Environmental Checklist for Shelter Response (FOR PILOTING)

Version 1.5 - April 2020

This checklist (with annexes) is designed to guide the shelter coordination team, program managers and field staff through the steps required to ensure that environmental considerations are adequately considered and implemented in humanitarian shelter programs. Following the steps of the humanitarian program cycle and aligned with the 2018 Sphere Humanitarian Standards, it is designed for situations where the population has not been displaced by the hazard event (sections 1-5), as well as displacement and resettlement scenarios (sections 1-6).

Shelter Cluster Vanuatu defines shelter as private and community housing and shelter related non-food items such as clothing, bedding, cooking and eating utensils and household lighting. Shelter excludes public buildings such as schools, medical centres and public service housing such as teacher, nurse and other public authority housing. These are the responsibility of the education and health clusters.
Assistance for private and community housing should encourage the self-help concept and promote adoption of effective preparedness measures by communities. As a result of their self-sufficiency and resilience, Ni-Vans, after a disaster, wherever possible, start the self-recovery process immediately. Community, urban or rural, often quickly reconstruct shelter with building materials which are readily available. Therefore, shelter response strategies should encourage and support people in their own coping mechanisms, with the appropriate provision of non-food and shelter materials, tools, technical assistance and safe shelter awareness, targeting the most vulnerable.

For all recommended actions in the checklist:
(1) Consult and engage actively with authorities at national, municipal, provincial and local levels, customary chiefs, and communities via Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) who can provide local knowledge of key environmental concerns, potential hazards and natural resource availability in the area. Effective engagement with host and affected communities can also minimize social tensions often associated with situations of mass displacement. Ensure community feedback mechanisms are in place, and;
(2) Coordinate with other shelter and environment stakeholders (annex 2) through participation in the Shelter Cluster at national, municipal, provincial and local levels.

For further information or to provide feedback on this checklist contact coord1.vanuatu@sheltercluster.org

#	Action	Shelter Coordination Team	Program Manager	Field Staff	Annexes
1	**Inform yourself and your team**				
	Familiarise yourself with the country environment and disaster context and regulatory requirements (according to national laws and policies) at national, municipal, provincial and local levels. Program managers to brief field staff on essential points, risks, etc.	X	X	X	1,2,3,4
2	**Assessment and analysis**				
	Integrate environmental questions in to shelter sector and multi-sector assessments (or carry out a rapid Environmental Impact Assessment) to identify environmental impacts and practical local actions required. Key points include pre-crisis building typologies and access to and use of local natural resources, extent of need and availability of resources post-disaster, and social, economic and cultural issues that may influence the sustainability of the response. Deployment team to comprise of DEPC and other relevant government agencies where possible.	X	X	X	8, 9
3	**Strategic planning and project design**				
3	Develop a shelter and settlement plan in consultation with local authorities and community members responsible for environmental management and service provision:	X	X	X	
3.1	Incorporate environmentally sustainable construction considerations in the project management cycle, and longer-term environmental opportunities into recovery planning from the start of the response.	X	X		7, 18
3.2	Consider the potential negative impact of certain types of activities such as cash-based interventions, on natural resources (e.g. increased logging).	X	X		13
3.3	If not already in place, support local authorities and communities to develop environmental management plans	X	X	X	6
3.4	Consider ways to increase level of security of land tenure as a part of the shelter program. Higher level of security of tenure can encourage long-term consideration for the local environment.	X	X	X	11
3.5	Consider local hazards and climatic conditions in building design, implementation timeline, and siting.	X	X	X	5, 13

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3.6	Encourage reuse and repurpose of disaster debris, waste, and emergency shelter materials provided towards upgrading of shelter over time.	X	X	X	13, 17
3.7	Minimise amount of materials used through accurate bills of quantities and innovative design.		X	X	13
3.8	Provide only household items that minimize energy consumption or potential environmental impacts.		X	X	15
3.9	If provision of fuel is identified as a need, identify and mitigate the impact that energy interventions can have on existing livelihood activities that involve the collection and sale of fuels.		X	X	16
3.10	Provide improved burners or green energy stoves that optimize combustion efficiencies, to replace homemade burners.		X	X	16
3.11	Provide and use energy efficient lighting such as LED lighting and solar energy		X	X	16

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4	**Resource mobilisation / logistics**				
4.1	Encourage the use of locally available materials and building practices where appropriate and able to be supported by the environment and locally sustainable supply chains. Encourage and engage in replanting of building materials.	X	X	X	13
4.2	Choose environmentally sustainable building materials and consider material lifecycle, from extraction to disposal. Avoid the use of hazardous or harmful substances.	X	X	X	13
4.3	Procure local, durable, sustainable household items which can be reused or recycled		X		14, 15
4.4	Reduce packaging on relief items and ensure all waste generated is properly disposed of or recycled.		X	X	15
4.5	Scrutinise the source of fuel (supplier and supply chain) being used by communities to ensure that procured fuels are responsibly extracted, regulated and/or certified.		X	X	16
5	**Implementation and monitoring**				
5.1	Ensure shelter is located at a safe distance from local hazards		X	X	5, 13
5.2	Ensure shelter is well shaded and ventilated to increase thermal comfort.		X	X	13
5.3	Ensure cooking areas are well ventilated.		X	X	13
5.4	Encourage proper disposal and recycling where it is not possible to reuse or repurpose building materials.		X	X	13, 17
5.5	Ensure all waste generated by the field team is properly disposed of at a licensed landfill site or recycled.	X	X	X	15, 17
5.6	Provide awareness to those receiving assistance on the use of new household items to minimise unintended environmental consequences.	X	X	X	15, 17

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6	**If the affected population will move to temporary displacement or permanent resettlement sites, consider the following:**				
6.1	Advocate against / avoid setting up temporary displacement and permanent resettlement sites close to protected or ecologically sensitive areas, areas of cultural importance, or TABU sites	X	X	X	4
6.2	Advocate against / avoid using previously unsettled areas for temporary displacement and permanent resettlement sites.	X	X	X	10
6.3	Advocate for careful selection of the construction site, considering previous usage of site (is it contaminated), exposure to natural hazards, access to roads and public transportation.	X	X	X	5, 10
6.4	Assess access to cooking fuel for host and affected communities and any negative implications the harvesting of natural resources may have on the environment and social harmony.	X	X	X	16
6.5	Consider the provision of fuel-efficient stoves and training in their use into site management plans.	X	X	X	16
6.6	Protect, restore and improve the ecological value of operational sites such as temporary settlements during and after use (including environmental restoration).	X	X	X	12, 18
6.7	Use materials and construction methods that allow for easy dismantling, transport and reuse to avoid wasted materials. This is particularly applicable for emergency or transitional shelters due to high likelihood of beneficiary mobility.	X	X	X	13
6.8	For permanent resettlement, advocate to government authorities to provide the affected population with a secure level of tenure.	X	X		11