



Shelter Cluster Iraq
ShelterCluster.org
Coordinating Humanitarian Shelter

Cluster guidance on cash-based shelter and NFI assistance

Introduction

The following document has been prepared by the Shelter/NFI Cluster Coordination Team to provide guidance to cluster partners on the utilisation of cash-based programming for shelter and NFI activities. The document is based on the work of the cluster's Strategic Advisory Group, and is in line with the cluster's revised strategy for 2015 and the overall objectives of the 2015 national Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Creation of this document has also referenced global best practice guidance documents on the use of cash in the shelter sector. The Shelter/NFI Cluster Coordination Team will continue to work with the Cash Working Group to improve guidance to cluster members.

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1. Key Notes

1.1. Multiplier effect

Much has been written about the multiplier effect of cash programming over the provision of in-kind assistance. Providing beneficiaries with cash allows them to buy products from local suppliers or manufacturers and use local labour, creating livelihoods at multiple levels of the supply chain and assisting local economies to recover and flourish.

Good market analysis is essential to ensuring that supply chain capacities and potential blockages are identified and assistance measures are put in place to overcome them.

1.2. Ensuring technical quality

A commonly expressed concern in the shelter sector is around how to ensure the technical quality of goods purchased or construction work undertaken. The use of cash as an assistance modality should not be used as an excuse by agencies to relinquish the responsibility to ensure internationally agreed standards and local building codes are enforced.

Cash-based shelter programs commonly use a combination of conditional or restricted cash along with technical support and training to address these concerns.

1.3. Access to markets

There has been much discussion within both the broader cluster and the SAG around the issue of access to markets. Many feel that in-kind distributions are more appropriate in areas far from markets or where markets are no longer functioning; while other proponents point out that creating market demand will quickly result in increased supply capacity. Global experience has shown that even in places perceived as far from markets or where access is limited, entrepreneurs usually step in quickly to fill gaps in the market.

While addressing immediate life-saving needs may be more quickly serviced through in-kind distributions, (particularly where products are already held in stock by agencies as part of contingency plans), moving as rapidly as possible to cash-based assistance will build market capacity and ensure long term sustainability. In-kind based responses should include strategies to support a rapid transition to cash.

1.4. Impact of other unconditional cash support

Discussion within the SAG identified the potential impact of unconditional cash distributions on the shelter needs of the affected community. For example, experience has shown that unconditional cash distributions to IDP families in the rental market has often been used for rental payments.

Separating out IDPs with remaining critical shelter needs from those whose shelter needs have already been addressed through receiving unconditional cash is critical to ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of shelter programs. To achieve this cluster partners will need to undertake detailed assessments utilising the prioritisation tool that the cluster is developing to assist in this process. Receipt of unconditional cash does not in itself rule out a household's continued need for shelter assistance through cash or other means.

2. Specific guidance per assistance package type

2.1. Emergency shelter

Addressing the emergency shelter needs of the newly displaced;

a) in outdoors and other informal settings

Basic/minimum NFIs: plastic sheeting, kitchen set, mattress, pillows, jerry can, jerry can for kerosene, blankets, towels, hygiene kit, stove	-Cash-based where immediate market access is possible, otherwise in-kind
Basic shelter materials: tents, tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, poles, ropes	-Cash-based where immediate market access is possible, otherwise in kind -In-kind for tents
Implementation costs: will require additional cost for distribution in hard to access areas	Internal cost

b) in abandoned, unfinished or public buildings

Basic/minimum NFIs: plastic sheeting, kitchen set, mattress, pillows, jerry can, jerry can for kerosene, blankets, towels, hygiene kit, stove	-Cash-based where immediate market access is possible, otherwise in kind
Basic shelter materials: tents, tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, poles, ropes	-Cash-based where immediate market access is possible, otherwise in kind -In-kind for tents
Sealing-off kits: plastic sheeting, wood, tools, nails, ropes, clear sheet	-Low-rise residential houses: cash-based where immediate market access is possible. otherwise in-kind -Multi-storey buildings: material, labour and technical support to ensure safety -Cash for work, livelihoods programs or IDP labour incorporated into contract specification for local contractors

c) In formal managed camps and settlements

Basic/minimum NFIs: plastic sheeting, kitchen set, mattress, pillows, jerry can, jerry can for kerosene, blankets, towels, hygiene kit, stove	-Cash-based assistance except in locations with restricted access to functioning market, in which case programs should include transition plans to cash-based assistance when possible -Vouchers may also prove appropriate where pre-existing supplier agreements are in place
Basic shelter materials: tents	-In-kind

2.2. Upgrading critical shelter

Assisting IDPs living in critical shelter situations to achieve safe secure shelter;

a) from outdoor and other informal shelter situation to improved abandoned, public or unfinished buildings

Securing tenure: finding sites, negotiating tenure, private sector partnerships, rental support, assistance to relocate	-Direct technical support -Soft loans to landlords for upgrades in exchange for tenure -Restricted cash for rental support -Cash assistance or vouchers for relocation assistance
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Upgrading safety and habitability: improved sealing-off of windows and doorways, ensuring safety of stairwells and ledges, ensuring WASH and cooking facilities, ensuring climatic appropriateness	<i>-Cash for work, livelihoods programs or IDP labour incorporated into contract specification for local contractors</i> <i>-Direct technical advice</i>
b) from all forms of insecure shelter to rental or hosted shelter solutions	
Securing tenure: public-private partnerships, municipal level link to government for support, ICLA, identify vacant housing units and families willing to host, tenure agreements, 3- month phased assistance	<i>-Direct technical support for ICLA</i> <i>-Cash grants for private and public partnership agreements</i> <i>Tapered cash grants to reduce rental costs over first 3 months</i>
Upgrading safety and habitability: ensuring that households have the resources to address minor repairs/upgrades addressing privacy, safety, security etc.	<i>Cash or vouchers for shelter upgrades and rental support</i>

2.3. Maintaining shelter

Ensuring the shelter conditions of the currently displaced do not degrade further;

a) in outdoors and other informal settings

Basic/minimum NFIs: replenishment of acclimatisation items, blankets/clothing, kerosene distributions	<i>Cash-based assistance except for those with restricted access to functioning market, In which case programs should Include transition plans to cash-based assistance when possible.</i>
Basic shelter materials: plastic sheeting replacement average 40% per year	<i>In-kind assistance to ensure quality and advantages of bulk procurement</i>

b) in abandoned, unfinished or public buildings

Basic/minimum NFIs: replenishment of acclimatisation items, blankets/clothing, kerosene distributions	<i>-Cash-based assistance except for those with restricted access to functioning market, In which case programs should Include transition plans to cash based assistance when possible.</i> <i>-Vouchers may be more suitable for some specific purposes (fuel for instance)</i>
Basic shelter materials: check and upgrade of building safety and acclimatisation	<i>-Low-rise residential houses: cash-based assistance except for those with restricted access to functioning market, Include transition plans to cash-based assistance where possible</i> <i>-Multi-storey buildings: material, labour and technical support to ensure safety</i>
Tenure support: renegotiate ongoing tenure, may incur rental support costs or physical upgrades	<i>-Technical and legal support, may also require assistance for rental support or building upgrades to ensure owner support</i>

c) In formal managed camps and settlements

Basic/minimum NFIs: replenishment of acclimatisation items, blankets/clothing, kerosene distributions	<i>-Cash-based assistance except for those with restricted access to functioning market, In which case programs should Include transition plans to cash-based assistance when possible.</i> <i>-Vouchers may be more suitable for some specific purposes (fuel for instance)</i>
Basic shelter materials: tent or plastic sheeting replacement (global average 20% per year)	<i>-In-kind assistance to ensure quality and advantages of bulk procurement</i>



d) In host family and rental situations

Basic/minimum NFIs: seasonal NFI assistance to vulnerable families	-Cash-based assistance -Vouchers may be suitable for some specific purposes (fuel for instance)
Rental or hosting support: tapered cash support for 3-6 months	-Cash-based tapered support

2.4. Assisting return

Ensuring the shelter condition of those returning does not degrade to critical.

a) Supporting those returning rapidly

Basic/minimum NFIs: basic NFI kit	Cash-based assistance to purchase basic NFIs where markets are functioning, tapered NFI support or market interventions/support where markets are re-emerging
Basic shelter materials: basic shelter materials and tools	Cash-based assistance to purchase basic NFIs where markets are functioning, tapered NFI support or market interventions/support where markets are re-emerging
Labour: support to hire labour when required	Cash-based assistance , highly vulnerable families may require direct labour assistance
Transport and rent: assistance for renters and for transport	Cash-based assistance , highly vulnerable families may require direct assistance
Technical advice: advice to returnees and to government on transitional shelter options, structural building assessments and repair	Direct technical advice



3. Appendices

3.1. Appendix 1: case studies

Jordan 2013 Syria Conflict

Rental support; housing repair and retrofit using cash / vouchers & advocacy / legal support.
http://www.sheltercasestudies.org/shelterprojects2013-2014/SP13-14_A11-Jordan-2013.pdf

Lebanon 2013 Syria Conflict

Support for household items; construction materials; emergency shelter; rental support; housing repair and retrofitting; site planning; combination of cash / vouchers and in-kind.
http://www.sheltercasestudies.org/shelterprojects2013-2014/SP13-14_A14-Lebanon-2012.pdf

China Sichuan Earthquake 2008

Support for shelter reconstruction using cash.
<http://www.sheltercasestudies.org/shelterprojects2009/ref/B.4-China-Sichuan-2008-Earthquake.pdf>

3.2. Appendix 2: reference documents

Cash and Shelter: how cash can be used in humanitarian shelter responses

<http://www.sheltercentre.org/library/cash-shelter-how-cash-transfers-can-be-used-humanitarian-shelter-responses>

EMMA: Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis toolkit.

<http://emma-toolkit.org/>

Builders and Bankers: opinion piece on cash programming in the shelter sector.

<http://www.sheltercasestudies.org/shelterprojects2011-2012/B02-Cash.pdf>

PASSA: Participatory Approach to Safe Shelter Assistance.

<https://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/95526/publications/305400-PASSA%20manual-EN-LR.pdf>

Gender and Cash: gender considerations in cash programming.

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp260028.pdf>

3.3. Appendix 3: online reference libraries

Shelter Centre: <http://www.sheltercentre.org/library>

Shelter Cluster: www.sheltercluster.org/resources

ALNAP: <http://www.alnap.org/publications>

Humanitarian Practice Network: <http://www.odihpn.org/hpn-resources>

CaLP (Cash Learning Project): <http://www.cashlearning.org/>



3.4. Appendix 3: key terminology

Unconditional cash

Unconditional cash transfers (or “cash without associated activities”) are cash transfers given directly to beneficiaries without them having to do anything specific to receive the transfer. With no restriction placed on how they choose to spend the money, almost by definition unconditional cash programs do not usually include incentives or consequences.

Proponents argue that unconditional cash provides greater dignity, respecting recipients ability to make intelligent decisions on how best to assist themselves, respecting the right to freedom of choice.

Conditional cash

Conditional cash transfers are when beneficiaries are required to fulfil a specific obligation or activity (such as building a temporary shelter, buying certain goods, travelling to a certain place, etc.) to receive the cash. Conditionality refers to what beneficiaries are required to do to receive the transfer and not to conditions on how they subsequently use the resources. Conditional cash transfers may include incentives or consequences for adhering or not to conditions.

Proponents argue that conditional cash ensures project outcomes are better achieved and minimum standards maintained.

In-kind assistance

Refers to assistance provided directly in the form of pre-purchased goods or services.