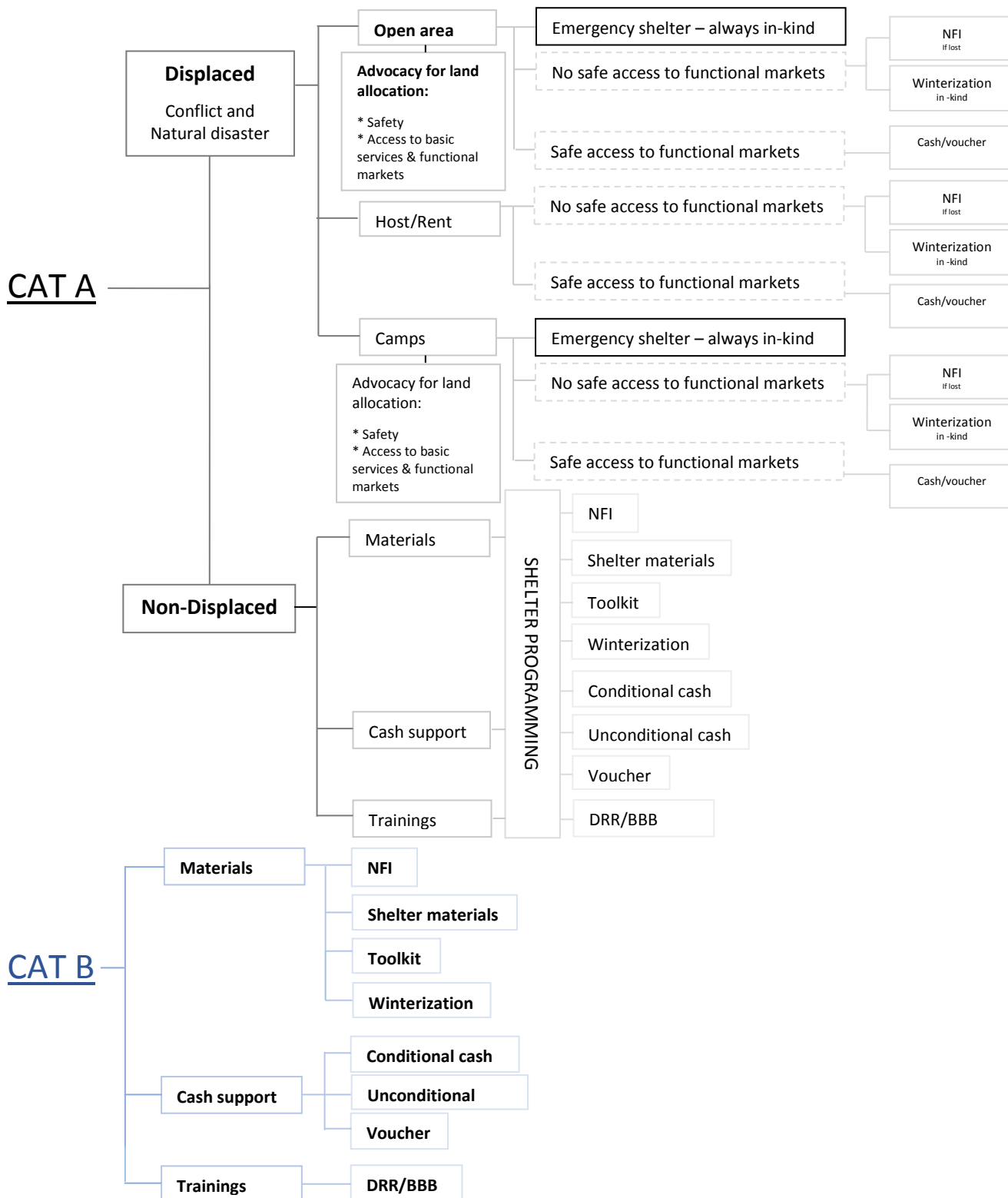
**Category B beneficiaries:** Individuals with shelters that are severely damaged but still can be repaired in order to offer protection from further harm to the family.  
This includes shelters with: At least one room standing which with manageable repairs will be inhabitable and ensure dignity and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

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

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

In the table below the standard responses according to the above mentioned categories are mapped for reference.

*Recommended responses for respective beneficiary categories*





## CORE NFIs, SHELTER AND WINTERIZATION ITEMS FOR EMERGENCIES

Based on well recorded experience, UNHCR defined the reference list of the **Core Relief Items Catalogue**<sup>6</sup> that should be the basis for technical reference on items description and standards where possible (local procurement options may differ). For agencies providing **cash for NFIs**, a market assessment collecting prices of each item listed below from the nearest functional market, should be carried out prior to implementation in order to identify the specific amount needed to cover basic needs.

The table below is a reference of the basic items to compose an emergency NFIs package in the context of Afghanistan operation. Kerosene cooking stoves are not included as the provision of cooking fuel is extremely difficult and its use in emergencies is still controversial.

### Standard NFI kit

Item	Minimum Quantity	UNHCR Specifications
Blanket*	2	Synthetic blankets are made of virgin fibers from polyester or acrylic materials. Some cotton may be included in the yarns. Size: 1.5 * 2 m Weight: 500 to 850g/m2 Thickness: 5mm minimum
Solar lantern, torch with battery, or table lamp	1	
Cooking pot or pressure cooker	1	Stainless steel Cooking pot of 7 lit capacity with a frying pan should serve as lid. Two stainless steel handles attached
Glasses for tea	6	
Bowl	1	
Tea pot	2	
Spoon	6	
Peeling knife	4	
Soap (hand)	1	
Jerry can	2	The 10 liters capacity Semi-Collapsible Jerry Can made of food grade LDPE is a container for general household use for carrying and storing drinking water. Weight: 190 – 230 grams
Match box	1	
Big spoon for serving/cooking	1	
Plastic mat	1	Synthetic sleeping mats are used to sleep on and must be waterproof, tear proof and material trim finished. Size: 1.8 x 0.9 meters. Weight: 0.500 Kg / m2 Minimum
Clothes for women (socks, gloves, sweaters, hats...)*	2	
Clothes for men (socks, gloves, sweaters, hats...)*	2	
Clothes for children (socks, gloves, sweaters, hats...)*	2	

\*Blankets and clothes should only be distributed where there is a need i.e. in winter and in cold areas.

Components of a complete NFI kit for Cat A families. All agencies must include kitchen sets/items with NFI kits. 13 of the 16 items (75%) must be included at a minimum for the ESNFI cluster to consider in 3W reporting.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/4ec628819.pdf>

## Standard Emergency Shelter kit

Item	Minimum Quantity	Specifications
Family sized tent with necessary tools for pitching	1	Family tent of total area 23 sqm. Approximate weight 55.0 kg. Having complete accessories, poles, beams, rope... Poly-Cotton: (Polyester/Cotton blended Composition: fibers yarns). Cotton: 40% (±10), polyester: 60% (±10) = Polyester: 50% to 70%, with balance in cotton. Specific weight: 350 g/m <sup>2</sup> ±15% in finished state.
Tarpaulin (4m x 6m)	2	Dimensions 4 * 5 m made of woven high-density black polyethylene (HDPE) fibers, warp x weft, laminated on both sides with low density polyethylene (LDPE) coating, with reinforced rims by heat sealing on all sides, (or 2 sides heat sealing and 2 sides double stitching), and a 5 millimeters diameter PE or PP rope on the edge, inside the hem. 1000 denier minimum. minimum 190 gr/m <sup>2</sup> +/-20g/m <sup>2</sup> .
<b>Optional:</b> Rope (30m)	1	

To be used in cases of beneficiaries residing in an open area without protection from the weather. Only category A beneficiaries should receive emergency shelter in order to immediately provide protection and ensure the dignity and privacy of the families. Other solutions, such as Cash for Rent and hosting possibilities should be explored before distribution of larger numbers of emergency shelters. Please note that the cluster do not endorse large distributions of emergency shelter without complimentary WASH intervention and general development of camp infrastructure.

Category B and C beneficiaries will normally have the possibility to repair their shelters when provided with resources to do so.

In cases of large scale disasters where beneficiaries have lost the majority of their resources a tool kit for repairing of an existing shelter can be distributed in order to protect the family from the weather and further harm.

## Emergency shelter self-construction/Repair tool kit

Item	Minimum Quantity
Sisal Rope (100 m)	1
Plastic Rope roll (30 m/ 6-10 mm diameter)	1
Hoe( iron made, with wood handle)	1
Shovel (iron made with wood handle)	1
Axe (iron made with wood handle)	1
Mason's Bucket (15 Liters reinforced)	1
Plastering Trowel (10' with wood handler)	1
Claw Hammer (4', steel magnetic head)	1
Pick digger (with wooden handle)	1
Hand-held Saw (blade of 1mm thickness and 60 cm length)	1
Wheelbarrow/Zambil (sufficient resistance to move construction)	1

materials)	
<i>*Latrine squat base*</i>	1
<i>*Water storage tank (min 100 Liters)*</i>	1

\*Items are optional but their inclusion will support immediate recovery in cases of damaged houses reconstruction / repair and will also substantially improve the hygiene and sanitary conditions of displaced population.

### Winterization Package

Winterization package is considered by the cluster to only include items for heating as the items listed below and only distributed when the weather is cold, and when the beneficiaries have been affected by a natural or manmade disaster and thus have lost all of their assets. Clothing and blankets should not be distributed on a yearly basis in preparation for winter as these items are considered to have a life-span of more than one year and can for a minimum amount of money be purchased in local markets.<sup>7</sup>

Considering the large impact that household heating in Afghanistan can have on the environment, the cluster strongly recommends providing gas as the main source of heating during winter months. Gas creates less pollution, minimize deforestation and is to a certain degree the safer choice in heating options. If gas balloons are distributed in-kind, they should be empty during transportation and distribution.

People living in rural areas might have limited access to filling and re-filling their gas balloons whereas wood is widely used and available throughout the country. Where gas is the main item in the winterization distribution **awareness raising** on the benefits of switching from wood to gas should be done in parallel to ensure that the assistance is used in a sensible manner.

Winterization support should always be planned according to the availability of heating options in the market, thus, the two following packages are recommended by the cluster depending on market availability.

#### Where available

Item	Unit	Unit cost	Minimum Quantity	Total cost
Gas cylinder	pcs	500 AFN	1	500 AFN
Cash/voucher for gas	1	3500/month	Depending on area	3500 AFN
<b>TOTAL per month</b>				<b>4000 AFN</b>

\*Additional months of support should only cover costs of gas

#### Where gas is not available

Item	Unit	Unit cost	Minimum Quantity	Total cost
Wood	Kg	20 AFN	200	4000
Kindling	Kg	6 AFN	20	120
Fuel gel	liters	60 AFN	2	120
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>4240 AFN</b>

In case of cash programming a market analysis is needed to establish the proper amount for the packages listed above. The costs mentioned are estimates based on nationwide averages. Please consider the possibility of inflation as the majority of Afghans will purchase the same items in the same period of time as your programming.

<sup>7</sup> For more information, please refer to the KIS winter relief guidelines 2014-2015

## *Cash assistance modalities for NFI and winterization interventions*

Providing beneficiaries with cash allows them to;

- Feel empowered by being given the responsibility to make their own decisions on how to cover their most basic needs.
- Buy products from local vendors and markets and services from their local community to stimulate the local economy and creating livelihood activities at multiple levels.
- Flexibility to buy the exact items that the family needs.

A thorough market analysis prior to cash distributions is essential to ensuring that items are available in the market and that supply chains will remain open for an extended period of time. Moreover, safe access to markets for all groups should be confirmed. In areas where temporary settlements are too far from existing markets, global studies indicate that local entrepreneurs have the potential to fill the gap in the market by setting up temporary small shops to address the demand of the beneficiaries. However, this will not serve as a viable option in the first days of displacement and immediate emergency in-kind assistance will in many cases be the most suitable option.

### **Technical quality of items**

Most ES/NFI partners are buying items locally to compile the standard NFI packages, and the quality of items that the beneficiaries can obtain with in-kind vs. cash support will often be the same. It is recommended to confirm the quality of the items available in the market via market assessments.

Cash transfer modalities tested and used in Afghanistan include; direct cash, hawala, Mpesa, and bank transfers.

### **Post distribution monitoring**

Cash interventions as well as in-kind interventions should be followed by PDMs to capture the exact expenditure of the cash distributed. More on PDMs can be found in a later section of this document.

## SHELTER ASSISTANCE

Although the primary aim of the ESNFIs is the provision of emergency shelter solutions, in Afghanistan, shelter interventions have been taking the form of the following three types of interventions, depending on funding resources, implementation time/urgency and humanitarian access:

- **Emergency Shelters:** including Tents, plastic sheets and basic emergency shelter items
- **Transitional Shelters:** To provide urgent assistance while bridging the gap between emergency shelters and permanent shelter assistance and supporting the repair/rebuilding of damaged housing.
- **Permanent shelters:** Assistance aimed to build, repair and in some cases rebuild lost houses/dwellings or supporting IDPs settlement once land access/rights are obtained.

**Decision on shelter response options should be made based on the needs assessment and scale of disaster.**

TYPE OF SHELTER	DESCRIPTION	TARGETED BENEFICIARY GROUPS (Vulnerability Criteria should be applied)
<b>Emergency shelter</b>	Any easily to assemble, mobile, climate resistant small covered area that can provide immediate protection from climate inclemency and safety for affected people It's provided as the immediate assistance solution and can be later reinforced with additional shelter support if funds are available. Possible responses are: Tents and/or the Basic Emergency Shelter Self Construction/Repair Tool Kit (See Table 3 in page 7 above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ People affected by natural disasters</li> <li>❖ People affected by armed conflicts</li> <li>❖ People evicted of forcibly displaced</li> </ul>
<b>Transitional shelter</b>	Transitional shelters are an intermediate housing solution for HHs in need until durable long-term housing solution is achieved. It also implies the gradual transition from emergency shelter assistance to more suitable shelter solution. In general it could be applied when urgent shelter assistance is needed but land ownership is an issue or when the beneficiaries may return to their original houses and re-use the provided transitional shelter materials. Examples can be found in later sections of this document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ IDPs with no access/rights to land</li> <li>❖ People affected by armed conflict or natural disasters that can rebuild or repair their houses</li> <li>❖ Displaced people with pressing housing needs in temporary land use arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Durable shelter</b>	Are all types of shelters that are designed to last for at least 5-10 years and are made of durable and affordable materials, respecting local customs and providing appropriate covered living space. Generally made of solid mud or cooked bricks, with strong durable doors and windows and light & insulated roofing. Durable shelters should be constructed with a family latrine. DRR mainstreaming / build-back-better should be ensured, while remaining cost-effective. Different types of durable shelters can be found in a later section of this document.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ IDPs affected by natural disasters or by armed conflicts that have land access/rights for settling down.</li> <li>❖ Houseless people who are returning to their areas of origin where they have land rights.</li> <li>❖ Vulnerable houseless people granted land access.</li> </ul>

### Emergency Shelters

A practical definition of emergency shelter is: "**any easily to assemble, mobile, climate resistant small covered area that can provide immediate protection from climate inclemency and safety for affected people**". It

provided as immediate assistance solution and can be later reinforced with additional shelter support.

Shelters provide lifesaving protection to families in distress by safeguarding them from harsh climate conditions, from external aggressions related to conflict or natural disasters, protecting from diseases and providing minimum privacy and dignity living spaces.

The significance of emergency shelters is laid on its critical importance to determine the survival capacity in the initial phase of disasters or armed conflicts. Harsh climate conditions and the absence of shelter materials in the area are of the ultimate concern for relief practitioners as those elements would shape the emergency shelter assistance programs. These aspects should be always considered together with the **core items proposed in Table 2, Page 5.**

Shelter support should also be aligned with WASH and if possible with early recovery interventions. In particular, the site designs, site selection, availability of water and toilets, access to markets, and the coordinated way to assist women, girls and people with special needs.

Emergency shelters, should provide shield from adverse climate, preserving health, dignity and protection while increasing the possibilities of people to recover from shocks. These interventions should be always linked with future transitional solutions aimed to self-sustainment and building resilience. As an example, we refer to the IFRC shelter kit designed for natural disasters<sup>8</sup> this can provide useful information, not only in materials, design and applicability but in coordination and decision making processes.

**In Afghanistan high quality tents are difficult to find in local market and would in most scenarios be distributed in-kind directly to the beneficiaries.**

### Large scale distribution of tents

As a principle large scale distributions of tents have been discouraged by the ES/NFI cluster for several years due to the existence of the wide variety of more suitable shelter options available in Afghanistan, however, the dramatic increase in conflict over a now more widespread territory, the continued occurrence of large scale natural disasters and the current returnee situation have all influenced the country's ability to accommodate the large amount of people on the move.

Previously, IDPs had the possibility of seeking refuge with neighbours, relatives and friends in line with the country's cultural norms of hospitality. With the increased pressure on host communities and populations in urban centres to accommodate IDPs and returnees resources have reached a level of close to depletion. Rented accommodation can be difficult to find even for families with financial resources as empty houses in safe areas with access to basic services and functional markets are becoming more difficult to find. Beneficiaries are reporting to put themselves in sometimes boundless debt in order to provide for their families, and with limited opportunities to find job opportunities in an instable economic environment the chances of beneficiaries to rebuild their own lives with little beyond emergency support seem slim.

As a result conflict and natural disasters are more regularly resulting in large numbers of families finding themselves in open areas with no place to go, or in overcrowded and undignified shelter situations, when

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/95526/publications/D.03.a.07.%20IFRC%20shelter-kit-guidelines-EN-LR.pdf>

communities and urban centres have reached their maximum absorption capacity. In situations like these, immediate emergency shelter must be provided to ensure protection from the weather and provide families with a dignified shelter solution. Tents will not necessarily be the first option – see section on camps, but it might be the only option.

In short, below mentioned criteria should be followed when distributing tents;

- Families in overcrowded living situations (more than 7 people in a room)
- Families living in open areas (under trees, rocks, or make-shift shelter (tarpaulins, straw etc.)
- Also consider ownership status of the land. Families should be allowed to temporarily occupy the land.

## Camps

This section is supposed to provide agencies and various stakeholders, including local authorities with guidelines on how to adhere to minimum standards to ensure safety, dignity and privacy for individual in camps and informal settlements.

First and foremost, **camps should always be the last option** when other alternative shelter options are explored and no suitable solution has been found. Alternative shelter options to consider before large scale distribution of tents include;

- Host families
- Support for rented accommodation
- Vacant public buildings and private buildings where a temporary agreement has been signed between the owner and the government
- Construction of transitional shelter on temporarily allocated land

Land has to be allocated by the government for both temporary settlement and a more prolonged camp situation. The government should be given support to ensure that the land allocation process is swift, transparent and involving the municipality. Land allocated for settlement of a large amount of people should have as a minimum; 1) Safety (also from natural hazards) 2) Access to basic services 3) Access to markets. In situations where not all of the three minimum requirements are in place, an agreement between humanitarian actors and the government should be in place for supplementary activities to support upscaling of e.g. basic service in the camps or ensuring that basic infrastructure is in place ***prior to arrival of the beneficiaries***. Ensuring that beneficiaries accommodated in the camp will have access to all basic services also promotes coexistence with potential host communities as it decreased the fight for natural resources in the proximity of the camp.

A collective decision at ICCT level should be made on multi-sectoral activities to be carried out in the camp and clear division of roles including overall management of the camp. Deployment of site-planners or activation of a CCCM cluster should be considered prior to initiating any large scale tent distributions.

Camp closure should be considered in the early steps of initiating the process of setting up camps, and durable solutions strategies should be planned in coordination with local authorities, the reintegration and resettlement working group, other relevant longer term development stakeholders and the beneficiaries.

Considerations to be made when distributing large amount of tents for a camp-like situation

### **Spacing for privacy and fire hazards**

- Tents pitched should be according to sphere and cluster standards (3,5 m<sup>2</sup>/person as a minimum).
- Tents should be pitched with minimum 2m of spacing in between – preferably more to allow for cooking outside of the tent
- For every 300m of area of pitched tents, allow for an empty space of 50m to decrease the risk of fire spreading to more sections of the camp.

### **NFIs + winterization**

- Each tent should be equipped with the standard NFI package or beneficiaries provided with cash support to buy the necessary items in the local market (where available) with the addition of winter NFIs during cold weather months.
- Winterization should be considered to be an add-on when needed and should always be accommodated by awareness raising on fire hazards of winterization equipment.

### ***Transitional Shelters***

Transitional shelter is an incremental process which supports the shelter of families affected by conflicts and disasters, as they seek to maintain alternative options for their recovery.

Through its five characteristics, transitional shelter can be:

- upgraded into part of a permanent house;
- reused for another purpose;
- relocated from a temporary site to a permanent location;
- resold, to generate income to aid with recovery; and
- recycled for reconstruction.

The process starts with the first support offered to families and extends over the period of securing land rights and reconstruction, which may take several years. For tenants, the process is appropriate only when land rights and safe shelter close to their livelihoods cannot be achieved immediately. For owners, the process should be considered only when repairs or reconstruction cannot start immediately. The process should only be considered as part of the ongoing development and maintenance of a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive inter-sector strategy for shelter, settlement and reconstruction.

In our website (<https://www.sheltercluster.org/response/afghanistan>) there are references of technical documents and guidelines to be used as orientation in terms of planning and designing transitional shelters that can be successfully adapted to Afghanistan environment and to the different needs of displaced population (for example the IFRC model of 8 designs<sup>9</sup>).

The Shelter Center has completed a set of Transitional Shelter Guidelines<sup>10</sup> in 2012 with the support of DFID, UK Aid, SIDA and IOM that are to the present the most complete and "must-to-read" literature for shelter

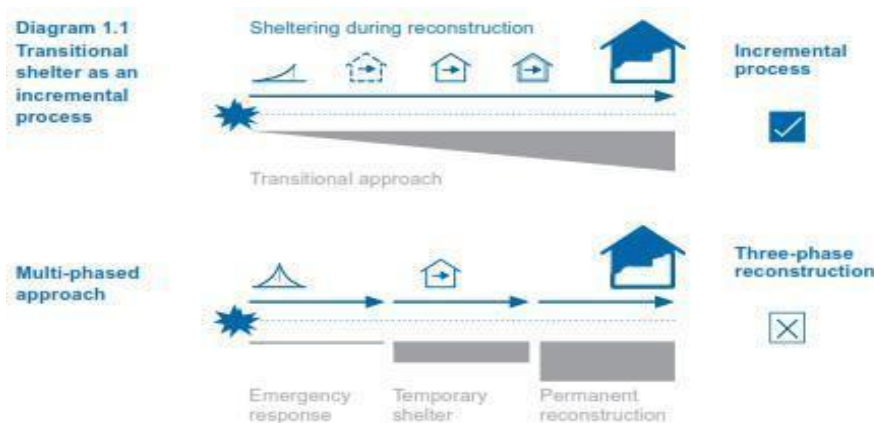
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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/95186/900300-Transitional%20Shelters-Eight%20designs-EN-LR.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/Transitional-Shelter-Guidelines.pdf>



practitioners.



**Transitional shelters are an intermediate solution for HH in need until durable-long term housing solution is achieved.**

It also implies the gradual transition from emergency shelter assistance to more suitable shelter solution.

In Afghanistan context, access to land and the chronic nature of the armed conflict are real obstacles to the implementation of durable housing solution. Besides, the Cluster Partners should be able to identify and/or evaluate main possibilities to assist people in need of transitional shelter support: by upgrading their current dwelling, by the construction of transitional shelters or by the provision of cash assistance (or a combination).

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

- Shelters that cannot withstand strong rain and winds (including rainstorms and landslides)
- Shelters that do not have adequate foundations or floor slab to meet agreed standards,
- Shelters that have structural deficiencies (unsafe),
- Shelters that are prone to flooding/landslides, or
- Shelters that do not have access to adequate water and sanitation.

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

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

It's important to highlight the respect of the minimum covered space per person of 3.5 square meters (without counting latrines or kitchens). This means that a family of 7 people will not be provided with less than 24.5 m<sup>2</sup> (living + room space). The aim of these technical guidelines is to set up a common agreed minimum standards.

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

### *Durable Solution Shelters*

Although the concept of long-lasting solutions is not in line with relief ESNFI interventions, in reality, most cluster partners have been engaged in the provision of durable shelter assistance. This is in part due to the absence of

National Housing programs and the common understanding that if funds are available these type of interventions (i.e. Building Back better = BBB) are helping the most vulnerable people to build up resilience while receiving a dignified and safe shelter assistance.

The main issue has been the misunderstanding of the government authorities that durable shelter assistance is what humanitarians should provide instead of immediate shelter relief assistance. In fact, the duration of medium to big durable shelter programs can be up to one year or more, depending of the weather conditions, availability of skilled labour force, availability of funds, construction materials and accessibility to implementation areas.

Taking into consideration the complexity and cost of durable shelters and based on Cluster Partner's experiences, there are some key considerations to take into account on developing and implementing these programs:

**Land tenure:** Mechanisms to ensure that the beneficiaries have the right to use the land plot where shelters will be constructed. On this regard, a standard form has been developed and should be jointly signed by relevant Government and Civil Society stakeholders to recognize and grant land access to shelter project's beneficiaries.

**Phased Construction:** It's imperative to provide not only material (or Cash) assistance altogether with technical support in a phased manner. This means that before the construction, beneficiaries and supporting masons should get sufficient training and understanding on the modality of the construction program; once one phase of the construction is completed, it must be inspected and cleared before next stage support (material or cash) is provided. This will avoid deviation from planned program; assist in budget management, diminish corruption and/or runaway risks while facilitating the interaction with beneficiaries and communities.

**Engagement of Beneficiaries:** It is important to secure the cooperation and acceptance of beneficiaries in durable programs because of the long term objectives of providing a participative, dignified and safe solution. In many cases, the most vulnerable people in need of housing solution have no income (i.e. FHoH, elderly), or are among the poorest (making a living from begging or from very low income informal activities). Thus, the labour costs should be quantified and integrated to each stage of the shelter construction, in other words, beneficiaries would have the possibility to either pay skilled labour or to save the equivalent cost by doing the work themselves.

It is unrealistic to think that the most vulnerable displaced people will be able to contribute significantly to shelter construction while the assertion would be valid for refugees/returnees. In large scale disasters implementing agencies should consider the fact that reaching out to the community for support in reconstruction might not be a viable option as each member of the community will most likely be preoccupied with reconstruction of own shelters. On this regard, these standards are focusing on the assistance modalities for the most vulnerable IDPs, HHs affected by natural disasters or host population cases.

**Community Considerations:** Whenever possible for large group of shelters to be repaired, reconstructed or build; the needs of community services (i.e. schools, clinics) should be considered as well as proper urbanization plans. Cluster partners should always coordinate with government authorities and ensure that shelter programs are in line with future development plans (if any) as well as coordinate with relevant clusters for large response programs (i.e. WASH, Health, Education). It happens that Cluster Partners integrate shelter assistance to larger livelihood or recovery programs, in such case, it's necessary to ensure coherent, coordinated and sustainable responses.

**Proper Vulnerability Assessment:** All shelter interventions have to prioritize the most vulnerable people in need among any affected population group. The cluster has adopted seven specific vulnerability criteria for identifying the extremely vulnerable among the affected population which to a large extend is in line with vulnerabilities

endorsed by the protection cluster in country: Female Headed Household; Child Headed Household; Disabled Headed Household; Elderly Headed Household; Very Large Family (8 members or more); Very Poor Families; Families with Chronically-ill members or having other pressing vulnerability. Under no condition should these vulnerabilities be disregarded in favour of other groups or compromised by external pressure.

**Table 10: Reference matrix for inclusion of Beneficiaries for Shelter Assistance according to vulnerabilities**

VULNERABILITY	Able to Contribute with Labor	Unable to Contribute with labor	Have resources	House/Shelter Lost or Seriously Damaged	House/Shelter Partially damaged	Have Land Rights/ Access	Don't Have Land Access/Rights
<b>Extremely vulnerable household*</b>	YES	YES (+ support)	NO	YES (Full assistance)	YES (Partial assistance)	YES	Advocacy

\*Female/Child/Elderly headed household, large families, households with chronically ill members, and very poor families.

## SHELTER DESIGNS RECOMMENDED BY THE CLUSTER

Before commencing shelter programming there are several considerations to take;

### Regions

Afghanistan has a diverse subsoil which influences the construction materials available in large scale shelter programming. The north-east region predominantly consists of rocks with very limited access to timber and large amount of soil for e.g. mudbrick construction. Other regions can to some degree find supply of several construction materials with mudbricks being the cheapest option. Undertake a thorough market analysis of the construction materials available in the region before deciding on a shelter design. Make sure to confer with skilled labour in the villages that have been affected. Moreover, considerations should be taken to the statistical snow persistency and low temperatures in the area in order to ensure that the construction will be able to withstand harsh winters with low temperatures (insulation, inclination of roof etc.).

### Cultural traditions

Shelter construction is a skill transferred from generation to generation. Understanding how shelters have been constructed in the past can help improve designs to enhance the acceptance of the programme itself. Roofs shaped as domes are e.g. in many areas the traditional way of ventilating the shelter in hot summer months. Any incorporation of the traditional designs should be approved by a shelter engineer prior to starting construction.

### Main hazards

Afghanistan is subject to a wide range of natural and manmade disasters. The most prominent being floods, landslide/mudslide/avalanche and earthquakes. The shelter cluster recommends mapping the most probable hazards in the area of intervention before deciding on a shelter design.

**Flood:** Shelters located in flood prone areas should have a strong foundation and plinth to not only withstand occasional large scale floods but also recurrent seasonal flash floods.

**Minimum height of foundation should be 50 cm above the ground.**

**Foundation materials recommended are: cooked mudbricks, quarry stone, gambion construction (should be enforced with adequately strong mortar and possibly cement plastering).** Consider the fact that even in urban hubs like Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif, the seasonal flood risk is high in certain months due to poor drainage in several areas of the cities.

Amo river in the north region of Afghanistan has continuously been overflowing to such a degree that several villages are suffering loss of livelihoods and damage to their existing shelters. Several shelters have been rebuilt by a variety of agencies in the past, but the majority of them suffered damage the following year. Reallocation of villages in the high flood risk areas including permanent landownership agreement is the sustainable solution for these specific communities and advocacy at a provincial and national level is the recommended way forward for all cluster members.

**Earthquake:** Provinces located in and around the Hindu Kush mountain range are in high risk of being affected by recurring earthquakes.

Shelters built in earthquake prone areas should include a minimum of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures.

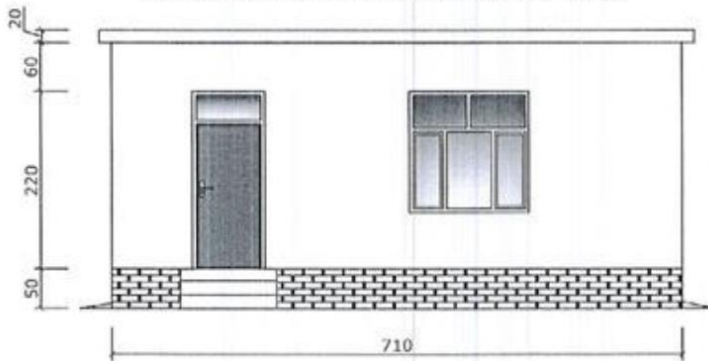
**Corner bracing and enforced roof construction is the main measures to incorporate.**

## Shelter designs

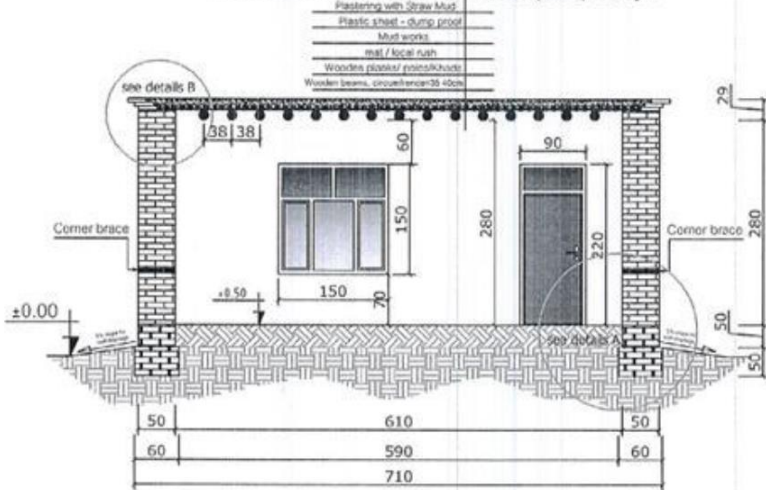
**ECHO blueprint - comes in 3 sizes depending on family size (18/25/35 m<sup>2</sup>) and adjusted to either earthquake or flash flood prone areas.**

18m2

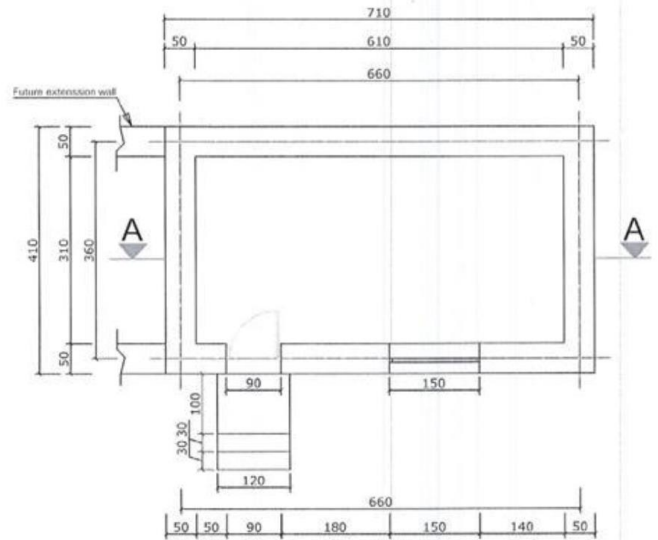
**FRONT VIEW DRAWING  
 SMALL SIZED FAMILY SHELTER (SSFS) - 18sqm**



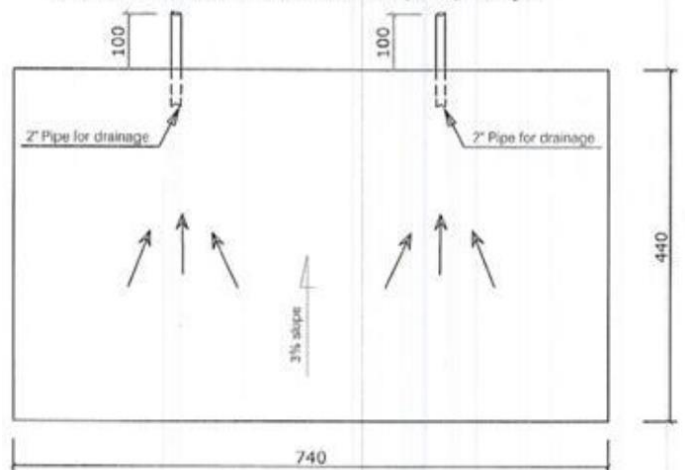
**LONG SECTION (A-A) DRAWING  
 SMALL SIZED FAMILY SHELTER (SSFS) - 18sqm**



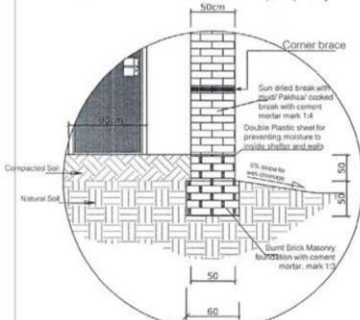
**PAKHSA / SUN DRIED BRICK MASONRY WALL - PLAN DRAWING  
 SMALL SIZED FAMILY SHELTER (SSFS) - 18sqm**



**ROOFING PLAN WITH DRAINAGE DRAWING  
 SMALL SIZED FAMILY SHELTER (SSFS) - 18sqm**

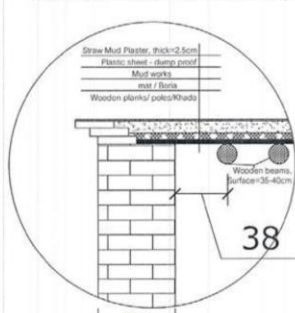


**PAKHSA / SUN DRIED BRICK MASONRY WALLS  
 AND FOUNDATION - DETAILS DRAWING  
 SMALL SIZED FAMILY SHELTER (SSFS) - 18sqm**



Details A

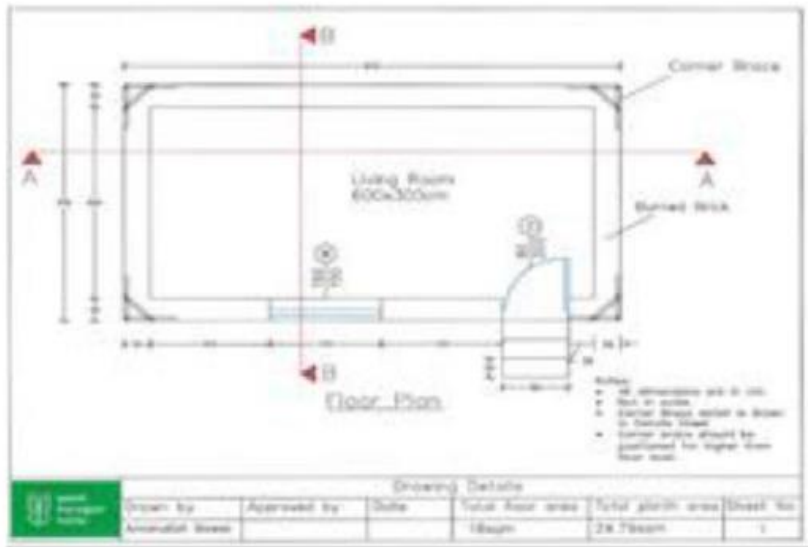
**PAKHSA / SUN DRIED BRICK MASONRY WALLS  
 AND ROOFING - DETAILS DRAWING  
 SMALL SIZED FAMILY SHELTER (SSFS) - 18sqm**



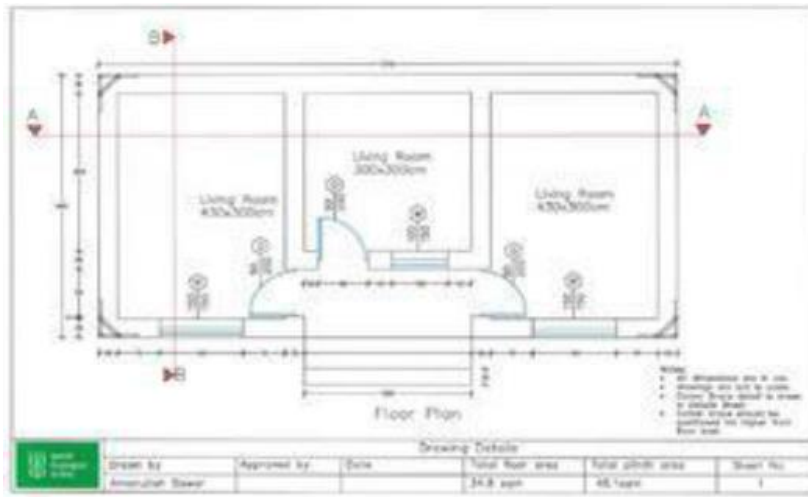
Details B

**Note:**  
 All dimensions are in cm.  
 All drawings are not to scale

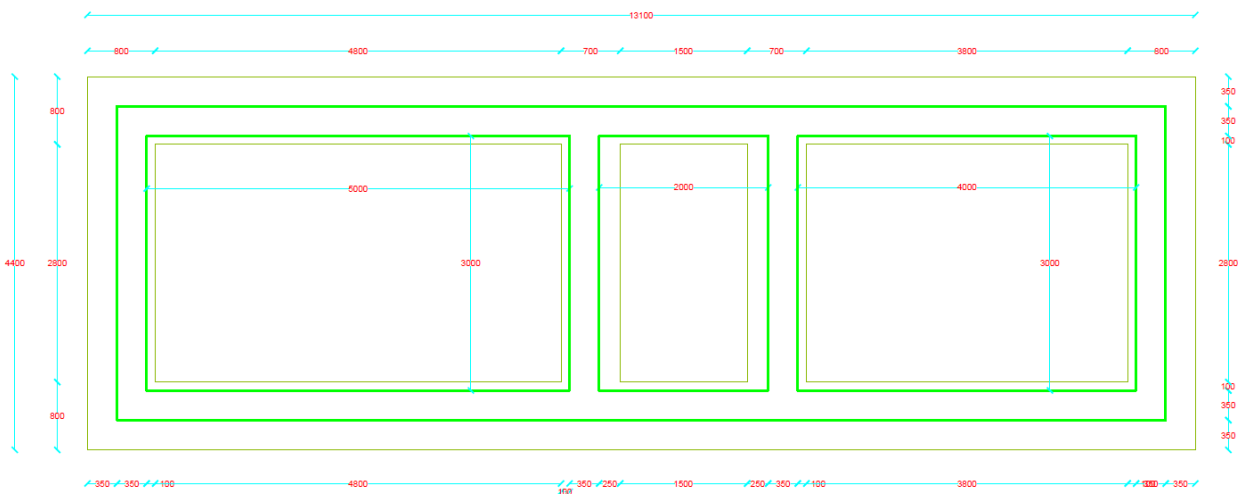
**WHH one room shelter**



**WHH two rooms shelter**



**MRRD/CONCERN**



### UNOPS shelter



### NRC two room shelter



### *Cash assistance modalities for shelter reconstruction (extracted from ECHO partners' standards):*

The standard adapted for cash-for-shelter interventions was designed on the basis of ECHO partners' field experience and proven cost-effectiveness. Lessons learned with regard to DRR and innovative techniques have been incorporated as well. It is expected that the agreed standard will adequately cover basic needs in most cases. However, should strong specific needs and/or constraints (related to climate, materials availability, disaster risks...) be identified by ECHO partners, amendments to the standard should be agreed upon on an ad-hoc basis.

The approach promoted by ECHO for shelters delivery is **cash-for-shelter** ("CFS"), for the following reasons:

- CFS is the most flexible option with regard to skilled and unskilled labor availability.
- CFS allows greater ownership by involving beneficiaries in the construction process.
- CFS requires limited project teams and thus improves the cost-effectiveness of the action.

- CFS does not require heavy procurement and avoids related delays in project delivery.
- CFS is not taxable by the GoIRA.
  
- **Technical standards:** Two standard variants are proposed and are considered adequate to most disaster related emergencies in Afghanistan (see design section of this document for more information). These standards take into consideration the following aspects:
  - **Costs constraints:** The ES/NFI cluster’s priority is to ensure high needs-coverage while providing culturally and qualitatively acceptable shelters to beneficiaries.
  - **Comprehensive costs assessment:** All shelter construction costs are provided in attached BOQs, to be updated in each targeted area.

**Instalments plan:** To each shelter size & related BOQ corresponds an instalments plan, defining the amount of cash to be transferred according to set completion thresholds. The first instalment shall be transferred upfront the construction start, once the initial beneficiaries’ training is completed.

When relevant and possible, simple low cost measures allowing the protection of food stocks and other essential items should be looked at in order to reduce the impact of possible future disasters (e.g. elevated storage space...). Similarly, low cost measures to improve pest control and increase the durability of wooden elements (roofing) should be promoted by the partners.

The proposed BOQs only reflect systematic costs related to the construction of shelters. Other costs may be incurred to customize or improve the shelters; these should be borne by the beneficiaries. Should specific constraints make additional project support necessary, this will be discussed on an ad hoc basis, depending on the project’s modalities and constraints.

**Instalments payment:**

A safe and secure instalment payment method should be selected that takes into consideration beneficiary protection issues and preferences. Current options available include direct transfers through *Hawala* or mobile cash transfer systems (M-Paisa). Mobile cash transfer charges as of May 2016 are indicated below:

Company Name	Charges per beneficiary for each disbursement	Registration, Training and SIM charges
Etisalat	1% from total amount of each disbursement	150 Afs - one time for each beneficiary
Roshan	200 Afs for each disbursement	155 Afs - one time for each beneficiary
AWCC	1% +40 Afs from total amount of each disbursement	150 Afs - one time for each beneficiary

***Mandatory documents to accompany shelter proposals***

All Shelter and NFIs proposals presented for UN coordinated funding schemes (CHF, ERF, CERF-UFE, Flash Appeals, SRP 2015 and bilateral agreements with UN Agencies and Programs) should include;

- 1 Proposal Narrative
- 2 Proposal Budget and budget narrative
- 3 Bill of Quantity of the items with its estimated market costs and including labor costs and construction time (work/hours calculation)
- 4 Designs reference to the present Technical Standards (in case of shelters)
- 5 Detailed implementation workplan



## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR REDUCTION OF FUEL CONSUMPTION (GERES)

**Environmental issues must be considered for any shelter interventions**

## POST DISTRIBUTION / POST CONSTRUCTION PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION

All ES/NFI interventions should be followed up by post distribution monitoring in order to measure impact and ensure accountability to donors and more importantly beneficiaries.

The ES/NFI cluster has developed a standardized PDM format as a reference for partners for future programming planning. It reflects both in-kind and cash interventions and is designed to inform future improvements of cluster standards, partner programming and reporting against indicators and targets of the cluster strategy. The ES/NFI cluster will continue to facilitate interagency lessons learned exercises for large scale shelter programming to further develop standard shelter